

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

The United Front Policy in Context:
Vietnam—A Case Study in Chinese Foreign Policy

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by

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PREFACE

The weight of the People's Republic of China in international relations cannot be denied or ignored. The People's Republic is a nuclear power with regional ambitions, possessed of significant resources, not least its huge population and land mass. From the late 1960s its position in the strategic triangle formed with the United States and the Soviet Union reflected its relative status to the other major powers in the international system. Thus to understand the PRC is to know the world better.

Having graduated from my second graduate school in 1984 and consequently travelled widely in a foreign service capacity the question of what lay at the root of the PRC's foreign policy activity became an enduring interest. Hence, over a period of years I was able to gather a wide range of relevant and useful primary and secondary materials in my quest for enlightenment. These sources were of both English and Chinese origin.

Many of the English sources were collected from the libraries of Sydney University and the Macquarie University during my stationing in Sydney, Australia between 1987 and 1991. English language sources were also obtained from the Law School, National Taiwan University and the USIS in Taipei following my recall for home service. After enrolling in Hull

University's doctoral programme in 1997 I was able to make use of their significant source base for updating my English source materials.

The material in Chinese has provided the backbone of this dissertation. The library of the Institute of International Relations of National Chengchi University in Taipei has an internationally reputable collection of classified, declassified and general data regarding the PRC. The exclusive nature of PRC publications was, however, a limiting factor. Chinese Communist Party and government control of newspapers and periodicals results in these media frequently being vehicles for political rhetoric and propaganda, although a sophisticated reading of these sources may provide some interesting insight into PRC motives and perceptions.

For source material from the PRC which have required transcription from Chinese romanised spelling the updated Hànyǔ Pīnyīn system has been used as adopted in 1979 by the PRC's Shanghai publisher, Cí Hǎi. In all other case the Thomas Wade system has been applied.

Finally, in addition to the kind help proffered by the many and varied library staff approached during my research, I am especially indebted to Dr. Eric Grove, my dissertation supervisor at Hull, whose learning, experience and assistants have enabled me to reach my goal.

To my wife, Shirley, I give grateful thanks for her support which enabled me to finish my paper.

I offer this thesis as a contribution to Chinese studies and dedicate it to the Chinese people.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

THE THESIS

1.1. The Context

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has a communist and revolutionary government. The declaration of the PRC in October 1949, represented the victory of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), established in 1921, in its struggle against the Chinese Nationalists, the Kuo Min Tang (KMT). This victory seemed to prove that the CCP's strategy, based on a United Front policy, worked. The United Front policy was a manoeuvre by which the CCP united with lesser antagonists against a greater mutual enemy. During the period 1921 to 1949 a relatively weak CCP applied the United Front idea to form, when required, a temporary union even with its fundamental enemy, the KMT.

This occurred during the early and mid 1920s and the Sino-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945, and was even attempted in the talks with the KMT after

World War II. The experience with the KMT gave the PRC more confidence in dealing with the outside world. The Korean War made the PRC realise the importance of the safety of its own border. After the Korean War, not surprisingly, the PRC began to use its experience of the United Front strategy in its dealings with international affairs. The selective application of United Front tactics led to PRC foreign policy successes in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The PRC avoided the formidable hostility of the Soviet Union (SU) and played a significant role in the US-SU-PRC triangular relationship. Both domestically and internationally, the United Front strategy has been at the root of much of CCP-PRC policy.

It is the contention of this dissertation that the PRC has consistently employed a United Front strategy in its relations with the United States. It takes as its focus the period 1954 to 1973, with particular reference to the conflict in Vietnam. During this period, the comparatively weak PRC sought to accommodate itself to shifts in US Vietnam policy within the limits of its United Front strategy. The period of the US-North Vietnamese peace talks serves as a particularly useful “miniature,” as it were, of this process and will be given special attention.

There is a very extensive literature about the PRC's foreign policy, approaching the subject from a number of different perspectives. However, as Rosemary Foot identifies, "Much of the literature that deals with Chinese foreign policy behaviour, although extremely valuable, has tended not to be explicit about the selective processes that have underpinned the argument, or about the theoretical positions that have been taken."¹ None have stressed the United Front basis of the PRC's foreign policy toward both the United States and the Soviet Union or placed this within an explicit theoretical framework. Existing studies have selected various levels of analysis or images² with which to approach the subject: the broad international context; the PRC's relations with specific countries or regions; particular incidents; and the influence of individuals such as Mao Zedong, or Zhou Enlai. Whilst these studies offer useful insights, none grasp the essence of the PRC's foreign policy.

A few books and articles have sought to examine Chinese foreign policy in terms of Communist party doctrine. Peter Van Ness' Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy (1970), examines PRC foreign policy in terms of the revolutionary model, but emphasises the "people's war" concept, developed to

¹Rosemary Foot, "The Study of China's International Behaviour: International Relations Approaches," in Ngaire Woods ed., Explaining International Relations since 1945, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 259.

²Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State and War, New York: Knopf, 1948, pp. 50-67.

liberate the colonial and semicolonial countries in the world, rather than the United Front strategy. J. D. Armstrong's Revolution Diplomacy (1980) identifies the United Front strategy as an essential part of the Chinese revolutionary ideology, but it fails to apply this sufficiently and widely. Bevin Alexander's The Strange Connection: U. S. Intervention in China, 1944-1972 (1992) affirms that the PRC's foreign policy from 1954 and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, derived from the United Front strategy, were the guidelines of the PRC's subsequent foreign policy. However, the book is narrowly concentrated on PRC-US relations with no reference to the Soviet dimension. Qiang Zhai's article, "China and the Geneva Conference" (The China Quarterly, March 1992) reaffirms Bevin Alexander's assertion, whilst being focused essentially on the 1954 Geneva Conference.

King Chen is noted for his works on PRC-Vietnam relations, including Vietnam and China, 1938-1954 (1969), China's War with Vietnam, 1979 (1987), and "Hanoi vs. Peking" (Asian Survey, September 1972). In his chapter on "Foreign Relations" in Harold C. Hinton's (editor) The People's Republic of China: A Handbook (1979) Chen uses policy objectives as an analytical tool. However, this survey fails to identify the roots of policy and his

assertion that the PRC disapproved of any peace negotiations on the Vietnam War is not supported by the evidence.

In the Ph.D. dissertation of Sui Tak Chan, Conflict Modelling and Management: Chinese Foreign Policy Behavior in the Vietnam War, 1963-1965 (University of Minnesota, June 1976), the author observes the behaviour of the Chinese strategy of conflict management in the Vietnam War, limiting his study to the early years of direct American intervention. Another Ph.D. dissertation, Hsin-Hung Ou's Communist China's Foreign Policy toward the War in Vietnam, 1965-1973 (Southern Illinois University, February 1977) covers all of this crucially important period. Ou recognises that the PRC gradually changed its policy toward the Paris peace talks from opposition to support, but takes an insufficiently broad view of the PRC's foreign policy context.

Thus, the existing literature regarding the PRC's foreign policy fails to deal with the precise issue of its ideological roots. The contention of this dissertation is that the United Front strategy has consistently formed the basis of Chinese foreign policy. Other concepts flowed from this, notably are the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" and "Dual Tactics." An understanding of United Front policy can be obtained from studies of the CCP's history with its

complex ideological background and inter-relationships. Significant texts include Warren Kuo's Analytical History of Chinese Communist Party (1966), Chien-ming Wang's Chung-kuo Kung-ch'an-tang Shih-kao, (History of the Chinese Communist Party) (in Chinese, 1965), and the Year Book on Chinese Communism (in Chinese) published annually by the Institute for the Study of Chinese Communist Problems in Taipei. This body of work has formed the core of my research. Other important sources include the Chinese language newspapers, People's Daily and People's Liberation Army Daily; the Chinese language periodical Red Flag and the English language periodical Peking Review; and the famous Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung. These sources contain CCP propaganda, but provide important insights when correctly interpreted. The volumes The People's Republic of China 1949-1979, A Documentary Survey and Chinese Politics—Documents and Analysis, edited by Harold C. Hinton and James T. Meyers respectively, contain valuable primary source material and analysis.

The developing conflict in Vietnam in the 1950s was naturally of enormous consequence to the PRC. Vietnam was an adjoining country and the development of the conflict there raised similar issues to those which had led to direct military clashes with the US in the Korean War. It is pertinent to inquire

into how the PRC managed to design a Vietnam policy which could prevent another possible direct armed clash with the US. In formulating its Vietnam policy the PRC had to take into account its own capabilities, domestic situation, and its influence on the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). Equally significant, was the formation of a US-SU-PRC strategic triangle formed as a result of the US-PRC reconciliation associated with the first Nixon administration. However, the guidelines of the PRC's foreign relations and, more particularly, its Vietnam policy remained based on the United Front and its derivative, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

The PRC, as a comparatively weak nation, did not find it easy to gain advantage in its relations with the USA. It was aided in this by the drastic changes that were taking place in international politics between the late 1960s and early 1970s. These gave the PRC the freedom of manoeuvre to shift from a stance of opposition toward the US-DRV Paris peace talks, to one of passive approval, then to approval and then back to an anti-US position after the fall of Saigon. These shifts underscored the PRC's dual tactics, to oppose while approving the US, to stick to its foreign policy guidelines and gain some advantage. In other words, only a pragmatic foreign policy by the PRC could help it survive.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

If one is to understand foreign policy as essentially reactive to the external environment a certain theoretical approach to international relations is implied. No single generalisation, principle, or hypothesis has ever served as the foundation for a universally accepted comprehensive theory of international relations.³ Since the early twentieth century, the study of international relations has passed through a number of stages.⁴ The debate between realists and utopians, scientists and traditionalists continues. Far from having reached a consensus, approaches to the study of international relations have become even more fragmented in recent years.⁵

The power-politics propositions of the realist school have provided the nearest to a general and accepted theory of international politics.⁶ But, in fact, the idea of power is abstract and an unquantifiable phenomenon, and the relationship between power-politics theory and policy is not clear-cut because

³James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraft, Contending Theories of International Relations, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, fourth edition, 1996, p. 16.

⁴Ibid., p. 535.

⁵Ibid., p. 535.

⁶Trevor Taylor, "Introduction: the Nature of International Relations," in Trevor Taylor, ed., Approaches and Theory in International Relations, London: Longman, 1978, p. 15.

the uncertain nature of power allows the theory to justify and explain many policies.⁷

The basic and traditional theory of realism may be found in Hans Morgenthau's analysis of international behaviour in which history provides the platform for states to play their games of power politics.⁸ Though Morgenthau's theory has been generally influential, it has also attracted criticism.⁹ Kenneth Waltz provides a considered critique of realism in his advocacy of a neorealist approach.¹⁰ The quality of a theory, in Waltz's view, is a function of its breadth of applicability. Waltz argues that the importance lies, not in the characteristics of the units of the system, but in the structures of the system itself. Substantially, Waltz's neo-realism takes micro-economics as its model, rather than Morgenthau's "human nature" model. Waltz claims that, just as in economic affairs the market provides the framework for behaviour, be it monopolistic, duopolistic, oligopolistic, or one of perfect competition, the

⁷Brian Hocking and Michael Smith, World Politics, Herts: Prentice, second edition, 1995, pp. 196-214.

⁸Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics among Nations, New York: Knopf, 1948, pp. 4, 15.

⁹Some scholars remark that there are many errors and contradictions in classical realist concepts. Leaders of nations think about their own country's interests, but they also tend to recognise the national interests of other nations. More than power there are other variables have to be accounted for in classical realism. See Ole R. Holsti, "Theories in International Relations and Foreign Policy: Realism and its Challengers," in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. ed., Controversies in International Relations Theory: Realism and the Neoliberal Challenge, New York: St. Martins, 1995, pp. 35-65.

¹⁰Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics, Reading, UK: Addison-Wesley, 1979.

outcomes can be explained on the basis of the structure of the system. Hence analysis can be carried out without reference to the characteristics of the units in the system.¹¹

The role of interdependence in global terms has been the subject of much scholarly debate. The borders between nations have been eclipsed by nonterritorial factors, such as multinational corporations, transitional social movements, and international organisations.¹² Whilst the pluralist, Robert O. Keohane, supported a theory of “Structural Realism” he developed a multidimensional approach, never, however, denying the significance of realism as a basis for valuable research in international relations. Realism, he acknowledged, is built on fundamental insights about world politics and state action, and its focus on power, interests, and rationality are crucial to any understanding of the subject.¹³

Both realism and neorealism belong to a state-centric approach. They emphasise the concepts of national interest and balance of power. Power is a

¹¹Steve Smith, ed., From Cold War to Collapse: Theory and World Politics in the 1980s, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. 3-4.

¹²Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Power and Interdependence, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1977, p. 3.

¹³Robert O. Keohane, “Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond,” in Robert O. Keohane, ed., Neorealism and its Critics, New York: Columbia University Press, 1986, pp. 158-160, 181, 200.

means to an end, but it is also an end in itself, because only with power will a state be well placed to pursue other goals such as prosperity and peace.¹⁴

The realists are frequently among those who condemn model-building as an international relations exercise, yet the most well-known models published to date are those of a realist, Morton Kaplan.¹⁵ The most significant features of realist methodology are the assumptions made in order to develop propositions. The departure point is the view that the state can be treated as a unitary actor, that it has a similar sense of purpose and direction as an individual and that it is capable of rational action. Realists assume that, despite national differences, every state in any political situation has a national interest, and the national interest is often identified with security because the latter is viewed as the prime goal of foreign policy.¹⁶

¹⁴Trevor Taylor, "Power Politics," in Trevor Taylor ed., *op. cit.*, p. 130.

¹⁵Morton A. Kaplan, System and Process in International Relations, New York: Wiley, 1957.

¹⁶Trevor Taylor, *op. cit.*, "Power Politics," p. 127. However, this rational actor model of foreign policy-making may be differentiated from the Bureaucratic Politics approach of, for example, in Graham Allison's book, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971, he focuses on the organisational constraints on decision-makers choices and the "pulling and hauling" that takes place between participants. In this model, foreign policy may be seen as the result of bargaining between decision-makers, in a situation in which there is a plurality of interests, and where choices are the consequence of compromise rather than value maximisation. See, for discussion of models, Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, World Politics, Trend and Transformation, New York: St Martins Press, sixth edition, 1997, pp. 38-66.

The model applied in this study is that developed by Lowell Dittmer in his analysis of the US-SU-PRC security triangle which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s.¹⁷

Within the neorealist tradition, Dittmer takes a game theory approach to international behaviour. Although game theory has been criticised for being too rational, the patterns and processes of international relations often manifest certain gamelike characteristics.¹⁸ Game theory and gaming are closely related to decision-making and bargaining, and Dittmer recognises that a precise mathematical formula may not be applicable to a triangular relationship.¹⁹ The N-person non-zero-sum game, involving three or more players, is more complex than the two-person game, in that the number of permutations or interacting strategies increases at an exponential rate with the number of players. However, international relations can be best conceptualised as an N-person non-zero-sum game, in which gains by some parties are not necessarily at the expense of other parties. The payoffs depend upon whether the players cooperate with each other, cut each other's throats, or mix their strategies of

¹⁷ Lowell Dittmer, "The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game—Theoretical Analysis," *World Politics*, July 1981, pp. 485-515. See also Lowell Dittmer, "The Strategic Triangle: A Critical Review," in Ilpyong J. Kim, ed., *The Strategic Triangle*, New York: Paragon House, 1987, pp. 29-47.

¹⁸ James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, *op. cit.*, pp. 507, 515, 520.

¹⁹ Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, "The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game—Theoretical Analysis," p. 486.

conflict and cooperation in varying combinations.²⁰ Dittmer's theoretical models utilise rational choice theory and set choice preferences, which are developed in his second article.²¹

Dittmer identifies a set of ground rules appropriate to the game. These are of two types; Rules of Entry and Rules of Play. Rules of Entry define who may compete in the game, and Rules of Play denote which moves are possible, with what consequences and for what stakes.²² Rules of Entry may consist of either objective criteria as stipulated by the analyst, or of subjective criteria as defined by the participating players. In terms of objective criteria, the PRC may not have had adequate material assets or functional capability to compare with the US. In subjective terms, the PRC may have suffered equally from the limited perception and motivation of its key foreign policy players, factors that cannot be easily evaluated. Nevertheless, under certain conditions the three countries' relations became necessarily triangular. These conditions were, firstly, that each player took into account the third player in managing its relationship with the second; secondly, any player's political or military power was sufficient for it to defect from one side to the other, thus shifting the

²⁰James E. Doughty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraft, *op. cit.*, p. 507.

²¹Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, "The Strategic Triangle: A Critical Review," p. 35.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 30.

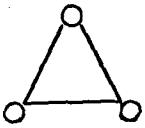
balance, each player being a full participant in the game; thirdly, none of the players might have a stable and enduring alignment with any of the others.²³

The Rules of Play are rather simple. They are that each player will prefer at a maximum to have positive relations with both the other players, and at a minimum to avoid negative relations with both players. More specifically each player will attempt to have positive relations with at least one other player, and each player will try to prevent collusion between the other two players, under the apprehension that such collusion may be hostile.²⁴ Even more substantially the level of tension is the main factor for shifts in pattern dynamics. An increase in tension clearly reveals stakes and priorities for the players involved, contributing to a decision to realign once the crisis is over. Thus, SU-US détente intensified after the 1962 Cuban missile crisis; PRC-US détente followed the 1968 Czechoslovakia incident and the 1969 PRC-SU border clash. Crisis and tension engender a greater need for security and promote realism, since ideological positioning becomes an unaffordable luxury in view of the high security stakes; resolution of the tension then offers the opportunity to realign.

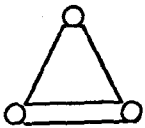
²³*Ibid.*, pp. 30-33.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 33.

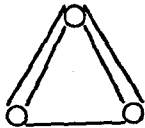
In his first article, "The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game—Theoretical Analysis," Lowell Dittmer divides triangular relations into three patterns:²⁵



(1) *ménage à trois*: consisting of symmetrical amities among all three players.



(2) romantic triangle: consisting of amity between one pivotal player and two wing players, but enmity between each of the latter.



(3) stable marriage: consisting of amity between two of the players and enmity between each and the third.

(double lines: negative; single line: positive)

All three models have their advantages and disadvantages.

The "ménage à trois" is desirable but insecure. Although one player is usually able to ascertain the motives and goals of an immediate negotiating partner, it is hard to be sure the relationship between the second and the third parties is also in the first party's interest.

The "romantic triangle" is the most desirable model, but it is not durable. The pivotal position has serious drawbacks from the viewpoint of both other

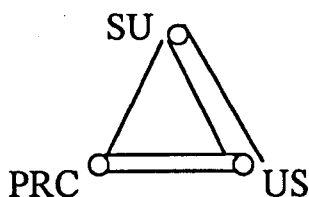
²⁵Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, "The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game—Theoretical Analysis," pp. 485-515.

players. Each wing player will feel vulnerable to being excluded. The pivotal players will eventually “marry” one of the suitors and exile the other.

The “stable marriage” is the most durable one, but it is not easy to establish such links, because both of the other players may have acquired a vested interest in the existing model, which is premised upon mutual hostility to the ostracised third party.

After the proposal of these patterns, Dittmer produced a chronological analysis of the triangular relations between the US, SU and PRC from 1949 onwards on the basis of his models.

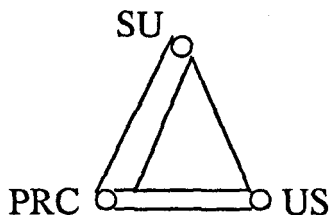
(1) 1949-1960



The SU and the PRC were joined in a positive relationship by the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, and both had problems with the US. The PRC had initiated an active and independent foreign policy in the first half of the 1950s and, ideologically, there were serious rifts with the Soviet Union from the 1956 CPSU Party Congress onwards. Nevertheless, due to its foreign and domestic problems, the PRC did not have time to concentrate on its

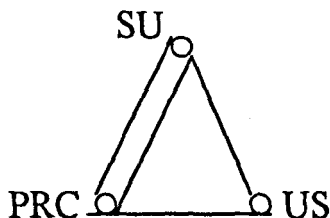
relations with the US, and the existing “stable marriage” between the PRC and the SU prevailed.

(2) 1960-1969



The relationship between the PRC and the US remained negative and relations between the PRC and the SU became increasingly bitter. However, at this time a US-SU détente was emerging, especially after the Cuban crisis of 1962, culminating in the opening of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in 1969. During this period none of the three triangular patterns applied fully, at best it might be termed a “US-SU détente.”

(3) 1970-1978



By the end of the decade, the PRC’s foreign policy moved from an autonomy based on ideological principles, to one based on national interest. The stimuli were the SU’s invasion of Czechoslovakia and the military clashes between the PRC and the SU along the Ussuri River border. Concurrently, the

US proclamation of the “Nixon Doctrine”²⁶ and initiation of a phased withdrawal from Vietnam and Taiwan, meant that the US no longer posed an immediate threat to the PRC’s security. The Nixon-Kissinger plan to open up China added to the pace of Sino-American rapprochement. The SU-US détente was not yet conclusive as the US became the pivot of a “romantic triangle” and, as Dittmer argues, there was a tendency for this kind of romantic triangle to collapse. Therefore, at this stage it was important for the US not to seem to be “using” either of the contenders against the other, as this could make itself vulnerable to retaliation or blackmail. The hostility between the PRC and the SU would serve the US purpose best if the US maintained closer relations with each party than they did with each other. At this stage the PRC formed an unprecedented friendship with the United States, although, as will be argued later this cooled somewhat after 1975. In general, however, the SU had been the net loser in the triangle, and comparatively speaking, the PRC had been the winner.

²⁶The Nixon Doctrine was a strategy for a master country to shift the burden of responsibility to local surrogates, which enabled the former (US) to project its global power at a tolerable cost. The countries receiving American military and economic assistance would have to furnish their own troops. President Nixon unveiled this idea to enhance his new Vietnam policy in Guam on July 25, 1969. See Stanley Karnow, Vietnam: A History, Penguin Books, 1987, pp. 593-594. See also p. 176 of this dissertation.

In his second article, “The Strategic Triangle: A Critical Review,” Dittmer develops his thesis in the following ways:

(1) the addition of the “unit-veto” dimension, which consists of negative relations between each player and the other two. This variant is included only for the sake of logical completeness, given that, in these circumstances there is a tendency for the triangle to disintegrate.

(2) the ordering of preference: a rational player’s choices can be placed in the following hierarchy:

First, a pivot in a “romantic triangle.”

Second, a partner in a “stable marriage.”

Third, a wing player in a “romantic triangle.”

Fourth, a pariah facing a “stable marriage” of two other players.

(3) ambiguities and elaborations:

First, in a given triangle between A, B, and C, how should C be expected to respond to the formation of a “stable marriage” between A and B? The choice will depend primarily on whether the AB marriage is perceived to be essentially “anti-C” in nature. If it is, then the prospect for an intensified suit of C to either A or B will be foreclosed; if not, the suit should be plighted.

Second, in a given romantic triangle between A, B, and C, in which A plays the pivot, how may A be expected to respond to a reconciliation between the two wings? Again the key variable will seem to be whether the BC reconciliation is anti-A in character. If it is, it may be argued that this is quite compatible with A's interests in that it obviates the possibility of warfare between B and C, which will obviously disrupt the triangle. On the other hand it may be argued that this constitutes collusion, depriving A of assured access to either B or C and implicitly threatening A with ostracism; if not, it is theoretically possible for the triangle to undergo transformation from "romantic triangle" to "ménage à trois."

Third, how may a wing player in a "romantic triangle," or a partner in a "stable marriage," most intelligently play these positions? For partners, the basic problem is how to deter one's counterpart from defecting to the pariah, and if this should occur, how to respond to it. For wing players, the main problem is how to avoid betrayal by the pivot in collusion with the other wing, and how to respond should that occur.

Fourth, what rules define the relations between players in the triangle and non-aligned actors? The solution to this problem that suggests itself on the theoretical level will be to preclude non-aligned relationships from taking

precedent over valued triangular relations, thus imposing a clear hierarchy of importance on each player's commitments. On a practical, diplomatic level such a solution will no doubt pose insuperable difficulties.

Dittmer divides his analysis of US-SU-PRC triangular relations into a number of phases, slightly revising these in his later piece.²⁷ Although some of his periodisation is a little crude, his triangle approach has been found useful by some scholars in the area of US-SU-PRC relations.²⁸

This dissertation will examine the development of Chinese foreign policy by applying critically the strategic triangle model that focuses on the international level of analysis and fits within a neorealist rational approach to the making of foreign policy, that is the policy can be understood in terms of value maximising choices taken by states as unitary actors. It will demonstrate that the United Front policy has been the mechanism by which the CCP has been able to adapt to the rules of the game.

²⁷The "transitional period" of 1969 to 1971 was subdivided, and the third phase of the "romantic triangle" with the US as the pivot was shortened from 1978 to 1975, according to Dittmer's second article. As will be argued later, Dittmer's article oversimplifies the period 1975-1979. See pp. 295-296 of this dissertation.

²⁸Such as Robert S. Ross, in his article "International Bargaining and Domestic Politics: US-China Relations since 1972," *World Politics*, January 1986, pp. 261-262; and James C. Hsiung's "International Dynamics in the Sino-Soviet-US Triad," in Ilpyoog J. Kim, ed., *The Strategic Triangle*, New York: Paragon House, 1987, p. 250, both of them said is in line with Dittmer's rules of the game and ambiguity consideration.

1.3. Chinese Foreign Policy and the United Front

Chapter 2 will examine the foundation of CCP foreign policy and its evolution up to 1965. This emphasises the key importance of the concept of the United Front and its development in theory and practice in the context of the evolution of the PRC's foreign policy after its establishment in October 1949. As well as providing an analysis of the key ideological foundations of policy, this chapter traces the development of policy in action.

The significance of the Korean War is identified in limiting the PRC's freedom of manoeuvre and drawing it into a military confrontation with the USA. The end of the Korean War and the Geneva and Bandung Conferences led to the development, by Zhou Enlai, of the concept of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, a strategy intended to improve the PRC's rigid relations with neighbouring and Afro-Asian countries in order to build a buffer zone on its southern border and prevent another military conflict with the US. This strategy, however, had limited impact given the deterioration of both SU-PRC and PRC-US relations in the mid to late 1950s, and the unwillingness of the Afro-Asian nations to accept the PRC as a member of the "third world." All this made the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence "fade away," a process

confirmed by a chaotic domestic situation, political and economic, which crippled the PRC's ability to improve its foreign relations.

During the 1960s, the Sino-Soviet split led to a revival of the Five Principles and a new, more cooperative relationship with the USA. The situation was complicated, however, by the escalation of the conflict in Vietnam. Because of PRC's relative weakness vis-à-vis the US and the SU, its foreign policy orientation would depend on who the PRC perceived as the greater immediate enemy and whether it was possible to compromise, temporarily, with the lesser enemy.

The conclusion of this and following chapters will analyse:

- (1) the strategic relationship during the periods covered,
- (2) the application of the Dittmer theoretical model to the empirical evidence,
- (3) the development of the United Front policy at the time,
- (4) the light the above sheds on the relationship between the United Front policy and the environment as explained by the Dittmer triangle.

1.4. Case Study: Vietnam

Chapter 3 begins the examination of Chinese foreign policy toward the Vietnam question within the context of the developing US-SU-PRC strategic triangle. It covers the first phase of the conflict from the major American escalation of 1965 to the key developments in Chinese policy which became clear in 1969. The PRC's situation was a complex and contradictory one. Despite its overt support for a "people's war," a "divided and continuing war-torn" Vietnam could be seen to suit the PRC's interests most. A unified and strong Vietnam would ruin the PRC's dream of dominating the Indochina peninsula and worsen its security by opening the possibility of collusion between the DRV and the SU.

Chapter 4 covers the period 1969 to 1973. At the beginning of this period the situation fundamentally altered. The Five Principles were revived as the PRC sought a greater pragmatism in its foreign policy. China's interest in bringing about a reconciliation with the US, led to a deterioration of relations with the DRV. PRC attitudes toward the Paris peace talks changed from opposition before 1969 to approval after 1969, but this was not an abrupt change. Before the stalemate of the talks was broken by a US concession in May 1972 at the Moscow Nixon-Brezhnev summit, the PRC's posture at the

Paris talks was one of passive approval. After the breakthrough, it changed to full approval. The PRC probably believed that the US concession of the deployment of DRV troops in South Vietnam coupled with the apparent commitment to continued US support to the South meant that the war would continue in a way most favourable to PRC interests. The PRC did not want to see a unified Vietnam. After the US Congress abandoned the Thieu government and the South fell the PRC reiterated its former anti-US rhetoric. Nevertheless, a few years of Sino-American rapprochement had enabled the PRC to manage its foreign relations more smoothly, while its domestic conditions improved. In retrospect, the PRC did not cordially reconcile itself with the US, but simply strategically adapted to what the US intended to do in order to safeguard its opportunity to be a player of the triangle and thus maintain its national security. The role of the DRV, as an external player, is considered as an element of this relationship.

The chapter will examine how, throughout this later period of the Vietnam conflict, the PRC had consistently sought an independent foreign policy by the application of United Front policy and the associated Five Principles. The attitude of the PRC toward the US in the late 1960s and early 1970s could be described as “dual tactics” or “pulling while dragging,” a



strategy of superficial support for the US Vietnam peace talks in order to earn an upper status in the triangle and collusion with the US to deter SU intimidation, while in fact the PRC wanted the war continued so that a strong and reunified Vietnam would never appear.

Toward the end of this chapter some lengthy pieces from the PRC's propaganda machines, such as Peking Review, People's Daily, Red Flag, etc. have been quoted to support the arguments, since those publications were regarded as being the acceptable materials to interpret Chinese Communist policy. Each piece is not considered to be overlong in terms of a ratio of a few hundred selected words quoted from several thousand, and particularly when the context needs detailed and consecutive quotations to demonstrate the delicacy of variations.

1.5. Conclusion

The conclusion will sum up the results of the preceding detailed analysis. It will draw together the conclusions of the previous chapters and seek to enhance understanding of the contextual constraints on the application of PRC foreign policy.

CHAPTER 2

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PRC'S FOREIGN POLICY UP TO 1965

2.1. Definition of the United Front Policy and its Origins in CCP Ideology

The United Front policy originated from communist concepts of Class, the Contradiction of Class and Class Struggle. As early as in the 1848 Communist Manifesto, there was the notion of constructing a sort of broad alliance of forces,¹ and Lenin elaborated the delicate strategy of "United Front." Mao learned from Lenin, but applied his own characteristic ideas.

Both Lenin and Mao saw United Front as a dual policy and urged communists to "struggle against" as well as "unite with" their allies. Nevertheless, for Lenin, United Front was a transitional policy, a temporary expedient to be employed only during periods of communist weakness. For Mao it was an intrinsic and essential part of the revolutionary process.²

A. The Root of CCP's United Front Policy

The 1848 Communist Manifesto had only a very preliminary philosophical conception of United Front. In his article, "The Left's Naivety of Communist

¹Zhōng-guó Tǒng-yí-zhàn-xiàn Cí-diǎn, (Chinese United Front Dictionary), Beijing: CCP Party History Publishing Co., January 1992, p. 17.

²J. D. Armstrong, Revolutionary Diplomacy, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, pp. 43-44.

Movement,”³ Lenin emphasised that if you wanted to defeat a stronger enemy, as well as endeavours, you should also delicately exploit the chasmlike differences between your enemies, the conflict of interests among various bourgeoisie; on the other hand take every opportunity, even a small one, to collude with anyone in any condition. Lenin also mentioned that if you did not understand this, you knew nothing about Marxism.

In his leadership of the Soviet revolution, Lenin reinforced the weak working class by colluding with the farmer class. As far as the political parties were concerned, before he and his Bolsheviks seized power Lenin joined the Social Revolutionaries to overthrow the Tzar.⁴

Following Lenin, Stalin consolidated the United Front idea in a strategic sense; he denoted that the United Front should be regarded as the main strategy for proletarian revolution. He also emphasised the taking advantage of differences between enemies while exploring every possible alliance.⁵ As early as in August 1927, when the CCP was frustrated by the KMT purge, Stalin indicated that the supporters of the Chinese proletariat were the peasantry, the

³(Translated into Chinese) The Complete Works of Lenin, Beijing: People’s Press, 1958, vol. 31, p. 52.

⁴Chien-ming Wang, Chung-kuo Kung-ch’an-tang Shih-kao, (History of the Chinese Communist Party), Taipei: Jeng Jong Book Co., 1965, vol. 2, p. 29.

⁵(Translated into Chinese) The Complete Works of Stalin, Beijing: People’s Press, 1954, vol. 9, p. 305.

urban destitutes, the petty bourgeois intellectuals and national bourgeoisie.⁶ During Stalin's period of sovereignty, the CCP was struggling to manoeuvre itself into an alliance with the KMT to deal with the Japanese invaders, and then tried to win the Chinese civil war. The CCP was enriched by Stalin's experience.

B. The Definition of the United Front

Both the KMT and the CCP have their own interpretations of the United Front, due to their hostility, and it will be clearer if both angles are analysed.

(i) View from Taipei

Since the KMT-led Republic of China retreated to Taiwan in 1949, and judging from its long experience of struggling and fighting with the CCP, the KMT would be quick to regard any political gesture from the CCP as a "United Front conspiracy."⁷ In ^{the} academic field, Shyue-jiah Cheng suggests that the CCP applied the United Front strategy under the condition that the communist party had already been in power but did not totally control the workers, thus the CCP would try to defeat the workers whose opinion differed from its own. As for

⁶(Translated into Chinese) Stalin, International Situation and Soviet's National Defence, Beijing: People's Press, 1953, p. 26.

⁷For instance, after the PRC-US reconciliation in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the rumour of a new KMT-CCP talks began. However, the then President of the Republic of China, Chiang Ching-kuo, announced in the Legislative Yuan (Congress) that the KMT would never take part. See Central Daily, January 23, 1973. In 1975, the PRC three times released the long-jailed KMT prisoners of war, and this gesture received the same treatment.

political parties, the CCP used the same strategy to subdue the opposition.⁸ This analysis was far from the truth, because at the very outset the CCP tried to be a parasite on the KMT.⁹

The other academic analysis, Warren Kuo's, is stronger. He said that Mao inherited the United Front ideology from Lenin and Stalin, and concluded the traits of the United Front strategy were as follows:

- (1) Using the enemy's differences. Temporarily allying with other classes and the secondary enemy in order to defeat the principal enemy.
- (2) Correctly dividing enemy and friend. Chinese society was composed of three forces: progressive, medium and stubborn. The policy adopted aimed to mobilise the progressive, strive for the medium and isolate the stubborn.
- (3) Applying the tactics of "defeating separately." Once the principal enemy was defeated, the secondary enemy became the next principal enemy.¹⁰

⁸Shyue-jiah Cheng, Dih-san Kuo-jih Shih, (The History of the Third International), Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1977, vol.1, pp. 615-616.

⁹See pp. 33-36.

¹⁰Warren Kuo, "Chung-gong Jy Tong-jan Yu Her-tan," (Chinese Communist's United Front Strategy and Peace Talks), in Essays of Chinese Communist Issues, Taipei: Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, 1982, pp. 232-233.

Warren Kuo was famous for his work, Analytical History of Chinese Communist Party. In political terms, Kuo's interpretation manipulated the flexibility of the United Front strategy.

(ii) View from Beijing

The CCP itself claimed that the "United Front" was one of the three magic weapons to defeat the enemy.¹¹ In a totalitarian regime like the PRC, Mao was deified by the people and all the state propaganda apparatus would follow Mao's explanation about the United Front.¹²

Mao was a follower of Marxism-Leninism, to which he added experience from the Chinese revolution. His thought became Maoism. The theory of contradiction was the backbone of Maoism.¹³

Mao asserted that the nature of contradiction was the basic element to cause change.¹⁴ Since all phenomena in the political universe were characterised by contradictions, all political data might be classified in terms of

¹¹In the opening statement of the first issue of the Communist on October 4, 1939, the other two magic weapons are "Armed Struggle" and "Party's Construction." See Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1965, vol. 2, p. 288.

¹²Warren Kuo, Analytical History of Chinese Communist Party, Taipei: Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, 1966, Book Three, pp. 124-125.

¹³Yen-tung Chen, Mao Zedong Sy-sheang Pou-shi, (The Analysis of Maoism), Taipei: Chinese Communist Research Magazine, 1978, vol. 1, p. 24.

¹⁴Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 289-290.

their relations to one or more contradictions. The main features of the “contradiction” theory were as follows:

- (1) Universality. Contradiction existed in everything, everywhere.
- (2) Speciality. The contradictions were different from each other, thus one should use different means to deal with each contradiction.
- (3) Principal contradiction. In every complex development process, there was only one principal contradiction, all the others were subordinate ones.¹⁵

Further, Mao emphasised that in any complex process in which there were two or more contradictions, one must devote every effort to finding its principal contradiction. Once this principal contradiction was grasped, all problems could be readily solved.¹⁶

(iii) The Definition

The two sides of the Taiwan Strait have actually no big variance in their interpretations of the United Front. The “principal enemy” is similar to the “principal contradiction,” and both seek to “solve” or “defeat” the main issue first. Therefore, the United Front strategy can be defined as that when facing the challenge of a principal enemy, one will mobilise support from all other

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 292-315.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 331-332.

available forces, even from the secondary enemy, neutralise the undecided, and isolate or pacify the intransigent. Once the defeat of the principal enemy has been achieved, one moves on, identifies a new principal enemy from those erstwhile allies, and repeats the process until one has finally achieved ultimate domination.

2.2. The Application of the “United Front” Tactics before 1949

From the Chinese communist point of view, from the very beginning of their revolution they had to face the enemies of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism. The proletariat could not prevail upon the other classes by itself. It needed to cooperate with other classes under different situations. Furthermore, there was also a contradiction in the union of different classes, and the existence of an internal struggle. Before 1949, therefore, the CCP grasped many opportunities to utilise the United Front strategy in its dealing with the ruling KMT, and three crucial instances are worth highlighting.

At the Second Chinese Communist Party Congress held in July 1922 at the West Lake in Hangchow, a resolution was passed to unite with the ^{KMT} uprising to overthrow the warlords and colonialists, and participate in the KMT as

individuals.¹⁷ In January 1924, the KMT's First Party Congress was held in Canton, and some Chinese communists were elected as members of the KMT central committee.¹⁸ There was a contradiction and power struggle between the temporary union of the KMT and the CCP, and the communists were expelled by a KMT purge in April 1927, the so-called "Purification Campaign."¹⁹

The second important opportunity for Chinese communists to deal with the KMT in their United Front policy occurred following the increased Japanese pressure on China that began with the occupation of Manchuria by the Japanese Kwangtung Army in 1931. The problems between China and Japan gradually intensified and, after the Sian Incident²⁰ the KMT and the CCP came together against the foreign invaders. The Marco Polo Bridge incident near Beijing on July 7, 1937, led to the outbreak of a countrywide anti-Japanese war in China. On September 22, 1937, the Chinese communists issued a

¹⁷Warren Kuo, *op. cit.*, Analytical History of Chinese Communist Party, Book One, p. 48.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp.106-107. In fact the CCP's manoeuvring was also assisted by SU's encouragement, in January 1923, Adolf A. Joffe, for the SU, had an agreement with Sun Yat-sen, the leader of the KMT to allow CCP member to join the KMT.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 205-211.

²⁰Broadly speaking, the Sian Incident was the result of a collision of two priorities: national unification as against resistance to Japan. The leader of the KMT, Chiang Kai-shek, wished to carry out the anti-Communist campaign and reunify China first; however, he was detained at Sian in December 1936 by his nominal subordinates while they tried to persuade him to change his policy. Chiang was freed a few days later, after it seemed that he had agreed to call off the anti-Communist campaign in return for promises by his enemies to moderate their policies. See C. Martin Wilber, "Nationalist China, 1928-1950: An Interpretation," in Hungdah Chiu and Shao-chuan Leng, ed., China: Seventy Years after 1911 Hsin-hai Revolution, Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1984, pp. 19-20.

“Declaration on Joint Effort to Meet National Emergency.”²¹ In it Chinese communists abolished their own regional Soviet government. Furthermore, the Chinese communists changed the title and identity of their forces and replaced them with the official name of the Nationalist Government armed forces. The most outstanding phenomenon of this second United Front union was the enlargement of the Chinese communist army from about 20,000 to 900,000, and an increase in the members of the Chinese Communist Party from about 40,000 to 1,200,000,²² an amazing expansion, particularly after the devastating Long March in the middle of the 1930s.

The third stage of “cooperation” between the KMT and the Chinese communists began with the end of the war with Japan in August 1945. The exhausted Nationalist government had to spare energy to deal with the strengthening rebellious communist group. Yet Mao did not think the Chinese communists would be capable of overthrowing the Nationalist government immediately after World War II. Therefore Mao flew from Yanan to Chungking on August 28, 1945, to meet Chiang Kai-shek and his delegates five times to discuss the basic principles of constructing a new China. Chiang and

²¹Warren Kuo, op. cit., Analytical History of Chinese Communist Party, Book Three, pp. 307-308.

²²1976 Yearbook on Chinese Communism (in Chinese), Taipei: The Institute for the Study of Chinese Communist Problems, 1976, p. 4:7.

Mao reached an agreement on October 10, 1945, to regulate some principles of democratisation of government, nationalisation of armed forces, etc.²³ However, the CCP never took part in the 1947 conference to write a national constitution. As Chien-ming Wang identifies, just as in the war with Japan, the CCP had no intention of subordinating any of its forces to the Nationalist government.²⁴ The Chungking talks provided a smokescreen behind which the Chinese communists could unite workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie, etc. to enhance their power to demolish the KMT's National government. In this they succeeded in 1949.

Among those three CCP United Front historical events, the first one was a failure, the other two were successful. The second, in particular, served a good example of CCP's exploitation of the United Front strategy. When the contradiction between the Chinese people and Japanese imperialism in that period became more important than the domestic contradictions in China, then the later turned into a subordinate contradiction, whilst the fight for survival between the Chinese people as a whole and Japanese invaders was the principal contradiction. Thus the CCP took action to reconcile with the KMT and had the

²³1978 *Yearbook on Chinese Communism*, *op. cit.*, p. 4:8

²⁴Chien-ming Wang, *op. cit.*, pp. 487-488.

advantage of having the opportunity to strengthen itself due to KMT's preoccupation with fighting with Japanese.

The CCP learned from its experience of both the failures and successes of the United Front policy through those years of struggle with the KMT. What happened to the United Front policy after 1949? Other than Taiwan, there was no "KMT" rival. The newly independent PRC tended to focus its attentions on its external relations, also based on the United Front strategy.

On June 30, 1949, about three months before the independence of the PRC, in commemoration of the twenty-eighth anniversary of the CCP, Mao concluded:

Twenty-four years have passed since Sun Yat-sen's death, and the Chinese revolution, led by the Communist Party of China, has made tremendous advances both in theory and practice and has radically changed the face of China. Up to now the principal and fundamental experience the Chinese people have gained is twofold:

(1) Internally, arouse the masses of the people. That is, unite the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie, form a *domestic united front* (emphasis added) under the leadership of the working class, and advance from this to the establishment of a state which is a people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the working class are based on the alliance of workers and peasants.

(2) Externally, unite in a common struggle with those nations of the world which treat us as equals and with the peoples of all countries. That is, *ally ourselves with the Soviet Union*, (emphasis added) with the People's Democracies and with the proletariat and the broad masses of the people in all other countries, and form an *international united front*.

"You are leaning to one side." (emphasis added) Exactly. The forty years' experience of Sun Yat-sen and the twenty-eight years' experience of the Communist Party have taught us to lean to one side, and we are firmly convinced that in order to win victory and consolidate it we must lean to one side. In the light of the experiences accumulated in these forty years and these twenty-eight years, all Chinese without exception must lean either to the side of imperialism or to the side of socialism. Sitting on the fence will not do, nor is there a third road.²⁵

Considering this statement, the PRC both internally and externally had declared the United Front tactics as its leading principle. Internally the main foe, the KMT, retreated to Taiwan from the mainland. The main domestic problem at this time was political thought. Thus, after 1949, the United Front policy was designed to act against intellectuals and politically-orientated organisations. There were eight political organisations that were recognised by the PRC authorities in December 1949.²⁶ On June 8, 1957, a campaign called "Anti-Right Wing" was launched and most core members of those political organisations were purged.²⁷ From onwards, then, there was no spare room in which they would manoeuvre.

Externally the PRC tried to unite with the Soviet Union to confront its enemy, supposedly, the US. Actually, the PRC tried to woo the US first and

²⁵Harold C. Hinton, ed., The People's Republic of China 1949-1979. A Documentary Survey, Willington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1980, vol. 1, p. 5.

²⁶1978 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, *op. cit.*, p. 4:13.

²⁷Ibid., p. 4:13.

failed to get a positive response.²⁸ In other words, concurrent with Mao's "leaning to one side" advocacy, the PRC had tried to apply its United Front policy and gain the friendship of the US. However Mao finally identified that the US was unfriendly, and that only the SU might be mobilised once the situation required it, as happened in the Korean War.

2.3. The Korean War and its Impact on CCP Foreign Policy

The outbreak of the Korean War was in June 1950, some nine months after the founding of the PRC. There are no governmental documents issued by the PRC government concerning its participation in the Korean War. This may suggest that the PRC's attitude toward the Korean War was rather passive, though it was condemned by the UN General Assembly as an "aggressor."²⁹

²⁸From May 1949 to June 1949, the Chinese communist authority dispatched Huang Hua, a Yenching University graduate, later to become PRC's foreign minister, to Nanjing to meet US ambassador John Leighton Stuart, who was Yenching's principal, to negotiate the possibility of US diplomatic recognition. The idea was eventually rejected by the US Department of State. In fact strong opposition came from Congress. See details in Yu-ming Shaw, "John Leighton Stuart and U.S.-Chinese Communist Rapprochement in 1949: Was There Another Lost Chance in China?", The China Quarterly, March 1982, pp. 79-82. See also John Gittings, The World and China, 1922-1972, London: Eyre Methuen Limited, 1974, pp. 165-167.

²⁹Although some Communist and some neutral (India and Burma) countries voted against, with nine abstentions, the General Assembly of the UN voted on February 1, 1951, to condemn the PRC as an aggressor. See Harold C. Hinton, Communist China in World Politics, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966, p. 217. The US sent its armed forces to Korea more than three months before the PRC did, however this was under the name of the UN, and therefore received no condemnation.

The Korean War was started on June 25, 1950. Though the PRC proclaimed its independence in October 1949, the Chinese civil war was still in its final stages while Korea was at war. The PRC's Fourth Field Corps liberated the Hainan Islands in April 1950. The triumph of this sea-land campaign encouraged the Third Field Corps to attempt to cross the Taiwan Strait and liberate Taiwan in due course.³⁰ Taiwan and Tibet were the only two areas not yet taken over by the PRC.³¹ Obviously, the imminent goal of the PRC's national policy was to occupy Taiwan, and in fact, the Chinese leaders had paid little attention to the Korean Peninsula and knew little about the North Korean situation. The Chinese Embassy in Pyongyang was not established at the time the war broke out, and the PRC ambassador was not in the post until late August 1950.³²

In Chinese eyes, the Korean War was a threat to its own security, but the PRC was reluctant to become involved because of its eagerness to liberate Taiwan. It seemed that there was a counterbalancing power preventing the PRC's forces from invading Taiwan. The US deployed its Seventh Fleet to

³⁰Allen S. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, California: Stanford University Press, 1986, pp. 22-23. The PRC armed forces tried to land on the off-shore bastion for Taiwan, Quemoy, in October 1949, but failed.

³¹Yufan Hao and Zhihai Zhai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History Revisited," The China Quarterly, March 1990, p. 98.

³²Ibid., p. 99.

patrol the Taiwan Strait to prevent any attack upon Taiwan by the CCP army from the third day after the commencement of the Korean War.³³ Whilst the US decision looked abrupt,³⁴ there are quite a few arguments contending that the US policy was a rather solid and mature one, a result of the evolution of their containment policy.³⁵

To cope with this change in US policy, the well-prepared PRC armed forces planning to liberate Taiwan³⁶ had to be moved from the south-east of mainland China to the Korean battlefield in the north-east. The PRC was forced

³³Glenn D. Paige, The Korean Decision, New York: The Free Press, 1968, pp. 188-189.

³⁴In August 1949 the US Department of State issued The China White Paper and tried to wash its hands of the Chinese civil war. On January 5, 1950, President Truman announced the US would not accord military aid to the Chinese Nationalists, and it had no predatory designs on Taiwan. See Kenneth Scott Latourette, A Short History of the Far East, New York: Macmillan, 1965, pp. 704-705. The North Korean attack on South Korea also took the US by surprise. In fact, the main reason for the shock was that American policy makers had thought only in terms of all-out war. It was precisely this single-minded preoccupation with total war that had accounted for South Korea's being left outside the American Pacific defence perimeter. On January 12, 1950, Secretary of State, Dean Acheson said before the National Press Club in Washington that the perimeter of the US in the Pacific as including the Aleutians, Japan, the Ryukyus and the Philippines. About one year previously, even General MacArthur had made the same remarks. See Allen S. Whiting, op. cit., p. 39, and the quote of General MacArthur's words in The New York Times on March 2, 1949.

³⁵The Korean War was the watershed for the US to extend its containment policy from Europe to Asia. See Richard S. Kirkendall, "Harry S. Truman: The Decision to Intervene," in Warren F. Kimball, ed., American Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century, St. Louis, Missouri: Forum Press, 1981, FA 071, pp. 1-2. Colin Brown and Peter F. Mooney, Cold War to Détente 1945-1980, London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1982, p. 45.

³⁶Michael Schaller, The United States and China in the Twentieth Century, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 132. See also Peter Van Ness, Revolution and Chinese Foreign Policy, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, p. 12.

to adjust its goal to adopt a passive policy toward Taiwan as a consequence of the following factors:

Firstly, the Korean War had a similar nature to the Chinese civil war (1945-1950), but its internationalisation was beyond the PRC's perception. The Chinese civil war was a duel between the ruling KMT party and the opposition Chinese Communist Party. Except for the job done by General Marshall, sent by the US government as a moderator, there was basically no foreign force involved. The situation in Korea was different. At the end of World War II Korea was settled by the Allies in the Potsdam Conference to be divided by the 38th parallel, and the Soviet Union and the United States occupied the north and south parts respectively. The occupying troops withdrew from the north and the south in December 1948 and June 1949.³⁷ The leader of North Korea, Kim Il Sung, took into account the situation of the peninsula after the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the upcoming victory of the Chinese communists in the Chinese civil war, which was without outside interference. Kim calculated that the same case would probably be applied in Korea. However, the US sent its troops back to Korea after the war started and Kim had not calculated on that. The US troops sent to Korea were under the

³⁷Carl Berger, The Korea Knot, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968, pp. 88-91.

mandate of the United Nations.³⁸ The war thus became internationalised. The scope of US concerns about the outbreak of the war extended not only to the Taiwan Strait mentioned above; but the Philippine government and the forces of France and the Associated States in Indochina would all get military assistance, according to an announcement by President Truman on June 27, 1950.³⁹ Therefore, Taiwan was saved from the attack of the PRC's Third Field Corps and, moreover, the Chinese civil war also became internationalised during the final stages. This complication did not please the PRC.

Secondly, the PRC was reducing its armed forces. The PRC was devastated after a lengthy civil war and also after its eight years of war with Japan during the Second World War. Actually in June 1950, except for those troops preparing to "liberate" Taiwan and Tibet, all others mainly dealt with crop production.⁴⁰ This sort of activity was in order to serve the urgent needs of the civilian population. To consolidate this, the PRC government scheduled to

³⁸The action based on the UN Security Council's resolution, the veto-holding permanent member, Soviet Union was not present due to its boycott of the ROC (Taiwan) as a permanent member.

³⁹Glenn D. Paige, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁴⁰When the war broke out, the Chinese had only one army, the 42nd Army of the Fourth Field Corps, stationed along the Yalu River border area. The army was principally stationed there for crop-production purposes. In fact the Third Field Corps was in the eastern coastal area preparing for the liberation of Taiwan, the 18th Army was advancing into Tibet and all other armies and corps were shifted to production purposes locally. See Yufan Hao and Zhihai Zhai, *op. cit.*, p. 100. See also John Gittings, "The Great-Power Triangle and Chinese Foreign Policy," *The China Quarterly*, July/September, 1969, p. 48.

reduce its armed forces from 5.4 million men to 1.4 millions. This large-scale reduction plan was the responsibility of Zhou Enlai and was put into effect on June 20, 1950,⁴¹ five days before the outbreak of the Korean War. If the PRC had been informed of the likely probability of the Korean War, it would not have carried out the army demobilisation plan.

Thirdly, US military strength and Soviet colonial attitudes made the PRC think twice about participating in the Korean War. The weapons used by the PRC forces after 1945 had been mainly handed over to them by the Soviet occupying troops in Manchuria, which had been confiscated from the Japanese Kwantung army in the last few days of the Allies' war against Japan.⁴² The PRC had to consider the US weaponry superiority if it intended to proceed in Korea. Therefore, if the PRC decided to go to war, it would not go alone, but would ask for Soviet military assistance, especially as the PRC had as yet no air force. The military provisions of the February 14, 1950, Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, were principally designed to prevent the possibility of Japan's revival.⁴³ However, the Soviet Union remained the only country which

⁴¹Yufan Hao and Zhihai Zhai, *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁴²Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China 1941-1950*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 331.

⁴³See the text, Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 123-124.

might possibly provide advanced military weapons for the PRC to counter US military strength. Besides, the same day that Zhou Enlai and Vyshinsky signed the Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance Treaty, they signed another Agreement on the Chinese Changchun Railway, Port Arthur and Dalny. The wording of this agreement was similar to the old Tzarist model of colonial treatment toward China:

Article 1. Both High Contracting Parties have agreed that the Soviet Government transfer gratis to the Government of the People's Republic of China all its rights in the joint administration of the Chinese Changchun Railway, with all the property belonging to the Railway. The transfer will be effected immediately upon the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan, but not later than the end of 1952.

Pending the transfer, the now existing position of the Soviet-Chinese joint administration of the Chinese Changchun Railway remains unchanged...

Article 2. Both High Contracting Parties have agreed that Soviet troops will be withdrawn from the jointly utilized naval base of Port Arthur and the installations in this area will be handed over to the Government of the People's Republic of China immediately upon the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan, but not later than the end of 1952...

Article 3. Both High Contracting Parties have agreed that the question of Port Dalny must be further considered upon the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan.

As regards the administration in Dalny, it fully belongs to the Government of the People's Republic of China.

All property now existing in Dalny provisionally in charge of or under lease to the Soviet side, is to be taken over by the Government of the People's Republic of China. For carrying out

work involved in the receipt of the afore-mentioned property...organizing a joint commission...⁴⁴

Mao Zedong, the main negotiator of the Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance Treaty and this Agreement, had just proudly declared the establishment of the People's Republic a few months previously and went abroad for the first time in his life to stay in Moscow for about two months to do the negotiation. He had the satisfaction of proclaiming himself a protector of a nation's independence, and in particular of freeing it from post-colonial bondage. The 1950 Sino-Soviet Chinese Changchun Railway, Port Arthur and Dalny Agreement sounded as though the Soviet Union used the excuse of an invisible peace treaty with Japan to continually occupy Changchun railway and Port Arthur; only the handover of Port Dalny seemed possible. Mao was humiliated by Stalin's colonial mentality.

When the UN forces crossed the 38th parallel to be in North Korea and the PRC decided to send its troops to the Korean battlefield at the beginning of October 1950,⁴⁵ Mao assigned Zhou Enlai as a special envoy to the Soviet Union on October 10 to request military, particularly air power, assistance.⁴⁶ The Soviet Union did not grant the petition on the spot. Thus on October 19

⁴⁴Harold C. Hinton ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 124-125.

⁴⁵Allen S. Whiting, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

⁴⁶Yufan Hao and Zhihai Zhai, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

when the PRC's "volunteer" forces crossed the Yalu River to enter North Korea, they went without Soviet endorsement.⁴⁷

Fourthly, the motivation behind the PRC troop deployment in Korea was to prevent US troops from invading the Chinese mainland. The extension of US military power to Korea and the Taiwan Strait contributed to a Pandora's box for the PRC, the PRC's central concern being US involvement in the Chinese civil war. Although the dispatching of the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait was non-aggressive in a strict sense,⁴⁸ the PRC had to postpone its liberation plan for Taiwan due to its lack of capability for confronting the US.

This explanation is not contradictory to the PRC's confrontation with the US in Korea. From June 25, 1950, up to October 1, 1950, the UN troops reoccupied the land lost by North Korea. This happened only in South Korea.

⁴⁷The SU's MIG jetfighters first appeared along the Yalu River in the last half of November, 1950. See Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis and Litai Xue, Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1993, pp. 198-199.

⁴⁸Glen D. Paige, op. cit., p. 189. The exact wording of President Truman's speech is as follows: "Accordingly I have ordered the Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack upon Formosa. As a corollary of this action I am calling upon the Chinese Government on Formosa to cease all air and sea operations against the mainland. The Seventh Fleet will see that this is done...." However, President Eisenhower, in order to end the stalemate in the Korean War, in February 1953 once tried to "unleash" the Nationalist forces to attack China mainland. See Tang Tsou, "Mao's Limited War in the Taiwan Strait," ORBIS, vol. IV, No. 3, Fall 1959, p. 335.

On October 1 and October 7, the South Korean and US troops crossed the 38th parallel,⁴⁹ and the PRC then decided to join the war. Clearly, the 38th parallel was the turning point for the PRC's decision. Under the leadership of the commander-in-chief, General MacArthur, the ambitious UN⁵⁰ plan to cross the 38th parallel kept the PRC alert and made it consider the possibility that the UN troops might cross the Yalu to invade the Chinese mainland. War with the US seemed inevitable.⁵¹

Before the Korean War, it was still an open possibility that the PRC would complete the liberation of Taiwan, secure admission to the UN, and win US recognition. It was the Korean War, more than any other single event,

⁴⁹Allen S. Whiting, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

⁵⁰No one in Beijing (or even in Washington) could be sure that General MacArthur would follow Washington's orders that China not be attacked. See Michael Schaller, *op. cit.*, p. 132. It had been argued that since the end of US atomic monopoly, (August 1949 marked the first successful Soviet nuclear test), all-out war ceased to be an instrument of US policy, because the result of a nuclear war would be a holocaust. Thus the newly applied US containment policy in Korea turned out to be a "limited war." However, once a nuclear balance between the US and the SU had been established, there would be a tendency for the SU to move to local aggression as a likely form of warfare, and the US would need to train and equip additional forces for conventional warfare. The Korean War became the first test for the US of such "conventional war." General MacArthur could be still encouraged by this conception. See Henry A. Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957, pp. 15, 171. The remarks of the "conventional war," see John C. Donovan, The Cold Warriors, Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1974, pp. 134-135, and Paul H. Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989, pp. 93-94.

⁵¹John W. Spanier, The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959, pp. 92-96.

which forced the PRC into a position of greater dependence upon the SU and isolation from the western world.⁵²

However, there are some other arguments that show that the PRC's involvement in the Korean War was prearranged. The Fourth Field Corps transferred to Manchuria after its triumph in Hainan Island in April 1950. In July 1950 the north-bound troops numbered more than 150,000 men.⁵³ The purpose of this troop movement was uncertain. It was speculated that the PRC was preparing to back up Pyongyang once war broke out.⁵⁴ This needs to be proved. Whether it can be proved or not, one crucial viewpoint was that the PRC did not send its armed force into Korea until the UN troops crossed the 38th parallel, thus, at most, the PRC's stationing of heavy forces in Manchuria was a sort of defensive strategy only.

Also in recent years some scholars⁵⁵ have argued that Mao was a romantic and that he and his associates aimed to win a glorious victory by driving the Americans off the Korean peninsula. This assertion is impractical since there was a big demobilisation plan in the PRC and Mao had sent Zhou to

⁵²John Gittings, *op. cit.*, "The Great-Power Triangle and Chinese Foreign Policy," p. 48.

⁵³Allen S. Whiting, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵⁵See the books of Jian Chen, China's Road to the Korean War, New York: Columbia University Press, 1994, and Shu Guang Zhang, Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953, Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995.

the SU for military assistance as mentioned above. It would have been an unlikely and unprecedented policy for a comparatively weak and civil war-ridden PRC to join an internationalised war against a stronger enemy.

After all, it is not hard to understand that the PRC was very reluctant to participate in the Korean War, because its main goal at that period was to liberate Taiwan.⁵⁶ It eventually got involved because of its own national security. The PRC's intervention in the Korean War and its direct armed clash with the US in the winter of 1950 was to usher in a new, bitter phase in the Sino-US relations. Thereafter, and for almost two decades, much of the relationship between the two nations was consumed by mutual recrimination and reciprocal hostility. It is also clear that the Korean War postponed the development of the PRC's own foreign policy based on the United Front ideology.

2.4. Policy Development 1954-1965

The cease-fire in the Korean War in July 1953 brought temporary peace to the PRC. Its territory was secure from foreign encroachment. Its objective of liberating Taiwan was still difficult to achieve since the US had started, from

⁵⁶Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis and Litai Xue, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-148.

the outbreak of the Korean War, to consider the PRC as one of its main enemies.

While it was obvious that the PRC was very reluctant to participate the Korean War, it nevertheless got involved, showing that the PRC would intervene directly only in order to maintain the delicate balance of power along its perimeter should it be seriously threatened by the initiative of an antagonistic power.⁵⁷ There was no such thing as a long-term Chinese foreign policy strategy at that moment, merely a series of reactions to external developments with the objective of maximising security. Besides, the economic and human costs reinforced PRC's caution not to repeat that experience.⁵⁸

It was impossible for the PRC to prolong a direct confrontation with the US. The main question in PRC foreign policy became how to deal with its principal enemy, the US, in order to prevent another challenge to its security. Zhou Enlai, who directed the PRC foreign policy, feared that once France sooner or later scuttled its commitment in Indochina, the US might step in, thus menacing China on its own doorstep once again.⁵⁹ A suitable foreign policy,

⁵⁷Joseph Camilleri, Chinese Foreign Policy, Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980, p. 43. J. D. Armstrong, op. cit., p. 61.

⁵⁸There is no record of CPV's (Chinese People's Volunteers) involvement, however it estimated that there were about 2.3 millions CPV involved and the PRC weaponry was far inferior to that of the US. See Yufan Hao and Zhihai Zhai, op. cit., p. 114. The economic cost see p. 79 of this dissertation.

⁵⁹Stanley Karnow, op. cit., p. 192.

based on the United Front, was needed. “Leaning to one side” was no longer necessary.

The PRC intended to prevent another direct conflict with the US, but it was also much weaker than the US, so a sort of “buffer” idea emerged. In practice, the idea was an effort to “neutralise” the Indochina region. This general formula reflected Zhou’s primary concern for PRC’s territorial security and economic development.⁶⁰ Zhou thought that the immediate US military threat could be curbed if the three local Indochinese states, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, were not allowed to enter into alliances with any outside major powers.⁶¹ This was Zhou’s primary aim at the 1954 Geneva Conference—to carve out an agreement that would deny the US a pretext to intervene in Indochina and again threaten the PRC.⁶² Zhou worked hard for this accord, even at the expense of the Vietminh.⁶³ This showed that how Zhou understood PRC’s principal objective on the macro-level.

⁶⁰China was devastated after the two big wars with foreign countries, against Japan during World War II and against the US in Korea, and a civil war. After the Korean War the PRC tried to avoid military conflict with foreign countries, and its first economic Five-Year Plan was scheduled to start in 1953. See Kuo-kang Shao, “Zhou Enlai’s Diplomacy and the Neutralization of Indo-China, 1954-55,” The China Quarterly, September 1986, p. 486.

⁶¹Kuo-kang Shao, Ibid., p. 483.

⁶²Stanley Karnow, op. cit., pp. 200-201.

⁶³Ibid., p. 192.

On April 29, 1954, India and the PRC concluded an agreement on trade and intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India which gave rise to the famous “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.” By this proclamation the PRC started to carry out the framework of building a buffer zone in Indochina.

Tibet, India, Burma, the three Indochinese countries and quite a few Afro-Asian countries were mobilised in different ways to establish harmonised “peaceful coexistence” relations with the PRC in order to diminish US influence.

Both the 1954 Geneva Conference and the 1955 Bandung Afro-Asian Conference featured very highly in Zhou Enlai’s policy proclamation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, a milestone in the PRC’s new foreign policy.⁶⁴ This phase started from the PRC’s participation at the 1954 Geneva Conference and ended with the Soviet Union’s strenuous involvement in the Vietnam War in 1965. At that time, Sino-Soviet relations were deteriorating, and both sides finally ran into competition over their aid to North Vietnam.

⁶⁴Bevin Alexander, The Strange Connection: U.S. Intervention in China, 1944-1972, New York: Greenwood Press, 1992, p. 192. See also, Qiang Zhai, “China and Geneva Conference of 1954,” The China Quarterly, March 1992, p. 107.

A. The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence

The Geneva Conference opened on April 26, 1954, with two issues on the agenda: Korea and Indochina. The Korean issue talks reached a deadlock, and the participants suggested stopping the talks on June 15, 1954. The Indochina issue had been discussed since May 8, 1954, exactly the day after the fall of Dien Bien Phu to the Vietminh. From June 15, all the participants⁶⁵ concentrated the talks on Indochina.

Three days after the opening of the Geneva Conference, the PRC and India had signed, in Beijing, the Agreement Between India and China on Trade and Intercourse between Tibet Region of China and India. By Article I this agreement:

The High Contracting Parties mutually agree to establish Trade Agencies:

(1) The Government of India agrees that the Government of China may establish Trade Agencies at New Delhi, Calcutta and Kalimpong.

(2) The Government of China agrees that...

The Trade Agencies of both Parties shall enjoy the privileges and immunities for couriers, mail-bags and communications in code. ...⁶⁶

⁶⁵They were Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Vietnam, France, Laos, People's Republic of China, State of Vietnam, the Soviet Union, the United States of America and the United Kingdom, totally nine countries.

⁶⁶Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 165.

This was explicitly put into the context of the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.” The participants, the agreement stated, had

resolved to enter into the present Agreement based on the following principles:

- (1) mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty,
- (2) mutual non-aggression,
- (3) mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs,
- (4) equality and mutual benefit, and
- (5) peaceful coexistence.⁶⁷

During the prolonged session of the Geneva Conference from April 26, 1954, to July 21, 1954, Zhou Enlai, the leading PRC negotiator in Geneva was invited by the Indian government to visit India in June. Zhou and the Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, issued a joint communiqué, urging a political settlement for Indochina and reconfirming the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.⁶⁸ Soon after visiting India, Zhou visited Burma, where he and Prime Minister U Nu reaffirmed the Five Principles.⁶⁹

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 165. According to Harold C. Hinton’s remarks, the Five Principles were initiated by the Chinese side to regulate its relations with noncommunist governments. In the Dalai Lama’s autobiography, Freedom in Exile: the Autobiography of the Dalai Lama, (translated into Chinese, published by Lian Jing Press, Taipei, 1997,) p. 124 mentioned that the Dalai thought that through this treaty and the Five Principles the PRC reaffirmed its sovereignty over Tibet. Also judging from the words “Tibet Region of China,” the title of the agreement, the PRC’s sovereignty over Tibet was recognised for the first time by a foreign government.

⁶⁸King Chen, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1969, p. 313.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 313.

Zhou's moderating role during the Geneva Conference, the first major international conference attended by the PRC, helped to offset any adverse effect on PRC's revolutionary image and to confirm its status as a major Asian power.

Accordingly, the signing of the Sino-Indian treaty and the improvement in Sino-Burmese relations heralded a new phase in PRC's diplomacy, and those Five Principles were to become, within a few months, the basis of the PRC's foreign policy. Less than one year later, in April 1955 the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference was held in Indonesia. The Soviet Union was excluded and the PRC took a prominent part. Zhou led the PRC team again, and in his main speech delivered on April 19, 1955, to the plenary session of the conference, he stated:

...We hold that in order to promote world peace and cooperation, the countries of Asia and Africa should first of all, in line with their common interest, seek good will and cooperation among themselves and establish friendly and neighbourly relations. *India, Burma, and China have affirmed the five principles of peaceful coexistence as the guiding principles in their mutual relations.* (emphasis added) These principles have received support from more and more countries. Following these principles, China and Indonesia have already achieved good results in their preliminary talks on the question of the nationality of the citizens of one country residing in the other...There is no reason why the relations between China and Thailand, the Philippines and other neighboring countries cannot be improved on the basis of these five principles. China is ready to establish normal relations on the basis of the strict adherence to these

principles and is willing to promote the normalization of relations between China and Japan...⁷⁰

In this speech the Five Principles were consolidated,⁷¹ and a clear message was sent out to Japan, a remaining de jure enemy without a peace treaty with the PRC after World War II.

A second message was even more challenging, Zhou suggested using peaceful means to solve the Taiwan issue with the US. Zhou said in his supplementary speech on the same day:

As for the tension created solely by the United States in the area of Taiwan, we could have submitted for deliberation by the Conference an item such as the proposal made by the Soviet Union for seeking a settlement through an international conference...⁷²

For the first time, the PRC declared its willingness to solve the Taiwan problem by peaceful means. Zhou not only tried to pacify Japan, he even intended to deal with the principal enemy, the United States.

Five days later, on April 24, 1955, in his speech at the closing session of that Asian-African Conference, Zhou reiterated the same topic:

⁷⁰Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 169.

⁷¹Some countries had different views on the wording of "peaceful coexistence," and the Conference used the phraseology "live together in peace" to replace it. However, all the other four principles of the original India-PRC agreement were incorporated in the final declaration of the Conference to be adopted as basic guidelines among nations. See Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 81. Also see Zhou's report to Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on May 13, 1955. Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 176.

⁷²Harold C. Hinton, *Ibid.*, p. 169.

...China and the United States should sit down and enter into negotiations to settle the question of relaxing and eliminating the tension in the Taiwan area;...⁷³

The spirit of moderation, exemplified by the championing of the Five Principles and the offer to begin negotiations with the US on the issue of Taiwan, was masterfully displayed by Zhou at the Bandung Conference.

On May 13, 1955, in his report on the Bandung Conference made at the meeting of the standing committee of the National People's Congress, Zhou emphasised the proposal for the peaceful solution of the Taiwan issue with the US again:

Outside the Conference, the Chinese Delegation also held talks with the heads of the Delegations of Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand, and discussed the question of easing tension in the Far East, particularly in the Taiwan area...

...The United States' occupation of Taiwan has created tension in the Taiwan area and this constitutes an international issue between China and the United States...There is no war between China and the United States, so the question of a so-called cease-fire does not arise. The Chinese people are friendly with the American people. The Chinese people do not want to have a war with the United States. To ease tension in the Taiwan area, the Chinese government is willing to sit down and enter into negotiations with the United States government. As to the form of negotiations the Chinese government supports the Soviet proposal for a ten-power conference and is also willing to consider other forms....The Chinese people are willing to strive for the liberation of Taiwan by peaceful means so far as it is possible...⁷⁴

⁷³Ibid., p. 171.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 177.

Again on July 30, 1955, in his report to National People's Congress on the international situation, Zhou said:

After the Asian-African Conference, the Chinese Government further stated that there are two possible ways for the Chinese people to liberate Taiwan, namely, by war or by peaceful means. Conditions permitting, the Chinese people are ready to seek the liberation of Taiwan by peaceful means.⁷⁵

B. Application of the Five Principles

The policy of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was demonstrated in the PRC's successful participation in the Geneva and Bandung Conferences. Their objectives guided by the principles could be analysed as follows:

(i) The Geneva Conference

Following the guideline of the United Front, the PRC continued to align with the Vietminh in order to build a buffer zone along its southern border to prevent another direct conflict with the US, its principal enemy. However the primary aim of the PRC at Geneva was less to aid a Communist "liberation" of Vietnam but more to uphold its own national interest. Whilst the PRC might wish to appear to support the claims of the triumphant Vietminh, it was more eager to assure its own security and win international recognition for itself.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 183.

The Korean experience helped the PRC to avoid the dilemma of being involved in the Vietnam War and consequently, facing possible US intervention. The militarily weaker PRC did not want to confront the US again. Therefore it sought to “neutralise” the Indochina region as a buffer zone, and to have “peaceful coexistence” with neighbouring countries to secure its territory.⁷⁶

In essence, Zhou’s “peaceful coexistence” was an extension of the CCP’s United Front tactics in the international field. In fact, even before Zhou, in 1953 the then Soviet premier Malenkov put forward the concept of peaceful coexistence with the US.⁷⁷ In 1956 Khrushchev intensified the remarks.⁷⁸ What Malenkov and Khrushchev identified was that for a temporarily inferior SU to confront a stronger US, skilful tactics would be needed to earn time to improve Soviet strength to deal with the US.⁷⁹ Zhou’s thought was similar to

⁷⁶Kuo-kang Shao, *op. cit.*, pp. 483, 486-487.

⁷⁷Adam B. Ulam, “Détente—Under Soviet Eyes,” *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1976, No. 24, pp. 149-150.

⁷⁸During the CPSU’s 20th Congress in February 1956, Khrushchev inaugurated a process of de-Stalinisation. The advocacy was not only a repudiation of Stalin’s autocracy and the idea of the single leader, it also propounded Khrushchev’s opinion that SU foreign policy should be based on the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence, and because of the increased strength of the socialist camp, war was no longer inevitable; furthermore, it was also possible for revolutions to be carried out by non-violent means, and thus there were several alternative ways to reach socialism. See Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *Soviet Foreign Policy since World War II*, Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1979, p. 51.

⁷⁹The outcome was SU’s launching of two Sputniks in October 1957, and Khrushchev’s hard-line attitude in the 1961 summit meeting with Kennedy and the Berlin wall incident.

that of Malenkov and Khrushchev. Zhou understood the PRC's weak position vis-à-vis the US. The PRC's first economic Five-Year Plan scheduled to start in 1953 also required a more stable situation.

Before the 1954 Geneva Conference, the Vietminh's contacts with the Soviet Union were far fewer than those ^{with} the PRC, and Soviet aid was very much less than ^{the} Vietminh received from the PRC.⁸⁰ For this reason, at the Geneva Conference the Vietminh delegates maintained close relations with the PRC delegates.⁸¹

After Zhou Enlai paid visits to India and Burma in June 1954, he flew to North Vietnam to meet Ho Chi Minh in Liuzhou, China, from July 3 to 5, 1954.⁸² As a result of the influential position of the PRC with Vietminh, the prolonged Geneva Conference negotiations reached some conclusion and agreements were signed less than three weeks later. Zhou persuaded Ho to agree with the arrangements for an armistice in Indochina, a temporary demarcation line, a political settlement of Vietnam through national elections,

⁸⁰Theodore Draper, Abuse of Power, Penguin Books, 1967, p. 139. Adequate Chinese military supplies made Vietminh's Dien Bien Phu triumph possible, see Greg Lockhart, Nation in Arms, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989, p. 247.

⁸¹P. J. Honey, Communism in North Vietnam, Cambridge: The M. I. T. Press, 1963, p. 43.

⁸²King Chen, China's War with Vietnam, 1979, Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1987, p. 14. Qiang Zhai, op. cit., p. 112.

and the neutrality of Laos and Cambodia,⁸³ even though the Vietminh had the military advantage and maintained their original aims of complete independence and control of the entirety of Vietnam.⁸⁴ All these main considerations were embodied in the provisions of the signed agreements.⁸⁵

Zhou's main purpose at the Geneva Conference was to consolidate the idea of "neutralising" Indochina, and for that reason, Zhou compelled the Vietminh delegates to make a lot of concessions. Furthermore, this policy would keep Vietminh weak, divided and under Beijing's domination.⁸⁶

What was clear was that throughout the long conflict in Vietnam, Vietnamese party leaders harboured a deep distrust of the PRC's motives,⁸⁷ despite its fraternal assistance. With the end of the war in 1975, such underlying tensions quickly rose to the surface. For the PRC, it was the first

⁸³King Chen, *op. cit.*, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 314. See also Qiang Zhai, *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

⁸⁴Sheldon W. Simon, "The Soviet Union and Southeast Asia: The Vietnam Connection," in Edward A. Koloziej and Roger E. Kanet, ed., The Limits of Soviet Power in the Developing World, London: Macmillan, 1989, p. 154.

⁸⁵The Geneva Conference, Vietnam: No. 1 in Read-In Series, London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1965, pp. 32-35. See also Keesing's Contemporary Archives, London: Keesing's Publications Ltd., Vol. IX, 1952-1954, pp. 13689-13690. Hanoi charged that the 1954 Geneva Conference was the first time the PRC betrayed North Vietnam, see King Chen, *op. cit.*, China's War with Vietnam, 1979, pp. 15-16.

⁸⁶William J. Duiker, Vietnam, Boulder: Westview Press, 1983, pp. 147-148.

⁸⁷As early as 1949, when Mao and his colleagues first rose to power in Beijing, to the sceptical eye of some Vietnamese, the ultimate objective of Maoist foreign policy in Southeast Asia was to keep Vietnam divided and weak in order to facilitate Chinese domination of the entire region. See *Ibid.*, p. 147. Also Douglas Pike, Viet Cong, Boston: The MIT Press, 1966, pp. 319-320.

time that it had played such an important role in international relations. It did well. For the time being, at least, it did not have to worry about the security of the southern territory.

Zhou's success was due to his ability to seek common ground to promote shared interests among the Geneva powers. The British were also interested in creating a buffer in Southeast Asia to protect its traditional interests in that region, and France desired an end to the tragic war.⁸⁸ Though not as influential with Vietminh as the PRC, the SU's emerging status as a superpower in the post-World War II Cold War period led the participants to find out what its attitude was toward the Conference. The Soviet Union's main purpose was to arrange a deal to obtain French help to reject the proposed European Defence Community, in exchange for Soviet assistance to France in obtaining a Vietnam settlement. Just as the PRC looked after its own interest first, so too did the Soviet Union judge its dealings in Europe more important than the Vietnam issue.⁸⁹ This would correspond with the PRC's contemporary foreign policy of peaceful coexistence.

⁸⁸Kuo-kang Shao, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

⁸⁹King Chen, *op. cit.*, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, pp. 309, 320. Sheldon W. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 154. Qiang Zhai, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

As for the US, particularly Secretary of State Dulles, it strongly opposed the PRC's participation in the Conference, so that the PRC had to confront an irritable enemy at the conference table. The result proved the PRC had reached its goal of having some soft contact with the US at Geneva. On June 5, 1954, while the Geneva Conference was still in session, to respond to US indirect contacts through the British delegates, the PRC's delegates had a meeting with the US delegates to discuss the issues of exchanging captives.⁹⁰ The US initiative was due to domestic pressure.⁹¹ This preliminary contact was the overture for the ensuing Warsaw ambassadorial talks between the two countries.

In short, the PRC had used "United Front" tactics to isolate the US. The US had tried to use Laos and Cambodia to contain the PRC. However, they eventually emerged from the Geneva Conference as neutralised nations,⁹² which suited the PRC's purpose most.

⁹⁰Ming Ji and Qiang Liu, Zhou Enlai De Wai-jiao Yi-shù (Zhou Enlai's Art of Diplomacy), Taipei: New Journalism Pty. Ltd., 1993, pp. 90-91. This book originally published by Shantung University, mainland China. There were four meetings held between June 5 and 21, see Qiang Zhai, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

⁹¹Ming Ji and Qiang Liu, Ibid., p. 90.

⁹²Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Ibid., pp. 13689-13690. These two countries became the victims of communist pressure, infiltration, sabotage, and guerrilla warfare, until they were largely communist dominated and controlled. See Stephen Pan and Daniel Lyons, S. J., Vietnam Crisis, New York: Twin Publishing Co., Inc., 1966, p. 41. See also P. 141 of this dissertation.

(ii) The Bandung Afro-Asian Conference

The Bandung Afro-Asian Conference was held at Bandung, Indonesia from April 18 to April 24, 1955, and was attended by 29 African and Asian countries. The conference featured those third world countries whose intention it was to expel their colonialist rulers, and the PRC played a predominant role in it.⁹³ The conference was held only once. The second scheduled one was postponed indefinitely on the PRC's proposal in October 1965, one month before its planned opening in Algiers.

The PRC proposal was made because several nations, notably India and United Arab Republic (Egypt), intended to exclude the PRC from the meeting in order to make it a conference of non-aligned nations.⁹⁴ At the same time there was an attempted coup in Indonesia, the host country of the original conference, in September and October 1965, and Sukarno was forced to step down. The suspicion of the PRC's involvement in the Indonesian coup caused a severance in the relations between the two countries.⁹⁵ The PRC realised its

⁹³Ronald C. Keith, The Diplomacy of Zhou Enlai, London: Macmillan, 1989, pp. 82-87.

⁹⁴King Chen, China and Three Worlds, London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1979, p. 24.

⁹⁵R. B. Smith, An International History of the Vietnam War, Vol. III, London: Macmillan, 1991, p. 210. The Sino-Indonesian Friendship Treaty signed on April 1, 1961, in Jakarta was a representative sample of the some other similar treaties between the PRC and the Third World countries. Following the signing of the treaty, Indonesia under President Sukarno became a major informal ally of Beijing on a common anti-Western basis until the failure of the pro-Sukarno communist coup in Indonesia in October 1965. See Harold C. Hinton, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 1033.

support had declined, and a postponement of the second Asian-African conference might, therefore, be in its interests. Ironically, the PRC tried to degrade the conference that once it championed.

How did the PRC behave at the Bandung Conference? Except for those “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” addresses given by Zhou Enlai, some other gestures were made.

Zhou continued the PRC’s diplomatic thrust for a “neutralised” Indochina. In his speech addressed to the final plenary session of the Bandung Conference on April 24, 1955, Zhou advocated that the full implementation of the 1954 Geneva agreements should be guaranteed by the parties concerned.⁹⁶ For Laos and Cambodia in particular, Zhou offered the two countries further assurance of non-interference in their internal affairs in a formal statement to the Political Committee of the Bandung Conference on April 23, 1955.⁹⁷

On April 22, 1955, two days before the closure of the conference, Zhou signed a treaty with his Indonesian counterpart called “Sino-Indonesian Treaty

⁹⁶Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 171.

⁹⁷Zhou said, “This time again we make our assurances to the delegations of Cambodia and Laos. We earnestly hope that these two countries will become peace loving countries like India and Burma. We have no intention whatsoever of interceding or intervening in the international affairs of these two neighbouring states of ours.” See Kuo-kang Shao, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

on Dual Nationality.”⁹⁸ For the first time in Chinese history, the Chinese authorities allowed overseas Chinese to have a choice of nationality.

The PRC continued to apply its newly-proclaimed foreign policy with neighbouring countries. During his visit to Rangoon at the end of 1956, Zhou promised his hosts that Chinese policy toward Burma would not follow the pattern of “big power chauvinism.” After prolonged and complex negotiations the boundary conflict was settled in January 1960 on terms considered generally favourable to the Burmese.⁹⁹

The message sent out by the PRC proposing negotiations with the US over the Taiwan problem, received a positive reaction. The bilateral consular talks at Geneva were upgraded to ambassadorial level and started on August 1, 1955.¹⁰⁰ The venue of the meeting moved to Warsaw in 1958.

If the most powerful country and the most populous country in the world had not had a normal diplomatic relationship, they would have to invent a substitute: the Warsaw Talks was that substitute. During the talks the US had emphasised and reiterated the limited nature of its aims: that it desired negotiations, that it had no intention of destroying the DRV or seizing its

⁹⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 172-173.

⁹⁹Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁰Michael C. Yahuda, *China's Role in World Affairs*, London: Croom Helm, 1978, p. 79.

territory, and that it was not its policy to threaten the security of the PRC or to invade it.¹⁰¹ However, it was difficult for the US and the PRC to trust each other. In particular, the PRC never gave up the idea of using force to solve the Taiwan issue. The US representatives at the Warsaw Talks had tried every reasonable means to persuade the PRC representative to reach agreement on mutual renunciation of force in the Taiwan area but the PRC consistently refused to reach such agreement.¹⁰²

The talks were held at irregular intervals, the Taiwan issue was the main issue and the PRC did not disregard easily its Five Principles. In the PRC foreign ministry's statement on November 25, 1968, it tried to urge the US to resume the Warsaw Talks. The PRC tried to cope with the incoming Nixon administration and wanted to counter the possibility of a Czechoslovakia-style Soviet invasion of China. The following statement described the Warsaw Talks from the PRC's view:

...Over the past thirteen years, the Chinese government has consistently adhered to the following two principles in the Sino-U.S. ambassadorial talks: first, the U.S. government undertakes to immediately withdraw all its armed forces from China's territory Taiwan Province and the Taiwan Strait area and dismantle all its military installations in Taiwan Province;

¹⁰¹Kenneth T. Young, "American Dealing with Peking," Foreign Affairs, October 1966, pp. 77, 83.

¹⁰²See President Eisenhower's reply on September 13, 1958, to Soviet Premier Khrushchev letter concerning the Taiwan Strait crisis. Current History, December 1958, p. 366.

second, the U.S. government agrees that China and the United States conclude an agreement on *the five principles of peaceful coexistence*. (emphasis added) But in the past thirteen years, while refusing all along to reach an agreement with the Chinese government on these two principles, the U.S. government putting the cart before the horse, has kept on haggling over side issues...¹⁰³

The two sides had tried to reconcile their positions, but no meaningful progress was made. The agreement on the repatriation of prisoners, issued on September 10, 1955, was the only transaction concluded between the two sides of the Warsaw Talks.¹⁰⁴

The PRC had set its foreign policy guidelines and applied them at the Geneva and Bandung Conferences, but with limited success. A neutralised Indochina was set up¹⁰⁵ and Tibet was recovered. The PRC also made concession of its overseas people's nationality to improve relations. As to Japan and the US, the PRC encouraged them to convert their antagonistic attitude. Zhou manoeuvred the United Front policy to the advantage of the

¹⁰³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2203.

¹⁰⁴Kenneth T. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 79. There was no other written agreement between the PRC and the US before the Shanghai communiqué on February 27, 1972. See Ming Ji and Qiang Liu, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-100.

¹⁰⁵Some scholars argue that, in the end, the Geneva Conference produced no durable solution to the Indochina conflict, only a military truce that awaited a political settlement, which never really happened. So the conference was merely an interlude between two wars. See Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

PRC; at least temporarily, the buffer zone in Southeast Asia would keep the PRC at a safe distance from any direct conflict with the US.

The PRC's endeavour could not change US hardliners' policy, and the PRC had to be very cautious while relations with the US remained tense. Thus, unless the "stronger" enemy, the US, took the initiative and shifted its policy toward the PRC, border security would continue to be the first priority for the PRC to take into account. Or, if bilateral relations deteriorated, there was no alternative for the PRC but to strive to keep its buffer zone.

C. The Factors Causing the Limitation of the Five Principles

(i) The Limits of Afro-Asian Support

The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence policy was stipulated in the PRC's treaty with India, and Zhou Enlai reconfirmed it with the leaders of India and Burma during the Geneva Conference period. Zhou's speeches at the Bandung Conference reaffirmed the principles. However all the participants of the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference were medium or small sized Asian or African countries. Their influence in the world-wide situation was rather weak in comparison with the emerging superpowers of the cold war era. Thus the PRC's policy initiatives could only affect those "powerless" countries, and

even some of these started trying to exclude the PRC from attending the planned second Afro-Asian conference.

The earliest and most dramatic break with the Bandung system was the growing hostility between the PRC and India. In 1959 India offered asylum to the Tibetan rebels and allowed Dali Lama to establish himself in self-imposed exile on Indian soil. Later India even had a border war with the PRC. Zhou's idea to construct a united front consisting largely of non-aligned governments under PRC's leadership to erode US power in Asia had failed.¹⁰⁶

The Sino-Soviet theoretical and ideological dispute broke out in the mid 1950s, and lasted for decades. With regard to Sino-US connections, the PRC's participation in the Bandung Conference became a significant diplomatic challenge to the US containment policy.¹⁰⁷ However, Zhou's endeavours could not prevent the US from carrying out its anti-Communist policy in Asia.

Even taking a broader view, that the PRC set up a buffer zone to keep its border secure and to prevent a direct conflict with the US, however, it could not change the origin of the issue, namely the hostility from the US. Its relations with the other superpower, the SU, were also getting worse. The triangular relations among the PRC-US-SU was no doubt the "principal contradiction."

¹⁰⁶Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

¹⁰⁷Ronald C. Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

(ii) Deteriorating Relations with the Superpowers

(a) The USA

The US, taken aback by the speed of French collapse, and disliking the prospect of negotiating with the Chinese Communists,¹⁰⁸ played a minor role at Geneva. The US administration did not wish to be associated as a signatory of the 1954 Geneva Accords.¹⁰⁹ The agreements were considered by some American scholars as a “surrender to communism” and an “Asian Munich.”¹¹⁰ To compensate for this, in September 1954, the US government created the South-East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO), a military-political bloc that included the US, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines and South Vietnam. The new government of South Vietnam and its

¹⁰⁸Even President Eisenhower was reluctant to send US delegates to participate in that conference due to the presence of the PRC delegates. See . . . President Eisenhower’s instructions to US envoy at 1954 Geneva Conference: New York Times, The Pentagon Papers, New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1971, p. 43. The text of President Eisenhower’s speech read, “You will not deal with the delegates of the Chinese Communist regime, or any other regime not now diplomatically recognized by the United States, on any terms which imply political recognition or which concede to that regime any status other than that of a regime with which it is necessary to deal on a de facto basis in order to end aggression or the threat of aggression, and to obtain peace.”

¹⁰⁹David P. Mozingo, “China’s Relations with Her Asian Neighbors,” Current History, September 1964, p. 159.

¹¹⁰Stephen Pan and S. J. Daniel Lyons, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

territory were expressly protected by the SEATO treaty.¹¹¹ This treaty aimed more widely to safeguard the security of the Southeast Asian signatories, and the other successor states of Indochina. Thus the US was formally committed as guarantor of the peace in southern Asia, as it had been committed in the NATO treaty five years earlier in Europe.¹¹²

Encouraged by the SEATO treaty, in July 1955, under the provisions of the Geneva agreements, the two zones of Vietnam were scheduled to begin consultations on elections for the next year. But the South Vietnamese government refused to talk with the Vietminh. Premier Ngo Dinh Diem asserted that the South Vietnam government had not signed the Geneva Accords and therefore it should not be bound by them.¹¹³ After the Korean

¹¹¹Roy Medvedev, China and the Superpowers, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 88. Moreover, the US helped to organise and maintain a non-communist government in South Vietnam. The objectives set by the US National Security Council on August 3, 1954, less than one month after the conclusion of the Geneva Conference, were to maintain a friendly non-communist South Vietnam and to prevent a communist victory through all-Vietnam elections. See The Pentagon Paper, op. cit., p. 1.

¹¹²For the US, the NATO commitment set a precedent: for the first time in its history, the US had committed itself to an alliance in peacetime. See Thomas G. Paterson, ed., Major Problems in American Foreign Policy, Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1978, p. 463. John Spanier, American Foreign Policy since World War II, Washington, D. C.: C. Q. Press, 1988, p. 52.

¹¹³The Pentagon Papers, op. cit., p. 22. Another reason was that Ho was much more popular than Diem. Hanoi assumed that a majority of the 12 million South Vietnamese would vote for Ho, who had led the national struggle against the French. He would of course have most of the North's 15 million votes. See John Spanier, Ibid., p. 163.

War, for quite some time it seemed that the US would not compromise in its dealing with the communists in Vietnam.

In Washington, domestically, right-wing senators like Joseph MacCarthy meanwhile fuelled a febrile atmosphere of anti-communism, driving US officials to great lengths to prove their devotion to the defeat of the “Red menace.”¹¹⁴

Although the PRC wanted to avoid another direct conflict with the US, once the truce in Korea became a reality on July 23, 1953, not only the French but the new Eisenhower administration were worried that the armistice might release PRC forces for service in Indochina.¹¹⁵

The US hard-line attitude toward the Geneva Conference has already been mentioned. Even before the Conference, on January 12, 1954, the Secretary of State, John F. Dulles, made a “massive retaliation” speech, which warned the PRC against its involvement in the Vietnam War. The strategic policy of “massive retaliation” was motivated by the US’s original fear of

¹¹⁴Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

¹¹⁵To reinforce the speculation Wellington Koo, the Chinese Nationalist Ambassador at the United States, reported in early May 1953 the conclusion of a Soviet-Chinese-Vietminh agreement providing that the PRC would send 300,000 troops to North Vietnam and the SU would supply weapons for five divisions. *Pravda* immediately denied the report; the PRC denounced it as a KMT fabrication. The PRC troops were not used in Vietnam, but its aid greatly increased and which led the victory at Dien Bien Phu. See King Chen, *op. cit.*, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 274.

Soviet intervention if UN forces attacked the PRC during the Korean War. To deter any PRC's ambition that might have been encouraged by the Korean War, Dulles warned that the US would use nuclear weapons against the PRC in response to a Chinese communist attempt to invade Taiwan or move into South East Asia.¹¹⁶ The Dulles' speech indicated a very hostile US attitude to the PRC.

The PRC proclaimed its Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence during the Geneva Conference, but it still wished to liberate Taiwan. Also, this action could test the US resolve following its proclamation of the "massive retaliation" policy. On September 3, 1954, less than two months after the conclusion of the Geneva Conference, fourteen months after the Korean War armistice, and five days before the signing of the SEATO treaty in Manila, the PRC started shelling the offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu, which were along the coast of the Chinese mainland and held by Nationalist Chinese troops from Taiwan.¹¹⁷ The

¹¹⁶George Hudson, "Paper Tiger and Nuclear Teeth," The China Quarterly, July/September 1969, p. 67. The feature of massive retaliation was that it rejected the concept of limited war, or "half war," and reasserted the old American doctrine of either abstaining or fighting an all-out war. This return to the more traditional American approach to war was natural in 1952. The Republicans had been elected largely because of deep popular revulsion against the Korean War; it was clear that the American people wanted no more such wars. John Spanier, *op. cit.*, American Foreign Policy since World War II, pp. 87-88.

¹¹⁷Bill Brugger, China: Liberation and Transformation 1942-1962, London: Croom Helm, 1981, p.105. See also Nancy Smith Simon, From the Chinese Civil War to the Shanghai Communiqué: Changing US Perceptions of China as a Security Threat, Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1982, printed by University Microfilms International, 1985, p. 173.

bombardment had no effective outcome. But this incited the US and Chinese Nationalist government to sign a Treaty of Mutual Defence on December 2, 1954,¹¹⁸ by which the US guaranteed the security of Taiwan and the nearby Pescadores. Those offshore islands were not included under the terms of the treaty.¹¹⁹ However as the situation in the Taiwan Strait grew more tense, on January 28, 1955, President Eisenhower requested and Congress endorsed the “Formosa Resolution,” which authorised the President to extend US armed forces to “related territories” as the President judged necessary.¹²⁰ The final vote passing the Formosa Resolution by the Senate was 85:3, and within hours President Eisenhower gave his final instructions regarding the conduct of American assistance in helping to evacuate the Chinese Nationalist-held

¹¹⁸A similar US-Republic of Korea Mutual Defence Treaty was signed on October 1, 1953, less than three months after the armistice in the Korean War. The treaty also provided the legal basis for the Republic of Korea agreeing to send troops to South Vietnam to assist the US during the Vietnam War. See William C. Johnstone, “Communists in Asia: 1969,” *Current History*, August 1969, pp. 93-94.

¹¹⁹The original wording of the treaty reads like this:

Article VI: For the purposes of Articles II and V, the terms “territorial” and “territories” shall mean in respect of the Republic of China, Taiwan and the Pescadores; and in respect of the United States of America, the island territories in the West Pacific under its jurisdiction. The provisions of Article II and V will be applicable to such other territories as may be determined by mutual agreement.

See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ROC ed., *Treaties between the Republic of China and Foreign States (1927-1957)*, 1958, p. 826.

¹²⁰Hollis W. Barber, *The United States in World Affairs, 1955*, published for the Council on Foreign Affairs, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957, p. 94. This resolution was repealed in the fall of 1974, due to the normalisation of Sino-American relations. See Harish Kapur, *The Awakening Giant: China's Ascension in World Politics*, The Netherlands: Alphen aan den Rijn, 1981, p. 82.

Tachen islands.¹²¹ It was through this Resolution and the Mutual Defence Treaty that the US formally allied itself with the Nationalist Chinese government.

In the face of US hostility and its failure to invade the Nationalist-held offshore islands, three months later at the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference the PRC reiterated its Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and particularly the “peaceful” solution of the Taiwan issue.

Pursuing the initiative of a peaceful solution to the Taiwan problem, the Geneva ambassadorial talks (later moved to Warsaw) between the US and the PRC were held, but in vain. About three years later, there was another test of US determination to protect Taiwan. Commencing on August 23, 1958, heavy bombardment of the offshore islands made the US president order its Seventh Fleet to escort Chinese Nationalist supply ships to within three miles of the islands and retaliate if fired upon.¹²² Also, six nuclear armed American aircraft carriers steamed toward beleaguered Quemoy together with a 10,000 ton dock landingship (LSD) carrying eight-inch howitzers capable of firing atomic

¹²¹ Philip J. Briggs, “Congress and the Cold War: U. S.-China Policy, 1955,” The China Quarterly, March 1981, p. 92.

¹²² John Spanier, op. cit., American Foreign Policy since World War II, p. 94.

shells.¹²³ The second PRC attempt to capture Taiwan was checked by the US action, and above all this proved that the US was willing to defend Taiwan under the provisions of the Treaty of Mutual Defence and the Taiwan Resolution.

The two Taiwan Strait crises had passed and the distance between Taiwan and mainland China remained the same.¹²⁴ Subsequently, as long as the US-ROC Mutual Defence Treaty was in effect, the PRC gave up its attempts at a military invasion of Taiwan.

(b) The USSR

Several months before the establishment of the PRC in October 1949, the PRC tried to contact US Ambassador Stuart in Nanking,¹²⁵ while Mao announced the policy "leaning to one side." The cold response from the US urged the PRC to lean toward the SU and to sign the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance. The SU assisted the PRC in fighting in Korea, but the material aid it offered to the PRC was not free of

¹²³Allen S. Whiting, "Quemoy 1958: Mao's Miscalculations," The China Quarterly, June 1975, p. 267. See also Yuh-shii Li, Ba Ell San Jin-men Huey-jann Hae-jiun Tzuoh-jann Shyr-luh, (The Sea Encounter of the Quemoy Battle in 1958), Taipei, 1985, p. 46.

¹²⁴American policy in the Taiwan Strait was committed to the preservation of the status quo. Containment had once more replaced liberation. See John Spanier, op. cit., American Foreign Policy since World War II, p. 94.

¹²⁵See p. 39.

charge.¹²⁶ According to the provisions of the Sino-Soviet Agreement on the Chinese Changchun Railway, Port Arthur and Dalny, the rights of the joint administration of the Chinese Changchun Railway and the installations of Port Arthur should be transferred from the SU to the PRC immediately upon the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan, but not later than the end of 1952. Up to the end of 1952 there was no such peace treaty and the Chinese Changchun Railway and Port Arthur were still operated and occupied jointly by both Chinese and Russians. After Nikita Khrushchev became the First General Secretary of Soviet Communist Party of the SU on October 1, 1954, on the occasion of the anniversary of the founding of the PRC, he led a big delegation to Beijing and agreed to repeal those colonialist articles stipulated in the

¹²⁶ About nine-tenths of the munitions the PRC needed during the Korean War were purchased from the SU on credit and at the bargain prices, and all loans were not repaid until the end of 1965. See Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis and Litai Xue, *op. cit.*, p. 201. It has been estimated that the SU billed the PRC for more than \$2 billion of military equipment which the PRC used during the war. This was more than all the economic aid that the Soviets gave to the PRC during that period. The source is from The Indochina Story, Bantom Book, 1970, p. 193.

mutual assistance treaty.¹²⁷ This gesture by Khrushchev was not followed by any other friendly deed. In fact, it proved to be but a prelude to more serious problems.

The first issue that caused discord between the PRC and the SU originated from the CPSU's 20th Party Congress in February 1956. In the congress Khrushchev inaugurated a process of de-Stalinisation. The CCP thought this unilateral decision on such a major issue was unacceptable.¹²⁸ The advocacy was not only a repudiation of Stalin's autocracy and the idea of the single leader, it also propounded Khrushchev's opinion that SU foreign policy should be based on the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence, and because of the increased strength of the socialist camp, war was no longer inevitable; furthermore, it was also possible for revolutions to be carried out by non-violent means, and thus there were several alternative ways to reach socialism.¹²⁹

¹²⁷Michael B. Yuhuda, *op. cit.*, p. 73. Both sides agreed in principle that Soviet armed forces would be withdrawn from Port Arthur and that the base there would be restored to full Chinese control. The joint stock companies established in 1950-51 concerning the Chinese Changchun Railway would be transferred by sale to China. Further, during the discussions the two countries agreed to cooperate in the exchange of scientific and technical information. See Howard L. Boorman, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance: A New Dimension in World Politics," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 11, 1957, No. 2, p. 127.

¹²⁸Harish Kapur, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

¹²⁹Alvin Z. Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

Although Beijing endorsed the Soviet Union's invasion of Hungary in October 1956,¹³⁰ the Chinese maintained that the highly principled dispute concerning the general line of the internationalist communist movement should continue. Besides, the new Soviet policy jeopardised the position of Mao, who had been a Stalinist.¹³¹

After the 1956 polemics over the 20th CPSU Party Congress, basically it was just too difficult to create a mutually-agreed ideological policy. In September 1959, after his trip to the US, Khrushchev visited Beijing. He met Mao and complained that the 1958 Quemoy crisis embarrassed him as he did not want to confront the US under any circumstances. He even proposed that the PRC should abandon its idea of liberating Taiwan.¹³² Obviously, if Khrushchev had any wish to repair the breach between the two countries, he had failed. There was no summit meeting between the leaders of two sides after that until 1989.¹³³

¹³⁰Richard Wich, Sino-Soviet Crisis Politics, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980, p. 63.

¹³¹Franz Michael, "Twenty Years of Sino-Soviet Relations," Current History, September 1969, p. 151.

¹³²Chi Su, Lun Chung-su-kung Kuan-hsi Cheng-ch'ang-hua 1979-1989, (An Assessment of Sino-Soviet Rapprochement 1979-1989), Taipei: Sam Min Book Co., 1992, p. 20.

¹³³The next summit meeting was in May 1989 when Mikhail S. Gorbachev met Deng Xiaoping in Beijing.

Following the failure of Khrushchev's 1959 visit, on April 16, 1960, a polemical article in the Red Flag magazine signified the PRC's first open challenge of the SU's position. The editorial, ostensibly celebrating the ninetieth anniversary of Lenin's birth, actually attacked Khrushchev.¹³⁴

With regard to the Soviet side, addressing the Twenty-second CPSU Congress in October 1961, Khrushchev continued to develop the theme of peaceful coexistence between the socialist and capitalist systems and he referred specially to the SU's relations with the US.¹³⁵ During that meeting Zhou Enlai openly argued with the SU leaders about the PRC's protégé—Albania. For the first time the two sides quarrelled publicly.¹³⁶

The two parties agreed to hold a meeting on July 5, 1963, in Moscow, to heal the wound. The effort to resolve outstanding ideological differences failed.¹³⁷ The signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty in the same month was roundly castigated by the PRC and aggravated the split. Starting from September 6, 1963, to the fall of Khrushchev in October 1964, the People's Daily and Red Flag consecutively issued nine joint editorials seriously

¹³⁴O. Edmund Clubb, "Maoism versus Khrushchevism: Ten Years," Current History, September 1973, pp. 102-103. See also Harold C. Hinton, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 839.

¹³⁵O. Edmund Clubb, Ibid., p. 104.

¹³⁶1967 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., p. 377.

¹³⁷O. Edmund Clubb, op. cit., p. 102.

criticising the SU's ideology and policy. The polemics caused the SU's oral counterattacks.¹³⁸

Khrushchev's successors followed essentially the same policy and the Chinese observed bitterly their "Khrushchevism without Khrushchev."¹³⁹ The PRC severed party relations with the Soviets by refusing to attend the Twenty-third CPSU Congress, held in March 1966.¹⁴⁰ A compromise was hopeless.

As stated above a next major issue in the Sino-Soviet dispute was related to the military operations against Quemoy in 1958. In contrast to the US's active assistance to the Chinese Nationalists, the SU gave no substantial aid to the PRC.¹⁴¹ The 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis was indeed a watershed in Sino-Soviet relations. For Mao it had the desirable outcome of showing that the Chinese leadership could conduct diplomacy independently of the SU. But he learned anew that the SU was a rival and a hard bargainer, not an ally, and that the PRC would have to be as self-reliant diplomatically as it was seeking to

¹³⁸ 1967 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

¹³⁹ O. Edmund Clubb, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

¹⁴⁰ Gerald Segal, "China and Superpowers," in Robert Benewick and Paul Wingrove, ed., Reforming the Revolution, Chicago: The Dorsey Press, 1988, p. 209. Michael B. Yahuda, *op. cit.*, p. 39. Harry Gelman, "The Sino-Soviet Conflict in Soviet Eyes," Current History, October 1972, pp. 148-149.

¹⁴¹ See Harish Kapur, *op. cit.*, p. 35. R.K.I. Quested, Sino-Russian Relations, Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1984, p. 122. Robert G. Scutter, Chinese Foreign Policy after the Cultural Revolution, Boulder: Westview Press, 1978, p. 6.

become economically and militarily. It helped to shorten the duration of Sino-Soviet cooperation, resulting eventually in Soviet abrogation of the October 1957 agreement in June 1959 and the withdrawal of all technical assistance in 1960.¹⁴²

From July to October 1959, the PRC had a border dispute with India, but the SU took a neutral stand, and in the October-November 1962 border war between the PRC and India, the SU provided India with military equipment to threaten Chinese claims in Ladakh.¹⁴³

The PRC and the SU had their own border dispute; in spite of the fact that they now ostensibly shared the same ideology, in historical terms their contact had been relatively slight and seldom friendly. It originated from “unequal treaties.” Those treaties imposed on China by Russia in the past included the Treaty of Nigphu of 1689, the Burinskiy Treaty of 1727, the Treaty of Aigun of 1858, the Treaty of Peking of 1860, the Tahcheng Protocol on the Delimitation

¹⁴²Melvin Gurtov, “The Taiwan Strait Crisis Revisited,” Modern China, January 1976, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 89.

¹⁴³Allen S. Whiting, The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, p. 198. The Indian-SU relations continued to be very close. In 1971, India took out insurance in Moscow in the form of a “friendship treaty” that was really an anti-Chinese alliance. The treaty also allowed New Delhi to separate East Pakistan from the western portion, creating an independent but India-leaning Bangladesh in 1972. Thomas W. Robinson, “China’s Asia Policy,” Current History, September 1980, p. 3.

of Sino-Russian Boundary of 1864, and the Ili Treaty of 1881.¹⁴⁴ The total land annexed by Tzarist Russia was about 1.5 million square kilometres.¹⁴⁵

The “unequalness” of those treaties was once recognised by the SU. Leo Karakham, acting Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union, proclaimed on July 25, 1919, that all secret treaties made before the 1917 Soviet revolution with China, Japan, or the allies, were abrogated, and that the Soviet government renounced the conquests made by the Tzarist government which deprived China of Manchuria and other areas. He proposed to enter negotiations with the Chinese government on the abrogation of the treaties disadvantageous to China and return everything that was taken by the Tzar independently or together with Japan or the allies.¹⁴⁶ On September 27, 1920, the government of the Soviets solemnly proclaimed that it declared null and void all the treaties concluded with China by the former government of Russia, and renounced all seizure of Chinese territory, which would be restored to China without any compensation.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2249.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 2250.

¹⁴⁶Luke T. Chang, *China's Boundary Treaties and Frontier Disputes*, New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1982, pp. 115-116.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 116.

But when the time came for actual negotiations in 1926, the Soviets did not yield any territorial rights.¹⁴⁸ Worse than that, at the Yalta Conference in 1945 the SU insisted on recognising Outer Mongolia's independence from China and on October 20, 1945, a Soviet-controlled plebiscite was held, and Outer Mongolia became totally under SU tutelage.¹⁴⁹ Also, the SU formally and arbitrarily annexed the Tannu-Tuva region between Sinkiang and Mongolia in 1944.¹⁵⁰

Starting in April 1962,¹⁵¹ the PRC and the SU had serious border disputes, and the 1969 Ussuri military clash signified the zenith of the border problem, which put pressure on the PRC to accelerate the pace of its rapprochement with the US.

The final issue which negatively influenced Sino-Soviet relations was their domestic variations. The SU had a longer history as a communist country in comparison with the PRC. The Korean War economically starved the PRC, a country which had only just survived a devastating civil war. After the Korean War, the PRC began its Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence policy

¹⁴⁸William V. Wallace, "Sino-Soviet Relations: An Interpretation," Soviet Studies, Vol. XXXV, No. 4, October 1983, p. 459.

¹⁴⁹Alvin Z. Rubinstein, op. cit., p. 186.

¹⁵⁰Luke T. Chang, op. cit., p. 116.

¹⁵¹See p. 109.

to deal with world affairs, and one major objective was to secure its domestic situation in order to fulfil its economic development plan.¹⁵²

In 1958, the PRC launched its second five-year economic development plan. In May that year the Great Leap Forward Movement started. However, the Great Leap Forward Movement actually created some lean years for the Chinese people.¹⁵³ The new Soviet foreign policy features outlined by Khrushchev at the 1956 CPSU Twentieth Congress were fully initiated only in 1958,¹⁵⁴ and coincided with the beginning of the Great Leap Forward movement. However, the Soviet leaders gradually lost patience with Mao, and the SU regarded this year as the watershed when Sino-Soviet relations changed for the worse.¹⁵⁵

(c) Both the USA and the USSR

There was a factor influential in the aggravation of the PRC's relations with both the US and the SU. The superpowers had nuclear weapons and the PRC was determined to design its own.

¹⁵²Kuo-kang Shao, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

¹⁵³Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, pp. 179-181. See also p. 89 of this dissertation.

¹⁵⁴Mainly refer to Khrushchev's visit to the US in September 1959. See Michael B. Yahuda, *op. cit.*, p. 103, see also Chi Su, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁵⁵Chi Su, *Ibid.*, p. 84.

In Mao Zedon's interview with the Hsinhwa News Agency correspondent on September 29, 1958, he admitted that world peace was threatened by the imperialist's atom bomb.¹⁵⁶ But in fact, the PRC had decided to build its own atom bomb as early as mid January 1955.¹⁵⁷ At the preliminary stage, the Beijing nuclear weapons specialists emphasised the need to search for uranium and began creating the fundamental research and administrative apparatus for the project. Then in October 1957, an agreement between the PRC and the SU was signed under which the SU promised to help the PRC, not only in building a prototype nuclear weapon, but also with the supply of uranium hexafluoride for enrichment at the Lanzhou plant.¹⁵⁸ However, in June 1959 the SU unilaterally terminated the 1957 agreement, and in August 1960 all assistance was cut off.¹⁵⁹

Why did the SU do this? Sino-Soviet relations had been deteriorating, beginning with Khrushchev's 1956 polemics over de-Stalinisation in the CPSU's 20th Party Congress. Then in 1958, during the Quemoy Crisis in the face of the US nuclear threat against the PRC, Moscow failed to back Beijing more positively. Basically, the Soviet leader Khrushchev pursued the policy of

¹⁵⁶Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 705.

¹⁵⁷John Wilson Lewis and Litai Xue, "Strategic Weapons and Chinese Power," *The China Quarterly*, December 1987, p. 541.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 542.

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*, p. 542.

détente with the US, which was manifested by his meeting with President Eisenhower at Camp David in September 1959.¹⁶⁰ The PRC thereafter decided to build weapons by itself. In October 1964 the PRC exploded its first nuclear explosive device. Less than three years later, on June 17, 1967, a self-designed, self-made hydrogen bomb was tested successfully.¹⁶¹

The PRC regarded the atom bomb as a “paper tiger,”¹⁶² but nonetheless it continued to develop its own nuclear weapons even during the “lean years” of 1959-1962.¹⁶³ Before its first nuclear device was tested successfully in October 1964, relations between the PRC and the two nuclear weapons superpowers were in decline. The Partial Test Ban Treaty, signed between the US, the SU and the UK in July 1963, was perceived by the PRC as a US-Soviet collusion to expel the PRC and consolidate their nuclear monopoly.¹⁶⁴ The SU’s unwillingness after 1959 to help the PRC to develop a nuclear capability and its signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty signified to the PRC a Soviet desire to

¹⁶⁰ Allen S. Whiting, *op. cit.*, The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence, p. 95.

¹⁶¹ John Wilson Lewis and Litai Xue, *op. cit.*, pp. 546-547, 550.

¹⁶² Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1197.

¹⁶³ Jay Tao, “Mao’s World Outlook: Vietnam and the Revolution in China,” Asian Survey, Vol. VIII, No. 5, May 1968, p. 417. 6 to 7 million people were died of starvation due to those three consecutive lean years, caused by the “Great Leap Forward” movement. See Roy Medvedev, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

¹⁶⁴ Allen S. Whiting, *op. cit.*, The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence, p. 95. See also Leo Yueh-yun Liu, China as a Nuclear Power in World Politics, London: Macmillan, 1972, p. 31. Gerald Segal, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

keep China a second-rate military power dependent on the SU's nuclear shield.¹⁶⁵

After its first atom bomb test the PRC's advocacy of a total ban would make further nuclear testing impossible.¹⁶⁶ A governmental statement on the day of the explosion, October 16, stated that:

...China is developing nuclear weapons not because we believe in the omnipotence of nuclear weapons and that China plans to use nuclear weapons. The truth is exactly to the contrary. In developing nuclear weapons, China's aim is to break the nuclear monopoly of the nuclear powers and to eliminate nuclear weapons...¹⁶⁷

To develop something to eliminate it was a very diplomatic and contradictory statement. The PRC's true motive was to prepare for more nuclear tests and to be properly competitive.¹⁶⁸ Mao thought the PRC must by its own efforts become a super state, a major nuclear power. The development of nuclear weapons and a missile system thus became matters of high priority.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵Erik P. Holfmann and Federic J. Fleron, Jr., ed., The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy, New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1980, p. 170.

¹⁶⁶Leo Yueh-yun Liu, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁶⁷Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 2, p. 1197.

¹⁶⁸After its first nuclear test in October 1964, the PRC started to denounce a total ban. It argued that because the United States had already conducted hundreds of nuclear tests and possessed a huge stockpile of nuclear weapons, a complete nuclear test ban would not affect US monopoly of nuclear weapons. See Leo Yueh-yun Liu, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁶⁹Jay Tao, op. cit., p. 417.

On July 1, 1968, the US and the SU signed a draft non-proliferation treaty for nuclear weapons. The PRC was isolated again, and refused to sign it to become a party. The PRC even argued that proliferation, especially among socialist or anti-imperialist states, might be a valuable development helping to restrict Soviet and American interventionism.¹⁷⁰

2.5. Conclusion

The Chinese Communist Party has relied on the United Front policy to manoeuvre its external relations since the very beginning of its establishment in 1921. Before 1949 it had consecutively and successfully applied the strategy against the KMT, resulting in the creation of the PRC.

The strategic environment of the period 1949 to 1965 was characterised by a number of significant shifts in relations between the key players. In the earlier period the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance signed between the PRC and the SU was confirmed by the Korean conflict which served to consolidate the communist alliance in opposition to the United States. Dittmer refers to this period of relations up to 1960 as a “stable marriage” between the PRC and the SU, with enmity between each of these and the US.

¹⁷⁰Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 24, and R. K. I. Quedsted, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

The 1954 Geneva Conference and the 1955 Bandung Conference gave the PRC a chance to practise its traditional strategy, the United Front policy, to manage external relations. The proclamation of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, maintaining friendly relations with India and Burma, ignoring Vietnam interests, building a “buffer zone” in Indochina and initiating the Sino-American Warsaw Talks, were reflected in the PRC’s position at the Geneva Conference and demonstrated the PRC’s aim of protecting itself in order to promote necessary economic development. A relatively weak PRC sought to ally itself with other states in order to affirm its security in light of its vulnerability in another clash with a stronger US.

However, the PRC continued to pursue its United Front policy in another direction. At the Bandung Conference, the PRC specifically invited the US to solve the Taiwan issue through peaceful means, and again at Geneva endeavoured to please the US as a means of lessening American opposition to its central foreign policy objectives of completing the defeat of the KMT.

The first United Front achieved by the PRC was the “stable marriage” with the USSR against the United States, consummated in the Korean War. The PRC’s first experiment in broadening the front by including the emerging Afro-Asian bloc failed, as did its attempt to improve relations with the US in

order to form a United Front with Washington against Taipei. The attempt to use military force against the ROC both confirmed US hostility and exacerbated the already deteriorating relationship with the SU. If the US refused to deal with the PRC, it could do nothing but wait for another opportunity. By 1956 the erstwhile friendly SU had started to have serious conflicts with the PRC over ideological, border and nuclear technical issues. As Lowell Dittmer explained in his models, the PRC's position began to move between 1954 to 1965 from a partner of a "stable marriage" with the SU to a "pariah" position facing the emergent "détente" of the US and the SU.

What was demonstrated was that the United Front could not work in a situation where the PRC, by its apparently irresponsible actions, forfeited the support of its partner in an otherwise "stable marriage" without gaining the support of its partner's opponent. Indeed, the PRC's retreating partner, the SU, began to see a positive relationship with its former enemy, the US, as potentially more advantageous. By the 1960s the PRC had become a pariah state, unable to form a United Front with either of the major strategic players and equally unable to develop a partnership with most other states because of the regional dominance of the other two players.

PART II

CASE STUDY

The purpose of the case study is to examine the complex relations between the US and the PRC in terms of the Vietnam War to support the view that the PRC manipulated the use of the United Front strategy to further its interests and to earn a more solid international status.

After the Korean War, Vietnam became another area where the US and the PRC could have had a direct military clash, though the PRC fully understood the danger and planned to establish a buffer zone of adjacent countries along its southern border. The Nixon administration changed both its Vietnam and China policies to become more moderate, which led the PRC for the first time, after the failure of the application of the United Front strategy in the 1950s and most of the 1960s, to have an opportunity for reconciliation with the US. This change not only assured the existing “buffer zone,” but had been engineered on purpose by the PRC in order to benefit from the emergence of a new US-SU-PRC strategic triangle. The newly developed intimacy between the PRC and the US made the PRC upgrade its status from a “pariah” in the

US-SU “détente” triangle to a “wing player” of a US-pivotal “romantic triangle.”

The PRC’s adroitness was also demonstrated in the detailed consideration of its passive concessions to US Vietnam policy development. Before the breakthrough of the Paris peace talks in May 1972 the PRC kept up its anti-US rhetoric to appease domestic opposition to a drastic foreign policy change. Even the PRC’s eventual approval of the Paris peace agreement was merely lip-service. However, despite the formidable appearance of a unified and strong Vietnam on its southern border, the PRC’s new Vietnam policy improved the PRC’s position in international politics.

There were risks in the PRC’s policy as the PRC and the US each had their own objectives for the rapprochement. After the withdrawal of the US troops from Vietnam, a reunified Vietnam would emerge, and it might collude with the SU to surround the PRC. Therefore, in the south, the PRC would have a new security issue. In other words, the PRC would still deal with threats from both the north and the south.

Since to play a triangular game with the superpowers would improve PRC's status in world politics, the PRC had no other choice but to shift its original Vietnam policy from opposing the Paris peace talks to approving them. This was an attempt to please the US in order to enhance PRC-US relations in the triangular game. But to approve the Paris peace talks would also effect a reunified Vietnam sooner. Thus, the PRC used dual tactics of "Pulling While Dragging" to deal with the situation. It approved the peace talks passively and temporarily once the breakthrough materialised, though the potential and secondary enemy, the DRV, was getting upper hand in the talks. But basically the PRC still preferred a war-torn divided Vietnam. The PRC's rhetoric during that period of peace talks was the typical type of a two-track approach.

To make the above-mentioned picture clear some detailed research and analysis is needed, particularly regarding these crucial junctures of both the US and PRC's Vietnam policy variations, the PRC-US rapprochement, the Paris peace talks and its breakthrough in May 1972. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 provide the integral explanations.

CHAPTER 3

THE PRC'S VIETNAM POLICY TO 1969

3.1. The Context of PRC Policy

A. USA v. DRV

Vietnam, after Korea, was the second testing ground for the US containment policy. The US became heavily involved in the war, and its impact, needless to say, was tremendous. To know the PRC's Vietnam policy better, it will be appropriate to apprehend the origin of the Vietnam War and the policies of its two main participants, the US and the DRV.

At the end of World War II, for a very short period, between 1945 and 1946, the US Vietnam policy was in support of Ho Chi Minh.¹ However in late 1945 and early 1946, Ho repeatedly cabled or wrote to the White House requesting recognition, but received no response.² By the time the French-

¹After the Japanese had overthrown the French in Indochina in March 1945, the American OSS (Office of Strategic Service) offered some help to Ho Chi Minh, in April that year. The US provided arms and advice and became involved in training and leading Ho's guerrillas to defeat the Japanese in the final months of the Pacific War. See Russell H. Fifield, "The Thirty Years in Indochina: A Conceptual Framework," Asian Survey, September 1977, p. 860. Stanley Karnow, op. cit., p. 139. The Americans were the only member of any foreign government given a place of honour when the Democratic Republic of Vietnam officially came into being on September 2, 1945. See Michael Maclear, Vietnam: the Ten Thousand Day War, London: Thomas Mandarin, 1989, p. 19.

²Michael Maclear, Ibid., p. 20. See also The Pentagon Papers, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

Vietminh agreement was signed on March 6, 1946, to authorise French troops to return to the northern part of Vietnam, all American military personnel had left.³ It meant that the US agreed to France going back to Vietnam.

In the next period, after the US withdrawal from Vietnam and the outbreak of the Korean War, the US containment policy emerged, consolidated and extended in scope over Asia. Due to the prevalence of the “Domino Theory” in the late 1940s up to the late 1960s,⁴ the US involvement in Vietnam was escalating through several American administrations.

By December 1965, after the beginning of the “Rolling Thunder” bombing and the landing of Marines at Danang,⁵ the number of American combat troops in Vietnam reached almost 200,000. That figure doubled in

³Michael Maclear, *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26. See also Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 675.

⁴The Domino Theory first emerged in 1947 in the form of the Truman Doctrine on Greece. Were Greece to fall, Secretary of State, George C. Marshall argued in February of that year, Turkey might fall and Soviet domination might extend over the entire Middle East and Asia. The same logic applied to Southeast Asia. In 1950 the US Joint Chiefs of Staff warned that Asia was the target of a coordinated offensive directed by the Kremlin and the fall of Indochina would undoubtedly lead to the fall of Southeast Asia which in turn would threaten Japan, India and Australia, and drastically shift the global balance of power against the US. See Gabriel Kolko, *Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975*, London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1987, p. 74, and George C. Herring, “Vietnam: An American Ordeal,” in Warren F. Kimball, ed., *American Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, St. Louis, Missouri: Forum Press, 1981, FA 076, p. 3.

⁵After the US Congress passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution on August 7, 1964, first sustained American bombing of North Vietnam, coded “Rolling Thunder,” began on February 24, 1965. On March 8, two weeks later, two US marine battalions landed at Danang to defend Danang airfield.

1966, and reached 500,000 by the end of 1967.⁶ The sheer rise of manpower and firepower could not guarantee an effective result in Vietnam, and at home protests against the war began. Besides general protests, the opinion leaders were losing confidence. Media commentators, business executives, educators, clergymen, and other elite voices resonating forcefully in Washington, moved from merely expressing misgivings about the war, to opposing an apparently futile conflict in Vietnam which divided and tormented the nation internally as well as dissipating its global assets.⁷ Financially the burden was also getting heavier since the escalation of the war in 1965.⁸ The apex of the buildup was 543,500 men, in April 1969.⁹ Therefore this solid anti-Communist policy

⁶Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, pp. 682-683.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 546.

⁸The total budget deficit in fiscal 1966 was \$3.8 billion, \$8.7 billion the following year, and an astonishing \$25.2 billion in 1968, far greater than that for any year since 1945, and 3 per cent of the entire gross national product. This huge military expenditure led to a weak US dollar and the breakdown of the gold standard "fixed" exchange rate system, which changed to a "floating" system in the first half of the 1970s. See Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285. James Mitchell ed., *The Random House Encyclopedia*, New York: Random House, 1990, p. 941. Further, in 1971 the US had its first postwar foreign-trade deficit, and its foreign net liquidity balance grew to an astonishing \$19 billion in fiscal 1972. Peter Dale Scott, *The War Conspiracy*, New York: The Bobb-Merrill Company, 1972, p. 349.

⁹*Congress and the Nation, Vol. III, 1969-1972*, Washington D. C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1973, p. 901. On the other hand, North Vietnam poured its troops into the south. To cope with increasing US forces, the Ho Chi Minh Trail was enlarged to a truck route and anti-aircraft batteries and engineers were sent to maintain it. In October 1964, the first PAVN (the People's Army of Vietnam) tactical unit left the north for the south. Due to combat needs the PAVN regular forces began to enter the south at the rate of twenty thousand or more per month by mid-1966. Those northern troops never withdrew, even during the Paris peace talks, up to the fall of Saigon. Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-148. Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

lasted only until 1969,¹⁰ when Nixon became President. A “negotiation replacing confrontation” policy had been adopted, replacing the policy of containment.

The origin of the concept of “negotiation replacing confrontation” was from Vietminh’s 1968 Tet offensive, started at the end of January and lasting about one month. The immediate objectives of Vietminh’s Tet offensive were the occupation of a few cities, not necessarily permanently, in order to reveal the revolution’s strength in urban as well as rural areas. It was also intended to weaken faith in the structure of government and to gain an edge for negotiations that were thought to be inevitable.¹¹ North Vietnam itself also regarded the Tet offensive as the turning point in the war and a decisive triumph, the consequences of which would eventually mature in final victory.¹²

Immediately after the Tet offensive, In his March 31, 1968, announcement President Johnson said:

But tragically, this is also clear: Many men—on both sides of the struggle—will be lost. A nation that has already suffered

¹⁰Michael B. Froman, The Development of the Idea of Détente, London: Macmillan, 1991, p. 4. However, some scholars argue that after 1969, President Nixon was eager to lead the US withdrawal from Vietnam, reconcile with the PRC, and continue détente with the SU, all of which would make the containment policy function more efficiently. Particularly after the emergence of the strategic triangle, Nixon and Kissinger, who cared most about détente, embraced it as a means of updating and reinvigorating containment. See John Lewis Gaddis, “The Rise, Fall and Future of Détente,” Foreign Affairs, Winter 1983/1984, p. 359.

¹¹Michael Maclear, op. cit., p. 279.

¹²Gabriel Kolko, op. cit., p. 334.

20 years of warfare will suffer once again. Armies on both sides will take new casualties. And the war will go on.

There is no need for this to be so. There is no need to delay the talks that could bring an end to this long and this bloody war.

Tonight, I renew the offer I made last August—to *stop the bombardment of North Vietnam*. *We ask that talks begin promptly*, (emphasis added) that they be serious talks on the substance of peace. We assume that during those talks Hanoi will not take advantage of our restraint.

We are prepared to move immediately toward peace through negotiations....

Now, as in the past, the United States is ready to send its representatives to any forum, at any time, to discuss the means of bringing this ugly war to an end.

I am designating one of our most distinguished Americans, Ambassador W. Averell Harriman, as my personal representative for such talks....

*Our presence there has always rested on this basic belief: the main burden of preserving their freedom must be carried out by them—by the South Vietnamese themselves.*¹³ (emphasis added)

This proposal in President Johnson's message became the basis of President Nixon's "negotiation replacing confrontation" policy and it also raised the idea of "Vietnamization." Indeed, the Tet offensive produced a US determination to negotiate rather than retaliate.¹⁴

After the Tet offensive, a request for an additional 206,000 US troops from General Westmoreland, head of MACV (U. S. Military Assistance

¹³Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1968-1969, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, pp. 227-229.

¹⁴Richard C. Thornton, "Strategic Change and the American Foreign Policy: Perception of the Sino-Soviet Conflict," in Ilpyong J. Kim, ed., The Strategic Triangle, New York: Paragon House, 1987, p. 51.

Command, Vietnam), was referred to General Earle Wheeler, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.¹⁵ This request was turned down by President Johnson, and General Westmoreland was recalled and replaced by General Creighton W. Abrams on July 2, 1968.¹⁶ The decision signalled that President Johnson would rule out major escalation.

The “Vietnamization” was superficially designed to improve the RVNAF (Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces) until they could assume the responsibility for combat, but the overall aim was to withdraw American forces so as to reduce political pressure at home.¹⁷ The other purpose of withdrawing US troops was to negotiate directly and secretly with the North Vietnamese.¹⁸ However, A quick withdrawal would bring about a possible South Vietnamese collapse. A government in Saigon controlled by the communists would not be welcomed by the US, and the credibility of US overseas commitments would be gravely weakened.¹⁹ Therefore when later North Vietnamese offensives gravely challenged not only “peace with honour,” but also the entire foreign

¹⁵Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 683.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 683-684. See also Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, p. 710.

¹⁷Stanley Karnow, *Ibid.*, p. 684.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 593.

¹⁹John Spanier, *op. cit.*, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, p. 196. See also Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

policy he had so carefully structured, Nixon unleashed tremendous forces against the North.

To North Vietnam, the United States was but the latest of a succession of colonial rulers. The Chinese had colonised Vietnam since 111 B. C., the local people only defeating the Chinese army and establishing an independent state in 940 A. D.²⁰ In 1861, French forces captured Saigon. In 1883, France established a protectorate over Annam and Tonkin, and ruled Cochinchina as a colony. In 1887 France created the Indochinese Union, composed of Cochinchina, Annam, Tonkin, and Cambodia.²¹

In 1890, within a decade of the start of French colonial rule over Vietnam,

²⁰Joseph Buttinger, Vietnam: A Political History, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1968, pp. 25, 37.

²¹Stanley Karnow, op. cit., pp. 672-674.

Ho Chi Minh, both a communist and a nationalist,²² was born in central Vietnam. He left Vietnam in 1911, in his early 20s. In 1919 Ho tried to petition US President Woodrow Wilson at the Versailles peace conference for self-determination in Vietnam, but in vain. Next year, he joined the newly formed French communist party. In January 1930, Ho and his fellow exiles formed the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) in Hong Kong, which could trace its origins to the Association of Revolutionary Annamite Youth, set up by Ho in 1925, in Canton, China.²³ In May 1941, after thirty years overseas, Ho returned to Vietnam covertly and, formed the Vietnam Doc Lap Dong Minh Hoi, or

²²It is debatable that Ho and his followers could be recognised as both communists and nationalists at the same time. Anyway Ho took double advantage of them. See Gabriel Kolko, The Roots of American Foreign Policy, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982, p. 94. Maj. Edward L. Katzenbach, Jr., USMCR, "Indo-China: A Military-Political Appreciation," World Politics, January 1952, p. 205. It is generally agreed that in the twentieth century, nationalism has had an enormous influence on international politics. From the beginning, third world nationalism was anti-imperialism and anti-Western. In colonial Asia, nationalism was basically a revolt of indigenous peoples against alien political domination. In Vietnam, in particular, the insurgent movement was almost solely an expression of nationalism, unlike the Chinese revolution, which was generated essentially by social and economic factors. Thus, the Vietnamese communists used nationalism more effectively against the French and Americans than the latter were able to use anti-communism against the nationalists. See Steve Smith, ed., Nationalism and International Society, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 5, 113. William Henderson, "Communist Movements in Southeast Asia," Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 8, 1954, No. 1, p. 32. Seymour Topping, "Indo-China on the Razor's Edge," Foreign Affairs, April 1951, p. 471. And, some scholars assert that Washington even saw Vietnamese nationalism as a tool of the communists. Gatriel Kolko, op. cit., The Roots of American Foreign Policy, p. 94.

²³William Henderson, Ibid., p. 34.

Vietminh for short, to fight both Japan and France for the independence of Vietnam.²⁴

When Japan surrendered in August 1945, the Vietminh moved swiftly to fill the vacuum. The northern part of Vietnam, north of the 16th parallel, according to the Potsdam Conference decision, was occupied by the Nationalist Chinese army. They stayed from August 1945 to February 1946 and refused to permit the French to return. Shielded by this protective cloak, the Vietminh consolidated its position.²⁵ The same day that Japan formally surrendered to the Allies, on September 2, 1945, Ho declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.²⁶ On March 6, 1946, after the withdrawal of Nationalist Chinese troops, Ho signed an agreement with France to allow the French army to replace the Chinese troops in the north.²⁷ Obviously, Ho was not equipped with enough power to refuse the continuing French rule. However, that never dampened Ho's rebellious determination.

In November 1946, after the breakdown of the March 6 Accord and the failure of negotiations, the French bombarded Haiphong to expel the Vietminh

²⁴Ruth Fisher, "Ho Chi Minh: Disciplined Communist," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1954, pp. 90-91. See also Michael Maclear, *op. cit.*, p. 6. Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 675.

²⁵William Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

²⁶It was the first Communist-led, anti-colonial country in Asia.

²⁷William Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

and restore its own authority.²⁸ Vietminh forces withdrew from Hanoi in December 1946 after attacking the French garrison. Ho called for resistance to France, and the first Indochina War began. This was brought to an end by the Geneva Conference settlement, which concluded on July 21, 1954.²⁹ Due to its containment policy, Ho, leader of the Vietminh guerrillas against the French, was adjudged by the US to be nothing more than another puppet of the communist conspiracy after the Korean War.³⁰

After Dien Bien Phu and the 1954 Geneva Conference, it was apparent that a triumph on the battlefield could not bring freedom from colonial rule. South Vietnam rejected the Geneva Conference agreement and became supported by the US for its security. To Ho, the nation was still divided. The French had faded from the scene but the Americans were beginning to make their mark. Therefore after the end of the first Indochina War, the Vietminh considered itself to be the only force in Indochina ready to abolish colonial rule.

In some sense in the eyes of the Vietnamese people the North Vietnam revolutionary communists were seen as patriotic fighters expelling the French colonial rulers and the US imperial invaders. The Koreans had fought each

²⁸Colin Brown and Peter F. Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

²⁹Russell H. Fifield, *op. cit.*, p. 861.

³⁰Michael Schaller, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

other in the Korean War, and although some foreign powers were involved, these foreigners had not come to restore colonial rule, as happened in Vietnam.³¹

A second factor is that North Vietnam tried to recover Vietnam's sphere of influence in Indochina. France lumped Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos as a whole under its colonial rule. Ho was aware of this. During the first Indochina war, although Vietnam was the geographical focus of the fighting, the regular Vietminh forces invaded Laos in 1953 and 1954, and Cambodia in 1954.³² After the defeat and humiliation of France at Dien Bien Phu, the North Vietnamese thought that in one form or other they should fall heir to France's former colonies, and resuscitated their old plan for an "Indochina Federation" led by North Vietnam.³³

North Vietnam had realised the nature of the rivalry between its two major assistance-providers, the PRC and the SU, in its war against the US and took advantage of that competition. Without large scale aid from the PRC and the SU, North Vietnam could not possibly do battle with the US. In the long period of the second Indochina War, North Vietnam knew how to manoeuvre in

³¹Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, p. 80.

³²Russell H. Fifield, *op. cit.*, p. 861.

³³Bernard K. Gordon, "Indochina: Still the Cockpit," in Ilpyong J. Kim, ed., The Strategic Triangle, New York: Paragon House, 1987, p. 149.

order to get much more assistance from both the PRC and the SU for its own purposes.³⁴ However, after the formation of a new strategic triangle in 1969, both the PRC and the SU deemed their relations with the US much more vital than the relationship with North Vietnam and decided on compromise at the Paris peace talks.

B. The Danger of a Two-front War (1965-1969)

The idea of the United Front policy is to combine all the enemy's enemies to defeat a mutual foe. Thus, in the mid-1960s when it had nothing but decayed relations with the SU, the PRC considered uniting with the SU's enemy as counterbalance. Nevertheless, there was improvement in the relations between the PRC and the US at this time. On the contrary, the worsening relations with both superpowers made the PRC even face the danger of wars with the SU in the north and the US in the south.

(i) With the SU

The substantial worsening PRC-SU relations can be analysed from two aspects.

³⁴Even the big Soviet assistance to North Vietnam after 1965 did not translate into increased political influence, as Hanoi doggedly stuck to its "straight zig-zag" path between its two major allies. For example, Hanoi did not support the Soviet proposals for collective security in Asia first enunciated in 1969. Also Hanoi went ahead and launched the 1972 Spring offensive despite Soviet concerns that this would disrupt the scheduled summit between Nixon and Brezhnev. See Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, Soviet Relations with India and Vietnam, London: Macmillan, 1992, pp. 58-59.

(a) Border Clashes

The PRC and the SU shared the longest land boundary in the world. Its total length is approximately 5,500 miles: 2,000 miles in Manchuria, 2,000 miles in Sinkiang, and 1,500 miles with Outer Mongolia,³⁵ a protégé of the SU. The previously mentioned unequal treaties mainly referred to those Chinese lands ceded to Russia during the weak Chinese Ch'ing dynasty in the nineteenth century.

The joint editorial of People's Daily and Red Flag on September 6, 1963, said:

...In April and May 1962, the leaders of the C.P.S.U. used their organs and personnel in Sinkiang, China, to carry out large-scale subversive activities in the Ili region and enticed and coerced several tens of thousands of Chinese citizens into going to the Soviet Union. The Chinese government lodged repeated protests and made repeated representations, but the Soviet government refused to repatriate these Chinese citizens on the pretext of "the sense of Soviet legality" and "humanitarianism." To this day, this incident remains unsettled. This is indeed an astounding event, unheard of in the relations between socialist countries.³⁶

The Soviets in reply accused the PRC of provoking more than 5,000 border incidents in 1962 alone.³⁷

³⁵Luke T. Chang, op. cit., p. 108.

³⁶Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 2, p. 1164.

³⁷Luke T. Chang, op. cit., p. 111.

Before the border violations were reported, as early as March 8, 1963, in People's Daily the PRC brought up the entire subject of the unequal treaties:

...In the 100 years or so prior to the victory of the Chinese revolution, the imperialist and colonial powers—United States, Britain, France, tsarist Russia, Germany, Japan, Italy, Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal—carried out unbridled aggression against China. They compelled *the* government of old China to sign a large number of unequal treaties—the Treaty of Nanking of 1842, the Treaty of Aigun of 1858, the Treaty of Tientsin of 1858, the Treaty of Peking of 1860, the Treaty of Ili of 1881, the Protocol of Lisbon of 1887, the Treaty of Shimonoseki of 1895, the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong of 1898, the Treaty of 1901, and so on. By virtue of these unequal treaties, they annexed Chinese territory in the north, south, east, and west, and held leased territories on the seaboard and in the hinterland of China. Some seized Taiwan and the Penghu Islands, some occupied Hong Kong and forcibly leased Kowloon, some put Macao under perpetual occupation, and so on and so forth.³⁸

Therefore, the Sino-Soviet border dispute gradually became a serious problem. Worse than that, the Soviet Union started to fortify its borders, which aggravated the already dangerous border situation.

The Soviets increased their strength along the border with the PRC from 13 “thin” divisions in 1965 to 25 “thick” divisions by the spring of 1969,³⁹ just before the Chenpao Island incident on the Ussuri River. The PRC at that

³⁸Harold C. Hinton. ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1119.

³⁹Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, “The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game-Theoretical Analysis,” pp. 496-497.

moment responded in relatively weak military terms.⁴⁰ Nevertheless the SU's build-up led to the final Ussuri clash and also led the PRC to think the SU would launch a preventive attack.

(b) Sino-Soviet Rivalry in Vietnam

During World War II, the contact of the ICP (Indochinese Communist Party) with the SU was broken and the Comintern dissolved. At the end of World War II, there was little evidence of Soviet support for Vietminh's August 1945 revolution. Formal state-to-state relations between the SU and the DRV, established on January 31, 1950, followed the PRC's diplomatic recognition of the DRV on January 16, 1950.⁴¹ From the recognition of the DRV in 1950 up to 1965, the SU gave little significant assistance to North Vietnam in the first Indochina War and its aftermath.⁴²

Until the end of 1964, North Vietnam was mainly dependent on PRC aid.⁴³ After the establishment of the PRC on October 1, 1949, Ho Chi Minh

⁴⁰R.K.I. Quested, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁴¹Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁴²The reason for the low-key Soviet role, some scholars argue, was that to support Hanoi and Vietcong more vigorously would only help Beijing in the long run. To urge an end to the fighting through a negotiated settlement would leave Moscow further exposed to Beijing's charges of inadequate leadership in world affairs and would risk the further loss of Soviet prestige in the world Communist government. Therefore it was wise to have kept Soviet involvement in Vietnam to a minimum. See Charles B. McLane, "USSR Policy in Asia," *Current History*, October 1965, p. 219.

⁴³Theodore Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

appealed to Mao Zedong for more military aid. General Lo Kwei-po was sent to be Vietminh's military adviser. The PRC also supplied the Vietminh with foodstuffs, arms and ammunition. Large numbers of Vietminh officers went to the PRC to receive political and military training. On January 18, 1950, a Vietminh military delegation led by Nguyen Dai Chi visited Beijing and signed a "Sino-Vietnamese Trade Agreement on Military Supplies," which stipulated that the PRC would sell to Vietminh 150,000 Japanese rifles, 10,000 American carbines and ammunition.⁴⁴

Also between September 1950 and October 1951, the PRC built a rail line from Liuzhou to the border town of Chen-nan-kuan, via Nanning. This railroad became the busiest land supply route for the DRV.⁴⁵ In July 1952, the DRV and the PRC signed a "Sino-Vietnamese Goods Exchange Agreement" in Beijing. It stipulated that the PRC would supply North Vietnam with military and medical equipment, machine tools and agricultural products. In May 1953, a supplement was added, and in 1954, it was renewed and strengthened.⁴⁶ Thus even during the Korean War, although the PRC got involved in that conflict, the PRC still gave considerable aid to the DRV.

⁴⁴Stephen C. Y. Pan and Daniel Lyons, S.J., *op. cit.*, p. 22. See also Stephen C. Y. Pan, "China and Southeast Asia," *Current History*, September 1969, p. 165. King Chen, *op. cit.*, *Vietnam and China, 1938-1954*, pp. 261, 263.

⁴⁵King Chen, *Ibid.*, p. 269.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 272.

In 1953, the Chinese had provided the Vietnam military units with equipment captured from American and South Korean forces in Korea, superior in quality and quantity to that held by the French troops.⁴⁷ In 1954, during the campaign of Dien Bien Phu, one Chinese general stayed at the headquarters of General Giap and many Chinese officers were assigned to various levels of the Vietminh army. Besides, the Chinese reinforced the Vietminh in early March 1954, with one anti-aircraft regiment, 64 37mm. anti-aircraft guns, and 1,000 Molotova trucks.⁴⁸ The suspension of the Korean War and increased Chinese military support were decisive to the Vietminh's victory at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954.⁴⁹

In early 1965, the PRC's position in aiding the DRV was challenged by the SU. In August 1964, when the war was escalated by the Tonkin Gulf Incident, the DRV needed more sophisticated and advanced weapons to counter US armed forces, which only the SU could supply.⁵⁰ Major Soviet

⁴⁷Philip B. Davison, Vietnam at War, London: Sidgwick & Jackson Publishers Limited, 1989, pp. 162-163.

⁴⁸King Chen, op. cit., Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 297. For more details on the aid from the PRC, see Jian Chen, "China and the First Indo-China War, 1950-1954," The China Quarterly, March 1993, pp. 86-105. But the victory at Dien Bien Phu never brought any advantage to Vietminh's stand in the 1954 Geneva Conference.

⁴⁹Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, op. cit., p. 56. See also Philip B. Davison, op. cit., p. 273.

⁵⁰W. R. Smyser, The Independent Vietnamese: Vietnamese Communism between Russia and China, 1956-1969, Ohio University: Centre for International Studies, 1980, p. 79. See also Douglas Pike, Vietnam and the Soviet Union, Boulder: Westview Press, 1987, p. 74, pp. 116-117.

commitments of aid were announced after the visits to Hanoi by Soviet Prime Minister, Kosygin, in February 6 to 10, 1965.⁵¹ Within two months, Soviet-made surface-to-air missiles and other Soviet bloc military equipment arrived in North Vietnam.⁵² The SU was the only nation which could provide advanced weapons sufficient to counterbalance US military presence in Vietnam.

1965 was a pivotal year for several reasons. Firstly, the war in Indochina was more internationalised. Only after the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident was the US President given power by Congress to deploy troops in the battlefield of Vietnam.⁵³ Within a few years hundreds of thousands ^{of} US armed forces served in Vietnam. Although without an official declaration of war, the US did not hesitate to send its regular troops to Vietnam. Following the Korean War, it was another large-scale US military action in Asia. This sort of intervention made the SU worried that the favourable situation for the NLF (National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, also known as Vietcong) in South

⁵¹Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 116. See also W. R. Smyser, *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁵²János Raclványi, *Delusion and Reality*, Indiana: Gateway Edition Ltd., 1978, p. 41.

⁵³Two US destroyers were attacked by North Vietnamese patrol boats and the US Congress passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution on August 7, 1964, giving President Johnson extraordinary powers to act in Southeast Asia. After many Vietcong attacks on US airbases and billets, Rolling Thunder, a sustained retaliatory US bombing of North Vietnam, began on February 24, 1965. See Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 682.

Vietnam might be changed,⁵⁴ and so the SU party politburo felt it necessary to send Kosygin to Hanoi to conduct an on-the-spot investigation.⁵⁵ Soviet aid skyrocketed after Kosygin's visit.

Secondly, it proved again that the Soviet conception of détente was not of a cordial international relationship. As explained in Chapter 2, the Soviet leaders deemed détente ^a version of peaceful coexistence, or a process of bargaining rather than agreement.⁵⁶ It was doubtful that any genuine peace could be gained through this sort of détente. In that sense, in 1965, the SU shifted its policy in order to replace the PRC as the principal arms supplier to North Vietnam. For the SU, this indirect confrontation with the US was one aspect of the "détente" relationship that it was constructing with the US. At the same time a retreating US would not be interested in causing severe conflict with the SU in Vietnam. Thus, for the SU, Vietnam offered a chance to beat the

⁵⁴The SU estimated that the NLF forces had already liberated almost 75 per cent of the countryside and units of the People's Army of North Vietnam (PAVN) had joined the NLF forces. But an American intervention might change this favourable situation. See Janos Raclvanyi, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

⁵⁵János Raclványi, *Ibid.*, p. 38. The timing corresponded with the change in the SU leadership. Khrushchev's détente policy with the US was kept going by his successor Leonid Brezhnev and Aleksei Kosygin. However, the new leaders sent a delegation to visit Hanoi and SU aid started to pour into Vietnam. A new aspect of Soviet policy appeared on the scene.

⁵⁶ See pp. 60-61.

PRC in terms of aid competition and to earn bargaining chips in dealing with the US through its show of strength in Vietnam.

Even for North Vietnam, Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia said in December 1971 that the SU would aid North Vietnam just enough to keep them from losing the war but not enough to enable them to win it, because the SU wanted to keep North Vietnam as a state of subservience.⁵⁷

Thirdly, it was the outcome of continuing aggravated Sino-Soviet relations. Before 1965, the US had not participated wholeheartedly in the Vietnam War. Some conventional war materials donated by the PRC were good enough, such as at Dien Bien Phu, for North Vietnam to contain the situation against the French. After the Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1965, when the US marines started to land on the coast of Vietnam and the "Rolling Thunder" campaign of bombing was initiated, the SU became the only nation that could assist North Vietnam with advanced weaponry.⁵⁸ The time for the SU to supplant the PRC's position in North Vietnam had arrived. SU-DRV relations had been uneasy. North Vietnam had supported the PRC in the 1962

⁵⁷Robert C. Horn, "Soviet Influence in Southeast Asia: Opportunities and Obstacles," Asian Survey, August 1975, Vol. XV, No.8, p. 663.

⁵⁸By the end of May, 1965, following delays apparently caused by the PRC, Soviet military supplies began to reach North Vietnam in significant volume, including sophisticated and advanced jet fighters and ground-to-air missiles. See Charles B. McLane, op. cit., p. 219. Theodore Draper, op. cit., p. 143.

Sino-Indian border war and relations had reached an all time low in the summer of 1964 after North Vietnam declined to sign the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty. The SU wished to reverse this trend and generally reappraise its policy toward Vietnam.⁵⁹

For thousands of years the Chinese had regarded Vietnam as within its sphere of influence.⁶⁰ After the Korean War, turmoil in Vietnam would jeopardise the PRC's national security again. To prevent the situation getting worse became an important part of the PRC's foreign policy. The deteriorating polemics and split between the SU and the PRC created tension for both sides in their relations with Vietnam. The SU's huge aid to Vietnam would draw Soviet-North Vietnam relations closer, and in turn put pressure on the PRC. A confrontation was inevitable.

From 1965 all signs indicated that the Soviets had become the largest supplier of military equipment to the DRV. Since accurate details of aid from

⁵⁹Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁶⁰China was the only country to dominate Vietnam for more than a thousand years historically (111 B.C.-940 A.D.). In fact it was Nationalist Chinese forces that were assigned by the Allies to occupy northern part of Vietnam after the surrender of Japan at the end of World War II.

two major communist countries are hard to obtain, the following chart is only a guideline:⁶¹

(in million US dollars)	1954-1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Soviet Aid	365	295	510	705	530	370	420	415
military		210	360	505	290	120	75	100
economic		85	150	200	240	250	345	315
Chinese Aid	670	110	170	225	200	195	150	175
military		60	95	145	100	105	90	75
economic		50	75	80	100	90	60	100

The PRC refused to let the SU use Chinese territory to transport aid materials to North Vietnam,⁶² and so the SU sent its aid and supplies via the 7500-mile sea route from Eastern Europe to Haiphong.⁶³ Also as the chart shows SU and PRC aid peaked in 1967. After the 1968 Tet offensive, the military component of the Soviet aid package declined as a percentage of the total. Priority was given to meet^{ing} North Vietnam's economic needs.⁶⁴ From 1965 to 1968, approximately 50,000 PLA troops, including two to three anti-aircraft divisions, railroad engineers, and construction units operated in North

⁶¹King Chen, "Hanoi vs. Peking: Politics and Relations—A Survey," *Asian Survey*, September 1972, Vol. XII, No. 9, p. 815. Sources: 1954 to 1964 estimated by King Chen; 1965 to 1972 estimated by State Department, US, in April 1972.

⁶²See p. 122.

⁶³Theodore Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

⁶⁴Ramesh Thakur and Carlyle A. Thayer, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-119.

Vietnam.⁶⁵ Those troops remained in North Vietnam until the cessation in March 1968 of the massive American bombing of North Vietnam, above the twentieth parallel, following which they began gradually to go back to the PRC.⁶⁶

The falling off of the aid did not make much impact on the North Vietnamese war against the US, because the US had shifted its Vietnam policy to a more defensive one and was retreating. The dispute between the PRC and the SU remained unchanged, and in this respect, North Vietnam was still in an advantageous position. North Vietnam continued to take aid from both and advice from neither, because neither side had sufficient leverage.⁶⁷

To compensate for what it lacked in advanced weapons in their competition to aid the DRV, the PRC took two actions, theoretically proclaiming the theory of "People's War," and practically boycotting Soviet aid to North Vietnam. On September 3, 1965, the Chinese defence minister, Lin Biao, wrote an article "Long Live the Victory of People's War," published by the Peking Review. Lin's treatise laid down the ideological framework for

⁶⁵Allen S. Whiting and Robert F. Deruberger, China's Future, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977, p. 58. See also Allen S. Whiting, "Chinese Foreign Policy Options in the 1990s," in Samuel S. King, ed., China and the World, Boulder: Westview Press, 1989, p. 303. Another estimation the figure of the PLA troops in Vietnam was between 80,000 to 100,000, see Douglas Pike, op. cit., Vietnam and the Soviet Union, p. 35.

⁶⁶George McT. Kahin, Intervention, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986, p. 340.

⁶⁷Douglas Pike, op. cit., Vietnam and the Soviet Union, p. 40.

Mao's interpretation of the PRC's foreign policy. For China, Vietnam was a laboratory for the people's war. On the other hand, Lin also perceived it to be a laboratory for the American effort to suppress people's war.⁶⁸ The doctrine of the "people's war" stressed political mobilisation and indoctrination of the people as a basis for military mobilisation; time was utilised to mobilise the people and to build up revolutionary forces.⁶⁹ The doctrine of the people's war featured largely in its resort to mobilisation, its use of delays, its decidedly defensive flavour, and its fundamental thinking that men rather than materials would decide the outcome of a war.⁷⁰ Besides, Lin's article stated:

...He (Mao) raised guerrilla warfare to the level of strategy because, if they are to defeat a formidable enemy, revolutionary armed forces should not fight with reckless disregard for the consequences when there is a great disparity between their own strength and the enemy's. If they do, they will suffer serious losses and bring heavy setbacks to the revolution. Guerrilla warfare is the only way to mobilize and apply the whole strength of the people against the enemy, the only way to expand our forces in the course of the war, deplete and weaken the enemy, gradually change the balance of forces between the enemy and ourselves, switch from guerrilla to mobile warfare, and finally defeat the enemy.⁷¹

⁶⁸Daniel S. Papp, Vietnam: The View from Moscow, Peking, Washington, Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1981, p. 77.

⁶⁹Ralph L. Powell, "Maoist Military Doctrines," Asian Survey, Vol. VIII, No.4, April 1968, p. 251.

⁷⁰Harlan W. Jencks, "People's War under Modern Condition: Wishful Thinking, National Suicide, or Effective Deterrent?" The China Quarterly, June 1984, p. 312.

⁷¹Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 2, p. 1230.

In fact, the PRC was unable to provide the high technology military equipment the DRV required in its escalating confrontation with the US. Under this disadvantageous condition the PRC was forced to change its tactics, regardless of what would be the DRV's reaction, to save what it had already accomplished in North Vietnam.⁷² The advocacy of the "people's war" theory was a morale-boosting cover for the unwelcome strategic fact.⁷³

In line with the United Front policy, Lin asserted in the article that the contradiction between the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the imperialists headed by the US was the principal contradiction in the world. He proposed that the world countryside (Asian, African and Latin American countries) should surround the world town (comprising North America and Western Europe). A people's war should be urged against the US imperialism and its lackeys, and the United Front would be worldwide.⁷⁴

The North Vietnamese leaders ignored Lin's article since they were confident in their own political and military timetable irrespective of their ally's

⁷²Frank E. Rogers, "Sino-American Relations and the Vietnam War, 1964-1966," The China Quarterly, June 1976, p. 304.

⁷³1967 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., pp. 687-688.

⁷⁴See the text of Lin's article on p. 1234 of Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit.. Also reference of O. Edmund Clubb, op. cit., p. 103.

wishes.⁷⁵ However, the US had ^a different view ⁱⁿ that it thought that a quick victory over North Vietnam was remote in a sluggish and “guerrilla” type of war, totally different from traditional Western warfare.⁷⁶ Thus the US *feared* Lin’s article would encourage the DRV to adopt a “people’s war” strategy to defeat the US.⁷⁷

The major issue was Chinese cooperation in the shipment of Soviet equipment to North Vietnam by rail and air. The PRC agreed to the trans-shipment of Soviet equipment by rail and an agreement was signed on April 30, 1965.⁷⁸ As far as air transit was concerned, however, the PRC refused to grant the SU overflight and landing rights. This was due to the PRC’s concerns regarding the credit likely to be gained by the SU for the entire international communist effort on behalf of North Vietnam, with the PRC playing only a subordinate role. This might result in the new Soviet leadership of Brezhnev-

⁷⁵Frank E. Rogers, *op. cit.*, P. 304. In September 1966, while the Chinese press was celebrating the first anniversary of Lin Biao’s article, *Hoc Tap*, the theoretical journal of the North Vietnamese, came out with a critical disavowal of the same. This article emphasised that the North Vietnamese should lose their inferiority complex and avoid too much reliance on foreign, obviously Chinese, experience. See Ishwer C. Ojha, “China and North Vietnam: The Limits of the Alliance,” *Current History*, January 1968, p. 45.

⁷⁶Peter Van Ness, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁷⁷Janos Raclvanyi, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

⁷⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2043.

Kosygin continuing to pursue the Khrushchev “revisionist” style against the interests to the PRC.⁷⁹

Originally, some in the PRC wanted “united action” with the SU so that the PRC could play a more active role in Vietnam in order to forestall a US victory. This was advocated by a group in the People’s Liberation Army, led by Chief of Staff, Luo Ruiqing.⁸⁰ Luo was removed from power in December 1965, but the strategic debate in Beijing continued. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were others who advocated “united action” with the SU.⁸¹ The debate eventually came to an end in the summer of 1966. In August of that year, the eleventh plenary session of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP was held in Beijing, and the removal from power of the dissident party leaders started.⁸²

The PRC made rail transportation very difficult after it strongly condemned SU aid to North Vietnam in the joint editorial of People’s Daily and Red Flag on November 11, 1965:

In numerous speeches, documents, and articles, the new leaders of the C.P.S.U. have been vociferously advocating “united action” on the part of the Communist parties and the socialist countries.

⁷⁹Ibid., vol. 2, p. 1254.

⁸⁰Parris H. Chang, “Peking’s Perceptions of the Two Superpowers and of American-Soviet Relations,” in Ilpyong J. Kim, ed., The Strategic Triangle, New York: Paragon House, 1987, p. 96.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 97.

⁸²See pp. 149-150.

They are incessantly spouting such fine words as “unity,” “common struggle against the enemy,” “unity against imperialism,” and “joint support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people.” But this is all false. Their deeds run counter to their words. At the plenary session of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. in September of this year, Brezhnev, first secretary of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., openly denounced the Communist Party of China while prating about “unity against imperialism.” This has laid bare the ugly features of the new leaders of the C.P.S.U. as protagonists of sham unity and real hostility towards China.

Just as the U.S. imperialists, the most aggressive of all the imperialists, try to disguise themselves as angels of peace, so the biggest revisionists and splitters seek to present themselves as ardent lovers of unity. The call of the new leaders of the C.P.S.U. for “united action” is nothing but a fraud.⁸³

Officially, the PRC rejected the proposal of “united action” on August 12, 1966, in the communiqué of the Eleventh Plenum of the CCP:

The Plenary Session maintains that to oppose imperialism, it is imperative to oppose modern revisionism. There is no middle road whatsoever in the struggle between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism. A clear line of demarcation must be drawn in dealing with the modern revisionist groups with the leadership of the C.P.S.U. as the centre, and it is imperative resolutely to expose their true features as scabs. It is impossible to have “*united action*” (emphasis added) with them.⁸⁴

(ii) With the US

The stagnation of Sino-US relations continued at this stage. The only direct contact channel in Warsaw turned out to be worthless. The Johnson

⁸³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1255.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 1571-1572.

administration continued to assist Taiwan and the protective umbrella of US-Republic of China (Taiwan) Mutual Defence Treaty was still in effect. The escalation of US involvement in the Vietnam War in President Johnson's era manifested his strong will to uphold the US policy of containing China.

The US concentrated on developing two aspects of its broader foreign policy at that stage: a dialogue with the SU, especially the limitation of strategic weapons, and a favourable result in Vietnam, preventing what it saw as the further spread of Communist Chinese influence. The continuing US-SU détente further isolated the PRC as it threatened the latter from both north and south.

(a) Security Intimidation from North and South

After Dulles' "massive retaliation" threat in the Eisenhower administration, Robert McNamara, Defence Secretary of the Kennedy administration, designed a "flexible response" policy to deal with the double perils of nuclear war and of the threat to US interests represented by the Communists' conduct.⁸⁵ Part of the flexible response was the importance of

⁸⁵The policy was a means of maintaining the balance of power in a way that would be consistent with available resources. It was a redefinition of interests to accommodate capabilities. It was a way to make containment function more efficiently, but through a method at once ingenious and less risky than the "massive retaliation" concept. After all the era of US monopoly of nuclear power had already gone. See John Lewis Gaddis, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

counter-insurgency.⁸⁶ The attempt to provide flexibility at the nuclear level had to be abandoned to allow concentration on fighting the war in Vietnam. The US therefore began a dialogue with the Soviet Union aimed at limiting the strategic weapons competition.⁸⁷ These became the centrepiece of a US-SU détente that would not give the PRC much chance to become reconciled with these two superpowers, in view of its already deteriorating relations with both of them. Indeed, a primary cause and purpose of détente for the Soviet Union was to prevent a too close rapprochement between the PRC and the US.⁸⁸

The tense situation brought by the PRC-SU border problem since the early 1960s was intensified by the fact that the PRC was known to be developing missiles, and its first hydrogen bomb was tested in 1967. Due to this realisation the Soviet military buildup along China's borders began in 1968.⁸⁹ In the south North Vietnam Tet offensive in the spring of 1968 brought

⁸⁶Anthony Hartley, "John Kennedy's Foreign Policy," Foreign Policy, Fall 1971, No. 4, p. 81.

⁸⁷The first agreements of SALT talks between the US and the SU were signed in May 1972 that limited antiballistic missiles defences and froze the level of ballistic missile forces on both sides. However, whether the strategic weapons limitation talks should be put on the first priority on the list of US-SU détente is very debatable. Some say that the whole world would not be relaxed if the two superpowers conducted an unrestrained strategic arms race. Some argue that for the SU the first choice of dealing with the US was to earn more benefits in terms of trade, technology and credit. See Thomas G. Paterson, ed., op. cit., p. 495. Adam B. Ulam, op. cit., p. 157.

⁸⁸Adam B. Ulam, Ibid., pp. 153-154.

⁸⁹Edward E. Rice, "The Sino-US détente: How Durable?" Asian Survey, September 1973, Vol. XIII, No. 9, p. 807.

about a major increase in US troop strength in South Vietnam to a highest level of 543,500.⁹⁰ In other words, the PRC was faced a major confrontation on the northern border with the SU and the possibility of the same on the southern border. She was caught in the tightening vise of a two-front conflict situation.

(b) US Preventing “Another Loss of China”

It was the loss of China to the communists in 1949 that helped to precipitate the US commitment to defend Indochina. It was also the US experience of PRC’s intervention in the Korean War, that had a strong effect on the making of subsequent US decisions about the Vietnam War.

In the 1950s and 1960s the “China threat” was a rationale for US involvement in wars in Korea and Vietnam. After the loss of China, the Truman administration moved to support South Korean and the French authorities in Vietnam to prevent further losses. On June 27, 1950, as he announced US action in support of South Korea to counterattack North Korea’s invasion, President Truman stated that:

...Accordingly I have ordered the Seventh Fleet to prevent any attack upon Formosa...I have also directed that United States Forces in the Philippines be strengthened and that military assistance to the Philippine Government be accelerated...I have similarly directed acceleration in the furnishing of military assistance to the Force of France and the Associated States in

⁹⁰Richard C. Thornton, *op. cit.*, p. 50. See also p. 99 of this dissertation.

Indochina and the dispatch of a military mission to provide close working relations with those forces.⁹¹

Evidently, the Truman administration thought the communist invaders would not only attack Korea, but that Taiwan, the Philippines and Indochina would also be objectives. The communist country that was located nearest to those “targeted” countries or areas was the PRC. Therefore, “another loss of China” would not be appreciated by the US government, and the PRC’s active involvement in the Korean War should keep the US alert for what would be the PRC’s next step. Domestically, political considerations reinforced Cold War assumptions. The American political system rewarded success and punished failure, and from the early 1950s various administrations deepened involvement in Vietnam for fear of the consequences of “losing.”⁹²

The Korean War was the first war where the US did not obtain a clear-cut victory. The US refused to be a signatory of the 1954 Geneva Conference agreement. Instead it formed an anti-Communist SEATO, and pledged to

⁹¹ Glenn D. Paige, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

⁹² The 1948 election of Truman and of a Democratic majority in both the House and the Senate, together with the fall of China to the Communist in 1949, exacerbated the differences within Congress, and between certain members of Congress and the administration, concerning US policy in Asia. Despite the differences, which centred on China, there was a growing consensus in both Congress and the Executive, and among both Democrats and Republicans, that steps needed to be taken to protect the rest of Asia, especially Southeast Asia, from the Communist. William C. Gibbons, The US Government and the Vietnam War, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1986, Part I, p. 48.

protect South Vietnam. One of the US war aims in Indochina was to contain the PRC's influence in Vietnam.⁹³ From 1950 to 1954, France received a large amount of military assistance from the US to help its efforts in the Indochina war.⁹⁴ France, in fact, increasingly became a pawn in American global strategy.⁹⁵ The concept of preventing the emergence of another communist state in Asia began to weigh more heavily.

From June 1950 to May 1954, when the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu, the US provided \$2.6 billion worth of military and economic aid to the French in Vietnam, no less than 80 per cent of the total cost of the French war effort in Indochina.⁹⁶ President Eisenhower did not completely oppose US intervention in Vietnam. But recalling his command of the Allies during World

⁹³Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, pp. 113-114.

⁹⁴In December 1950, the US signed a Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement with France, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos for indirect United States military aid to the three French states in Indochina. By the end of the Truman administration, the US was providing between one-third and one-half of the cost of the Indochinese war. The total amount of the US aid to France in Indochina in that period was between \$1.9 to \$3.6 billion, about 78% of the French war effort in Indochina. See Norman A. Graebner, "Global Containment: The Truman Years," Current History, August 1969, p. 81. Thomas E. Ennis, "Vietnam: Our Outpost in China," Current History, July 1956, p. 37. King Chen, *op. cit.*, Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 276. Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, The Roots of American Foreign Policy, p. 97. Russel H. Fifield, *op. cit.*, p. 862. Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 170. Colin Brown and Peter F. Moony, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁹⁵The US supported France in retaining control of Indochina, particularly after the outbreak of the Korean War because of its interest in the fulfilment of the containment policy. However, to Asian eyes, these were also acts of colonialism. See Edwin F. Stanton, "United States Foreign Policy in Southeast Asia," Journal of International Affairs, 1956, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 102-103.

⁹⁶Theodore Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

War II, he refused to commit the US alone, especially when the British were reluctant to be involved. Besides, Eisenhower had been elected on a pledge to end the war in Korea, not to spiral it into another, bigger confrontation with the PRC.⁹⁷ Thus in the Eisenhower administration era, there was no significant US military involvement in Vietnam. Nevertheless, “another loss of China” always haunted the US.

President Kennedy had favoured funding the war in Vietnam, asserting that the US must prevent the onrushing tide of communism from engulfing all Asia.⁹⁸ Although he rejected Maxwell Taylor and Walt Rostow’s recommendation, after their visit to Vietnam in October 1961, to send US combat troops there, American Military Assistance Command was formed in South Vietnam on February 6, 1962, and by mid-1962, US advisers had increased from 700 to 12,000.⁹⁹

President Johnson had inherited the mythology of the Alamo and was not contaminated by the cynicism that affected youth after World War I, and he claimed he would make the world safe for democracy.¹⁰⁰ The Tonkin Gulf

⁹⁷Theodore Draper, *Ibid.*, p. 39. Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, p. 197. Edward B. Fall, *Last Reflections on a War*, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1967, p. 140.

⁹⁸Stanley Karnow, *Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁹⁹Stanley Karnow, *Ibid.*, p. 680. Edward B. Fall, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

¹⁰⁰Stanley Karnow, *Ibid.*, p. 321.

resolution of August 1964, and the March 1965 Danang US marine corps landing, marked the beginning of President Johnson's "hawk-like" attitude.

The history of the US's gradually increasing engagement in the Vietnam War proved to be a process in which direct confrontation with communism was a logical result of the fulfilment of its containment policy in Asia. Because of this, Sino-US relations proved to be increasingly difficult.

The US's hardline and intransigent attitude toward the PRC was changed when President Nixon and Henry Kissinger took command of the foreign policy scene in Washington in 1969. The containment of communism was to be abolished and replaced by the search for a stable structure of peace.¹⁰¹

3.2. PRC Policy Evolution

A. Traditional Concepts

Historically, the Chinese considered that the Indochina peninsula was within its sphere of influence. The PRC therefore provided assistance to help the Vietminh win the 1954 Dien Bien Phu battle. However this role of ally was challenged and taken over by the SU after 1965.

¹⁰¹James C. Hsiung, "U. S. Relations with China in the Post-Kissingerian Era: A Sensible Policy for the 1980s," Asian Survey, August 1977, Vol. XII, No. 8, p. 692.

The PRC helped the Vietminh to win the Dien Bien Phu campaign, but this did not necessarily mean that the PRC approved of the Vietminh's goal of being a decolonized and independent nation. On top of that, the PRC took into account its own national interests and security, and its traditional status as a major power vis-à-vis Vietnam. It would not have been surprising in the 1954 Geneva Conference, if North Vietnam had been betrayed by the PRC.¹⁰² Besides, understandably enough, the PRC, working out its Vietnam policy before the emergence of the US-SU-PRC triangle in the late 1960s, was affected by its experience of the Korean War, which caused the PRC to prefer to have only indirect confrontation with the US in Vietnam.

Chinese foreign policy throughout the centuries had been to fragment Southeast Asia in order to influence its neighbours. A divided Vietnam suited the Chinese better than a unified neighbour, particularly one that had quarrelled with China for more than two thousand years.¹⁰³ Further, China's security would be served by restraining Vietnamese ambitions in Laos and Cambodia.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²John R. Boettiger, ed., Vietnam and American Foreign Policy, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1968, p. 73.

¹⁰³This is one of the reasons that Zhou manoeuvred to let Ho accept the conditions that in dividing Vietnam into two zones at the 1954 Geneva Conference. See Stanley Karnow, op. cit., p. 201.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 200-201.

From 111 B.C. the Chinese Han dynasty expanded and incorporated Vietnam into the Chinese empire, as the province of Giao Chi. Though Vietnam got independence in 940 A.D., however, only in 1428 A.D. did the Chinese recognise Vietnam's independence by signing an accord, after nearly a decade of revolt led by the Vietnamese Emperor, Le Loi.¹⁰⁵ Up until then, for about sixteen hundred years, Vietnam was either controlled by or regarded as a tributary of the Chinese empire.¹⁰⁶ In fact, this relationship lasted until June 1885, when a French-Chinese (Ch'ing) treaty was signed at Tientsin. One of the provisions of the treaty was to grant France suzerainty over Annam.¹⁰⁷ It meant that the Chinese retained some influence, since what France did in Annam (Annam became a French protectorate in 1883) was with the acquiescence of the Chinese. In July 1945, at the Potsdam Conference, rather than acceding to Nationalist China's demand to occupy the whole of Vietnam, the Conference granted it only the part north of the 16th parallel. The Chinese attitude was totally different from the occupant of the south—the British. The Chinese were opposed to the French going back to Vietnam and they sympathised with the Vietnamese. However, in February 1946, Nationalist

¹⁰⁵ Stanley Karnow, *Ibid.*, p. 672. See also Joseph Buttinger, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

¹⁰⁶ T. Louise Brown, *War and Aftermath in Vietnam*, London: Routledge, 1991, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Hosea Ballou Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire*, Vol. II, p. 366.

China and France signed a treaty, in which China allowed France to return to North Vietnam in exchange for complete French withdrawal from its colonial concessions and other privileges from China.¹⁰⁸

Before the Geneva Conference, PRC-DRV relations were close. There was no statement from the CCP on Vietnam from late 1946 to late 1949.¹⁰⁹ However, the CCP victory in the Chinese civil war definitely boosted the morale of the Vietminh, and a new approach to constructing good relations with the CCP was underway. The method of the CCP's success was a model for Vietminh. In late 1950 a study campaign to learn from the CCP's experience was begun, in particular documents or writings of Mao Zedong, Chu The and Liu Shaoqi were translated into Vietnamese and dispatched to all levels of every military and civilian Vietminh unit.¹¹⁰

There were several factors that indeed reminded the PRC that Indochina was very crucial to its interests and it tried to exert its control so long as the situation permitted and it had the power to do so.

Firstly, there was the security of the PRC's southern border and territory in the South China Sea. The PRC had military clashes along its borders with the

¹⁰⁸ Joseph Buttinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-216, 228, 238-239.

¹⁰⁹ King Chen, *op. cit.*, *Vietnam and China, 1938-1954*, p. 195.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

SU and India, located to the north and south-west respectively. It could not afford to have other border conflicts elsewhere, despite the existence of disputes over the ownership of islands in the South China Sea.¹¹¹

Secondly, there was the overseas Chinese problem. There were from 50 to 60 thousand ethnic Chinese living in North Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s, and at the same time about one million Chinese in the South.¹¹² The nationalistic Vietnamese both in the south and in the north were eager to see the economically powerful and culturally pervasive ethnic Chinese fully integrated into Vietnamese society. At least their political loyalty had to be ensured.¹¹³ In the north, according to an agreement reached between the PRC and North Vietnam in 1955, ethnic Chinese were to be administrated by Vietnam.¹¹⁴ This was an important concession from Beijing that was tantamount to the naturalisation of all Chinese in the north. According to the 1961 agreement, the

¹¹¹In January 1974, the PRC reoccupied the Paracel (Xisha) Islands from the Saigon government and, in April 1975, the PRG (Provisional Revolutionary Government, NLF) occupied some islets of the Spratly (Nansha) Islands, which the PRC claimed had been an inalienable part of Chinese territory since ancient times. See Grant Evans and Kelvin Rowley, Red Brothers at War, London: Verso, 1990, p. 46. The disputes originated from these two archipelagoes. Ownership was proclaimed by a special unilateral decree of the Saigon government, in September 1973, due to their oil resources. See D. R. SarDesai, Southeast Asia: Past and Present, Boulder: Westview Press, 1989, p. 290.

¹¹²Lewis Matthew Stern, Vietnamese Communist Policy toward the Overseas Chinese 1920-1982, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburg, 1984, printed by University Microfilms International, 1984, pp. 129, 183.

¹¹³Pao-min Chang, "The Sino-Vietnamese Dispute over the Ethnic Chinese," The China Quarterly, June 1982, p. 196.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 196.

Chinese who wished to return to China for short visits would from then on be issued only with Vietnamese travel documents.¹¹⁵

In the south, the Saigon government's naturalisation measures turned out to be much less effective than the Vietnamization programmes in the north. Its harsh stand led to violence in the Saigon area in the spring of 1957, as thousands of exasperated Chinese repeatedly demonstrated and rioted. Also, the entire South Vietnamese economy was almost wrecked when the Chinese simply closed their businesses and schools and began to withdraw large sums of money from the banks. In the face of a mounting crisis and in order to avert a national disaster, the Diem government finally had to modify its intransigent policies and relax their enforcement, until Vietnamization implied little more than a change of citizenship status for all Chinese, without seriously affecting their economic status or cultural activities.¹¹⁶

There is no doubt that both governments had problems with naturalisation. However, the problem of the ethnic Chinese persisted even when Vietnam was reunified in 1975, because they were populous and

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 197.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 198-199.

economically powerful. The problem deteriorated and became a primary point of conflict between the PRC and Vietnam in their 1979 border war.¹¹⁷

Thirdly, both powers saw the whole of Indochina as an area of potential domination and as a sphere of influence. This conflict between two expansionary powers came to the surface when South Vietnam was defeated by the North in 1975, and Laos and Cambodia also fell and became communist countries the same year,¹¹⁸ Vietnam saw its chance to fulfil its dream of conquering the whole Indochina peninsula. Once Vietnam and the SU had signed a friendship pact, Vietnam started to repress its ethnic Chinese and invaded Cambodia at the end of 1978, and war inevitably broke out in February 1979 between Vietnam and the PRC.

Fourthly, a divided and weak Vietnam served the PRC's national interest. In 1954, while the Geneva Conference was in session, the Vietminh won the campaign of Dien Bien Phu and the PRC's aid made this victory possible. However, at the conference, Zhou Enlai compelled the DRV delegation to accept the partition of Vietnamese territory.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷Ibid., pp. 204-207.

¹¹⁸In December 1975 Lao's coalition government was dismantled, and the ruling monarch was succeeded by Communist Pathet Lao regime, see The Random House Encyclopedia, op. cit., p. 2358; Phnom Penh fell to the Khmer Rouge on April 17, 1975, see Stanley Karnow, op. cit., p. 687.

¹¹⁹William J. Duiker, op. cit., p. 147. See also Stanley Karnow, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

To preserve a divided and weak Vietnam, the PRC paid much attention to its relations with Cambodia. For instance, after the Cambodian coup on March 18, 1970, when Prince Sihanouk was overthrown, the PRC allowed Sihanouk to flee to Beijing to plot his return home and resume the throne.¹²⁰ Meanwhile, the PRC assisted the Khmer Rouge for many years in its strife with the Heng Samrin regime under the auspices of Vietnam. Pol Pot of the Khmer Rouge, well known for his brutal carnage of millions of people, was supported by the PRC.

The prevention of a Vietnam-SU alliance was also crucial to keeping Vietnam weak. A protracted war would gradually weaken the DRV and keep Vietnam divided. For this reason, the PRC would not approve peace talks which would bring about the close of the Vietnam War and the opportunity of

¹²⁰Stanley Karnow, *Ibid.*, p. 685.

reunifying the divided country by the DRV.¹²¹

B. The Impact of the Korean War

The war in Korea (1950-1953) became a Chinese-American war and ended in stalemate. Because of its suffering in the Korean War, it was inconceivable for the newly established PRC to have yet another direct military confrontation with the US. Thus lessons from the Korean War deterred the Chinese from plunging into the first Indochina War.¹²²

To prevent a direct military encounter, the idea of a “buffer zone” or the “neutralisation” of Indochina, was raised as above-mentioned. The PRC tried to build up a favourable image in the international political arena and put forward the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence during the 1954 Geneva Conference. An important aspect of Zhou Enlai’s diplomacy during that

¹²¹The Vietnam War did end up with a reunified Vietnam by the DRV in 1975. This made more feasible of a DRV-SU alliance and the DRV invasion of Cambodia. A unified Vietnam could hardly dominate Cambodia, however, if the PRC were assisting the opposition, the Khmer Rouge. With respect of a DRV-SU alliance, the PRC could not do much to prevent it. In June 1978, the DRV joined the SU-sponsored Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA), and in November, the two signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. Backed by the SU, the DRV invaded Cambodia a few months later, and the PRC strengthened its help to the Khmer Rouge. Domestically, the DRV was, in the meantime, intensifying its harsh treatment of the ethnic Chinese in Vietnam. The PRC then launched a “teaching a lesson” war against the DRV in February 1979. A weak and constricted Vietnam was still in the PRC’s national interest. See Daniel Tretiak, “China’s Vietnam War and its Consequence,” The China Quarterly, December 1979, p. 741. Robert S. Ross, The Indochina Tangle: China’s Vietnam Policy 1975-1979, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, p. 3.

¹²²King Chen, op. cit., Vietnam and China, 1938-1954, p. 306.

conference was his systematic effort to neutralise the region. Only by terminating French colonial domination in Indochina, and restraining the major powers from interfering in the internal affairs of the three states of the Indochina region, could the peace and stability of Indochina be secured.

In 1953, after the cease-fire in the Korean War, the PRC was confronted with the possibility of US intervention in the Franco-Vietminh war in Indochina, because of the US containment policy which had applied in Asia since the Korean War and still existed. Zhou knew the limits of China's military capability, particularly after the Korean War experience, and priority had to be given to modernising the domestic economy, rather than another war with the US.¹²³

The vulnerability of the PRC's southern border with Vietnam remained a concern. To safeguard border security and to avoid facing the dilemma of whether or not to attack the US, Zhou, during the session of the 1954 Geneva Conference met Ho Chi Minh and persuaded Ho to accept the 17th parallel demarcation line. The partition of Vietnam would offer the PRC a buffer to its southern border. This also revealed the PRC's willingness to engage in classic great-power diplomacy at the expense of Marxist internationalism.¹²⁴ At the

¹²³Kuo-kang Shao, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

¹²⁴Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, p. 64.

1954 Geneva Conference the SU gave the Vietminh no more comfort than the Chinese did, since the SU was more concerned with using Indochina as a means of keeping France out of the European Defence Community.¹²⁵ At the end of the 1954 Geneva Conference, both the PRC and the SU in their different ways prodded the DRV into accepting the Geneva Accords. The Geneva Conference was the DRV's first major lesson on the nature and limitations of proletarian internationalism.¹²⁶

The provisions of the Geneva Accords, as stated in paragraphs 12 and 13 were concerned about Laos and Cambodia, besides Vietnam; and to quote the relevant passages:

Paragraph 12:

In their relations with Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, each member of the Geneva Conference undertakes to respect the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of the above-mentioned states, and to refrain from any interference in their internal affairs.

Paragraph 13:

The members of the Conference agree to consult one another on any question which may be referred to them by the International Supervisory Commission, in order to study such measures as may prove necessary to ensure that the agreements on the cessation of hostilities in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam are respected.¹²⁷

¹²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 64. See also p. 63 of this dissertation.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

¹²⁷*Keesing's Contemporary Archives, op. cit.*, Vol. IX, 1952-1954, p. 13690.

These words directly served the PRC's interests of neutralising the Indochina region. This sort of "buffer" concept had not changed eight years later. In July 1962, the Laos agreement of the second Geneva conference was reached, and Beijing revealed that keeping the war away from its border and avoiding direct confrontation with the US remained cardinal principles of its diplomacy.¹²⁸ The Laos agreement was a diplomatic triumph for the socialist and neutralist countries. For the first time, international guarantees of neutralism were furnished in the form of an agreement with the participation of the Western powers.¹²⁹

In the 1962 Laos agreement, the PRC abandoned its verbal commitment to armed struggle in Laos in order to obtain a peaceful border for itself. It also advocated negotiations for a similar plan for South Vietnam, revealing in the process the PRC's exclusive objective was its own national security. The PRC

¹²⁸It was a vital part of PRC's negotiating tactics of being aware of the intrinsic relationship between negotiations and hostilities. The Chinese delegation exploited the military and political development of Laos as an important instrument of its diplomacy at Geneva. For this purpose the Chinese kept close contacts with Princes Souvanna and Souphanouvong and gave them unreserved support in the face of Boun Oum, whose relationship with the US was often confused. The PRC assisted the Pathet Lao to gain a favourable position, and thus on July 9, 1962, during the protracted Geneva Conference on Laos, the new Laotian government declared it would honour the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and on July 23, 1962, eventually a Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos was signed. See Soviet Foreign Policy, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967, p. 115 and Chae-jin Lee, "Communist China and the Geneva Conference on Laos: A Reappraisal," Asian Survey, Vol. IX, No. 7, July 1969, p. 536. See also Gabriel Kolko, op. cit., Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, p. 402.

¹²⁹Soviet Foreign Policy, Ibid., p. 116.

would urge national-liberation struggles only where its own security was not endangered.¹³⁰

To advance this buffer zone concept, the PRC made it clear to the US several times that it would not enter the war unless the US invaded the DRV and threatened to move its forces toward the Chinese border.¹³¹ As in the Korean War, the PRC was primarily worried about the security of its own border. Since it realised it would be in a vulnerable and inferior position to the US once it crossed the demarcation line of the 17th parallel, the problem of how to manoeuvre to make the Indochina area a buffer zone was the main concern of the PRC's Vietnam policy.

C. Policy Aims

Due to its Korean War experience, the PRC simply wished that a neutral and buffer-like Indochina could be created to consolidate its security. However the situation developed unexpectedly and probably beyond control. If there was no neutrality, and conflict was inevitable, the goal for the PRC would be to prevent the Vietnam War from expanding to the point where it might require direct PRC intervention, which would compound the threat to its national security.

¹³⁰Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, p. 157.

¹³¹Gabriel Kolko, *Ibid.*, pp. 402-403. Bevin Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

Under these conditions, the PRC's interest demanded that North Vietnam should continue to fight at a level which would permit the PRC's continuation of policy of indirect confrontation with a minimum risk of direct involvement. North Vietnam would be used as a proxy in the war for the PRC's own benefit.¹³² In keeping with this concept, the PRC cold-shouldered any US peace initiatives in the late 1960s and early 1970s until the situation changed.

The policy aims of the Vietnam War from the perspective of the PRC were four-fold. The first was the weakening of North Vietnam. Both the SU and the PRC reduced their aid to the Vietminh, particularly in military materials, after the peak in 1967. Deprived of that assistance, especially advanced and sophisticated weapons from the SU, a direct encounter by North Vietnam with the US was out of the question. A protracted war would leave North Vietnam totally devastated, which would not necessarily be unwelcome to the PRC. Besides, both the SU and the PRC regarded their relations with the US as more important than their relations with North Vietnam. Therefore, the emerging triangular relations would force them to play games with one another, and their Vietnam policies were adjusted to endorse the US peace talks initiatives.

¹³²Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, pp. 452-453.

Tactically, the US had used heavy bombing to force North Vietnam back to the negotiation table. These tactics turned out to be effective. The May 1972 mining of Haiphong harbour and intensification of the bombing made North Vietnam feel isolated, and both the PRC and the SU reacted mildly to the US actions. The North Vietnamese Spring offensive was stopped and they agreed to go back to Paris to talk. The 1972 Christmas bombing, the largest in human history, hastened the conclusion of the Paris peace agreement.

The second aim was to weaken the US. Without actually participating, there were advantages for Beijing in the continuation of the war. Apart from weakening North Vietnam, it would also weaken the US. Because the war in Vietnam was a both conventional and guerrilla-style war, this protracted struggle could force the US into an appropriately conciliatory frame of mind.¹³³ The Americans were used to engaging in large scale regular combat. Before the development of the US-SU-PRC triangle in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the PRC encouraged North Vietnam to fight until final victory. Mao Zedong once again applied his strategy of a protracted struggle to bog down the enemy. He believed, as he told Edgar Snow in an interview in 1965, that the US would lose interest and withdraw in a short period of time. North Vietnam should not

¹³³David Marr, "Sino-Vietnamese Relations," The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs, issue number 6, November 1981, p. 57.

negotiate a compromise, therefore but fight to the end.¹³⁴ The PRC's expectations would probably not suit North Vietnam's wishes, as a continuation of war would bring US retaliatory bombing and weaken North Vietnam. In the end, if war could be dragged on, the US would eventually retire from the scene outmanoeuvred and psychologically exhausted.

The third aim was to prevent encirclement by a SU-DRV alliance. One of the major worries of the PRC, after its relations with the SU deteriorated, was a two-front war, against the SU in the north and the US in the south. After the border issue worsened, in 1965 the SU built up its forces along the PRC's northern borders, and the PRC certainly did not want a major war in Indochina that would jeopardise its security in the south. Nevertheless the war continued, but the PRC did not become directly involved. And, after all, the PRC did not want the DRV to win the war, because it feared that the DRV might become a Soviet satellite after the war, and help complete the encirclement of the PRC.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, this was exactly what happened after the fall of Saigon, in 1975.

The final objective was to undermine US-SU détente. The US-SU détente had a long history from the mid 1950s, particularly after the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. Nuclear arms control was the main topic. After 1965, the SU

¹³⁴King Chen, *op. cit.*, "Hanoi vs. Peking: Policies and Relations—A Survey," pp. 810-811.

¹³⁵Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, p. 419.

replaced the PRC as the most prominent supporter of the DRV in the second Indochina War, but, eventually the SU put its relations with the US first, and approved of the US policy of peace talks. This showed that détente with the US was uppermost in the Soviet Union's mind.

The war in Vietnam could undermine the existing US-SU détente. The SU was compelled to help North Vietnam to fight against the US, as giving up and let North Vietnam collapse, would be a major defeat. However, if Vietnam kept the US and the SU in stances of indirect confrontation, and the pace of détente would slow down.¹³⁶

All these advantages to the PRC made it encourage the DRV to fight the "guerrilla" war to a conclusion, although after 1965, it substantially lost its crucial influence over the DRV. The PRC national interest demanded that North Vietnam should continue to fight at a level which would continue to allow the PRC to pursue a policy of indirect confrontation with a minimal risk of direct involvement. Therefore, during this period, the PRC did not endorse the idea of peace talks on the Vietnam War.

¹³⁶Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

D. The Cultural Revolution and its Influence

Coincidentally, the Cultural Revolution erupted and this domestic turmoil had an enormous impact on the PRC's foreign policy. Mao Zedong's position was shaken by the failure of the "Three Red Flags" movement in the late 1950s and early 1960s.¹³⁷ Actually Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and their clique progressively tried to take the leadership away from him. To face that increasing anti-Mao momentum, Mao initiated the Cultural Revolution to try to regain domination. Ostensibly, the Cultural Revolution concentrated on the ideological struggle. According to the Red Flag editorial on June 16, 1966:

Why is it necessary to launch the Cultural Revolution of the proletariat? Why is this Cultural Revolution of the proletariat so important?

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has scientifically summed up the historical experience of international proletarian dictatorship and put forward the theory of contradiction, class, and class struggle in socialist society. He constantly reminds us that we must never forget the class struggle, never forget to bring politics to the fore, never forget to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that we must adopt various measures to guard against the usurpation of leadership by revisionism and the restoration of capitalism. He points out: In order to overthrow a regime, it is first necessary to lay hold of the superstructure and ideology and to make good preparations for public opinion. This applies to the revolutionary class as well as the counterrevolutionary class.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung is precisely proceeding from this basic viewpoint when he calls on us to launch the class struggle for the

¹³⁷The three "Red Flags" were: The General Line of Socialist Construction, Great Leap Forward and People's Communes.

“promotion of the proletariat and the destruction of the bourgeoisie” in the ideological sphere.¹³⁸

But evidently the movement was mainly a power struggle.¹³⁹ Mao tried to destroy all his political enemies. In the CCP’s Eleventh Plenum session on August 8, 1966, the CCP central committee made the aim of the Cultural Revolution clear:

Although the bourgeoisie has been overthrown, yet they attempt to use the old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits of the exploiting classes to corrupt the mind of man and conquer his heart in a bid to attain the goal of restoring their rule. On the other hand, the proletariat must squarely face all challenges of the bourgeoisie in the ideological sphere, and use its own new ideas, new culture, new customs, and new habits to transform the spiritual aspect of the whole society.

At present, our aim is to knock down those power holders who take the capitalist road, criticize the bourgeois reactionary academic “authorities,” criticize the ideologies of the bourgeoisie and all exploiting classes, reform education and literature and the arts, and reform all superstructure which is incompatible with the socialist economic base in order to facilitate the consolidation and development of the socialist system.¹⁴⁰

The Chairman of the CCP, Liu Shaoqi was purged in the session of the Eleventh Plenum and then imprisoned. Two years later in the Twelfth Plenum

¹³⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 3, p. 1302.

¹³⁹Mao launched the Cultural Revolution to purify the nation and to keep it loyal to the Marxist-Leninist faith. Persons suspected of taking the road back to capitalism, no matter what their position or function, were to be rooted out. Purges were carried out against the army, industry, agriculture, and the party itself. See John Spanier, *op. cit.*, American Foreign Policy since World War II, p. 184.

¹⁴⁰Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 1565.

he was deprived of all his official titles and duties as a CCP member.¹⁴¹

Another “capitalist power holder,” Deng Xiaoping, was also purged in the Eleventh Plenum.¹⁴²

After these severe power struggles, Mao stabilised his position, but the price he paid was very high, even economically. The delayed third Five-Year Plan was announced not in 1963 but 1966, the year that the Cultural Revolution was also introduced, thus the whole process of the economy was deteriorating.¹⁴³

Such domestic confusion could not form a solid base for cultivating foreign relations. Before the Cultural Revolution, there were thirty-nine Chinese ambassadors stationed overseas; thirty-eight of them were recalled home to join the Cultural Revolution. The last one, Ambassador to the United Arab Republic, Huang Hua, was transferred back to the PRC in July 1969.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ 1970 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, *op. cit.*, p. 2:9.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 2:8.

¹⁴³ The scheduled first Five-Year Plan was due to be initiated in 1953, but due to lack of experience, the details of the plan could only be fixed in July 1955, and by then, more than half of the “five years” had already elapsed. The second Five-Year Plan was from 1958 to 1962, but it was ruined by the “Three Red Flags” movement. See 1970 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, *op. cit.*, p. 2:20. Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 189.

¹⁴⁴ 1970 Yearbook on Chinese Communist, Ibid., p. 2:15.

Also the Boxer-rebellion style attacks were made to foreigners at home and abroad.¹⁴⁵

During the Cultural Revolution period, Chinese foreign policy could hardly be said to have made any significant gains and its influence in the Third World visibly declined.¹⁴⁶ As the PRC emerged from the chaos, however there was a need to reassert a new role for the PRC on the foreign stage.

E. Policy in Action

Based on its existing Vietnam policy, the PRC took certain measures, even though it was still in the turmoil of Cultural Revolution.

(i) Opposing the Peace Talks

A continuing Vietnam War would weaken the US and the DRV, undermine US-SU détente. Before 1969 therefore, and the emergence of the US-PRC rapprochement, there were no grounds for the PRC to endorse the Paris peace talks. There is strong evidence for these conclusions.

In January 1967, the North Vietnamese foreign minister, Nguyen Duy Trinh, was interviewed by an Australian journalist, Wilfred Burchett. In that interview, Nguyen Duy Trinh emphasised that negotiations must await an

¹⁴⁵The domestic turmoil see Stanley Karnow, Mao and China, New York: The Viking Press, 1972, pp. 240, 248. Overseas, particularly for those anti-Chinese incidents happened in Burma and the SU, see Thomas W. Robinson, ed., The Cultural Revolution in China, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971, pp. 265-269, 338-344.

¹⁴⁶John Gittings, op. cit., p. 50. J. D. Armstong, op. cit., p. 91.

unconditional halt in the US bombing of North Vietnam as well as American acceptance of the four-point proposal.¹⁴⁷ This viewpoint was reasserted in December 1967. Nguyen Duy Trinh's assertion in that interview was regarded as North Vietnam's first peace move, but it is interesting to note that the PRC was the only communist country that did not publish the interview. This omission was interpreted as evidence of the PRC's reluctance to see a negotiated settlement in Vietnam.¹⁴⁸

On April 3, 1968, three days after President Johnson offered peace talks, North Vietnam accepted, and the talks were endorsed by the SU.¹⁴⁹ The PRC was the only country that wanted a protracted Vietnam war at that point, so when North Vietnam agreed to talk, the PRC was strongly opposed and did not report anything about the issue.¹⁵⁰ On April 6, 1968, three days after North Vietnam's agreeing to talk, the People's Daily criticised President Johnson's offer as being a "new fraud."¹⁵¹

Apart from the benefits to them of a protracted Vietnam War, the reason why the PRC leaders opposed the DRV's peace talks with the US was because they could not take part in them, which was not the case with the 1954 Geneva

¹⁴⁷The four points, see p. 195.

¹⁴⁸Ishwer C. Ojha, op. cit., p. 46.

¹⁴⁹W. R. Smyser, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 102.

¹⁵¹People's Daily, April 6, 1968. However the PRC did not blame North Vietnam directly.

Conference. They were also worried that the talks would be manipulated by the two superpowers, which were both hostile to the PRC. The SU, in fact, did not join the talks, but Sino-North Vietnamese relations had also been getting worse since 1965, mainly because the PRC had refused “united action” with the SU in Vietnam, and the SU became the main and only capable supplier of advanced and sophisticated weapons to the DRV.¹⁵² Besides, in Vietnam the PRC had found the most suitable conditions for a major application for its liberation war strategy. The profound peasant discontent in South Vietnam and friendly neutrality of Cambodia were important factors that enhanced the possibility of a protracted struggle.¹⁵³

On May 10, 1968, when the US and the DRV commenced their peace talks in Paris, the 135th Sino-American ambassadorial Warsaw Talks, scheduled for May 29, were postponed to November by the PRC. The Paris talks apparently were not appreciated by the PRC.¹⁵⁴

Mao also thought the continuing of war in Vietnam would present a model for wars of national liberation in the third world, arouse anti-US sentiment in China and around the world, and promote the anti-war movement

¹⁵²Theodore Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

¹⁵³Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁵⁴Richard Wich, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

and other internal difficulties in the US. Mao encouraged North Vietnam to fight until final victory.

(ii) Reflections from CCP Party Congress Document

The Eleventh Plenum session of the Eighth Central Committee of the CCP was held in Beijing from August 1 to 12, 1966. This meeting mainly took some important decisions on the Cultural Revolution. In the communiqué of the Eleventh Plenum, issued on August 12, 1966, Mao also took the opportunity to denounce both the US and the SU, and their intervention in Vietnam. There were three features of the communiqué:

Firstly, anti-US:

Despite the inevitable zigzags and reversals in the development of the international situation, the general trend of imperialism leading for total collapse and socialism advancing to worldwide victory is unalterable. U.S. imperialism and its lackeys in various countries cannot avert their doom by brutally suppressing and widely attacking the masses of the revolutionary people, or by bribing and deceiving them. On the contrary, this only serves to give further impetus to the revolutionary awakening of all people. The activities of U.S. imperialism and its stooges in various countries appear to be powerful but are actually very weak. Taking the long view, they are all paper tigers.¹⁵⁵

Secondly, anti-SU:

The new leading group of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has inherited Khrushchev's mantle and is practicing

¹⁵⁵Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, p.1571.

Khrushchev revisionism without Khrushchev. Their line is one of safeguarding imperialist and colonialist domination in the capitalist world and restoring capitalism in the socialist world. The leading group of the C.P.S.U. has betrayed Marxism-Leninism, betrayed the great Lenin,...They are uniting with U.S.-led imperialism and the reactionaries of various countries and forming a new "Holy Alliance" against communism, the people, revolution, and China. But this counterrevolutionary "Holy Alliance" is doomed to bankruptcy and is already in the process of disintegration.¹⁵⁶

Thirdly, to unite the countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and support North Vietnam:

...The present situation as regards the struggles of Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary people throughout the world against imperialism, reaction, and modern revisionism is excellent. We are now in a new era of world revolution. All political forces are undergoing a process of great upheaval, great division, and great reorganization. The revolutionary movement of the people in all countries, and particularly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is surging vigorously forward...*The Plenary Session most strongly condemns U.S. imperialism for its crime of widening its war of aggression against Vietnam.* (emphasis added) The Session most warmly and most resolutely supports the Appeal to the People of the Whole Country issued by Comrade Ho Chi Minh, president of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and firmly supports the Vietnam people in fighting to the end until final victory is achieved in their war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation. The Plenary Session fully agrees to all the measures already taken and all action to be taken as decided upon by the Central Committee of the Party and the government in consultation with the Vietnamese side concerning aid to Vietnam for resisting U.S. aggression.

The Plenary Session severely denounces the *Soviet revisionist leading group for its counterrevolutionary two-faced policy of*

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p. 1571.

*sham support but real betrayal on the question of Vietnam's resistance to U.S. aggression.*¹⁵⁷ (emphasis added)

Anti-US, anti-SU rhetoric, and opposition to their intervention equally in Vietnam, were the distinguishing features of the PRC's Vietnam policy at this phase. The PRC was in the position of a "pariah" against the SU-US "détente."

3.3. Conclusion

Throughout most of the 1950s and 1960s the PRC's United Front strategy could not work properly with regard to China's external relations due to its deteriorating relationship with both the superpowers and third world countries. The PRC's status, in terms of Dittmer model, varied from a partner to a pariah. However, the escalation of the Vietnam War with the active participation of both superpowers, which eventually led to the further reorganisation of the strategic triangle and the revival of PRC United Front policy.

Traditionally China has regarded Vietnam as its sphere of influence, and it has been very sensitive to the security of its southern border with Vietnam. A

¹⁵⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 1571-1572. This conception of uniting the countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America is similar to Lin's assertion about the "People's War." See p. 121 of this dissertation.

“weak Vietnam” thus served its purpose. To develop an appropriate Vietnam policy, the PRC needed to consider the two superpowers’ roles in the Vietnam War. Because the US did not want to have “another loss of China” and its anti-Communist containment policy started to apply in Asia since the Korean War, the US deemed the PRC as one of its main enemies. This hard-line attitude lasted until the end of President Johnson’s administration when the policy of “negotiation replacing confrontation” was consolidated and President Nixon’s new China policy was adopted. In this sense, the PRC attempted to avoid another direct conflict with the US, like that in Korea, because it was still in a comparatively weak position and required considerable time to carry out its “Five Year Plan of Economic Development.”

The PRC treated the SU as intimidator from the north, but intended to avoid a two-front war. Ideological disputes and border issues made Sino-SU relations deteriorate throughout the 1950s and 1960s. From 1965 the SU replaced the PRC as the main backer, in terms of weaponry, for North Vietnam, and the PRC turned down the SU proposal of “united action” to assist North Vietnam. The SU and North Vietnam could cooperate to encircle the PRC and, consequently, the PRC was not happy to see the SU get too deeply involved in Vietnam.

From the perspective of Dittmer models, the first phase from 1949 to 1960 was the “stable marriage” between the SU and the PRC, with the US as a pariah. The initiative of the PRC’s active and independent foreign policy based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence gradually faded after the Geneva and Bandung Conferences. As Dittmer pointed out in his 1987 article there were certain ambiguities in the models.¹⁵⁸ He noted that if the two parties of the “stable marriage” model were not in an “anti-third party” stance then the suit of the third party (pariah) to either other party should be pursued. Furthermore, in the meantime the partner in the “stable marriage” would try to deter its partner from defecting to the pariah.

At this stage the separation of the two partners, the PRC and the SU, gradually came about. The US could have pursued a reconciliation with either partner but the variable that caused the anti-US partnership to change was Khrushchev’s attitude. The effect of the Korean War made it difficult at first for both the PRC and the US to change the direction of their foreign policy, but, as Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated and once the US responded positively to the SU’s initiation of improved relations, a US-Soviet partnership was able to emerge. As Dittmer says, the 1960s was an “ambiguous and transitional period

¹⁵⁸See pp. 19-20.

in which none of the three triangular patterns applied fully.”¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, US-SU détente helped create “pariah” status for the PRC.

During that second phase, except for the change in US-Soviet relations, PRC-US relations were without any significant improvement. Although the two countries had an indirect channel, the Warsaw Talks, the post-Korean War effect and the possibility of a second direct confrontation in Vietnam kept the two sides at loggerheads. Also the competition of aid to Vietnam and the Sino-Soviet border war along the Ussuri River, made the later Sino-Soviet relations even more bitter. The SU might have a different view of détente than the US, nevertheless their relationship was becoming more stable. Did the development of US-SU relations have an anti-PRC character? There was no kind of “cordial” friendship between the US and the SU due to any collective goal to depress the PRC. So the pariah might try to improve its relations with either partner of the model. This was the case of the PRC’s contact with the US in the late 1960s. The SU could not stop the PRC’s effort, but it tried to compete with it by enticing the US with those same conditions as mentioned above.

¹⁵⁹Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, “The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game—Theoretical Analysis,” p. 493.

The division of time periods of the varied Dittmer models reflects the reality of the situation rather than the players' policy objectives. The PRC was trying to adopt a more constructive foreign policy from 1954 but this initiative failed. As long as the PRC was treated by the US as an adversary to be contained, the PRC would try to avoid a direct conflict like the Korean War. Thus the PRC could not change the existing United Front policy but still kept a "buffer zone" in Indochina, a policy that began at the Geneva Conference. Although the PRC gave their support to North Vietnam to protect it from attack, the struggle for reunification was potentially far from being in its interest.

The continuing Vietnam War fitted PRC's Vietnam policy well. The PRC had no power to manoeuvre or to stop the war. However, if the war continued, it would weaken North Vietnam and the US, prevent a Soviet-North Vietnam alliance and undermine US-SU détente, which did not contradict its existing United Front design. Therefore the PRC would encourage the war and oppose the peace talks.

CHAPTER 4

THE PRC'S VIETNAM POLICY FROM 1969

4.1. The Context

Several conditions compelled the PRC to adopt a new foreign policy in the late 1960s. The policy of Peaceful Coexistence of the 1950s had its revival at the end of the 1960s. The period was the second time after the Korean War that the PRC felt its national security threatened by a possible foreign invader, this time along the Sino-Soviet frontier. The tactics to unite one party against another one were re-applied, in this case exchanging a friend for an enemy. A new cooperative relationship between the PRC and the US was set up. Nevertheless, although the PRC tried to unite with the US to counter the SU's probable invasion, and the US was willing to deal with the PRC, this did not necessarily mean the US had to treat the SU as an enemy. It would turn out to be a rather complex triangular relationship between them all. In other words, the new momentum of PRC-US relations was not on "cordial" but "coalition" terms. This phase lasted to January 1973, the year the Paris peace agreement of the Vietnam War was signed.

The PRC tried hard to reconcile itself with the US to stabilise its status in the triangle. In this sense the SU became the principal enemy and the danger of border security in the south was subordinate. To shift its Vietnam policy, from opposing peace talks to approving of them, in order to accommodate US aims, was a reasonable expectation from the PRC.

The process of the change was marked by the dual tactics of “Pulling While Dragging.” In order to please the US, Zhou and his clique had pacified the Lin faction, however, Zhou’s “approved” attitude toward the US would depend on the result of the Paris peace talks. If there was no breakthrough in the talks, there would be no change of policy. Even when the breakthrough materialised Chinese approval was more of the nature of political “lip service” and lasted very briefly, because the PRC did not want the Vietnam War ended, such that a reunified strong Vietnam would appear. Therefore the PRC never cordially allied with the US, and it shifted its policies based on its national interests. Its rhetoric was not constant. It changed with conditions. This chapter details the variation of those conditions, which include the context of the reshaping of the US-PRC-SU strategic triangle, the PRC policy revolutions, and an explanation of the dual tactics which allowed the adaptation to the result of Paris peace talks.

A. Worsening Sino-Soviet Relations

The military clashes on Sino-Soviet borders and the SU's invasion of Czechoslovakia were the two factors which stimulated a drastic change in the PRC's foreign policy.

(i) The SU's Invasion of Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia was invaded by more than 26 divisions from the SU and its Warsaw Pact members' troops, on the night of August 20, 1968, in spite of the apparent agreement reached between the SU and Czechoslovak party leaders. The country was occupied within 24 hours.¹ Contrary to its positive stand toward the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, the PRC strongly criticised the SU's intervention in Czechoslovakia.² This, of course, was the result of deteriorating bilateral relations.

On August 23, 1968, two days after the Soviet invasion, Zhou Enlai delivered a speech at the Romanian Embassy in Beijing on the occasion of its national day. Zhou denounced the SU's deeds in Czechoslovakia:

...A few days ago the Soviet revisionist leading clique and its followers brazenly dispatched large numbers of armed forces to launch a surprise attack on Czechoslovakia and swiftly occupied it with the Czechoslovakia revisionist leading clique openly calling

¹Robin Edmonds, Soviet Foreign Policy 1962-1973, London: Oxford University Press, 1975, p. 71. See also Sarch Meiklejohn Terry ed., Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984, pp. 105, 264-265.

²Richard Wich, op. cit., p. 63.

on the people not to resist, thus perpetrating towering crimes against the Czechoslovak people.

The Chinese government and people strongly condemn the Soviet revisionist leading clique and its followers for their crime of aggression—the armed occupation of Czechoslovakia—and firmly support the Czechoslovak people in their heroic struggle of resistance to Soviet military occupation.

...The aim of the Soviet revisionist leading clique in brazenly invading and occupying Czechoslovakia is to prevent the Czechoslovak revisionist leading clique from directly hiring itself out to the Western countries headed by U.S. imperialism and to prevent this state of affairs from leading to uncontrollable chain reactions. This is the inevitable result of the great-power chauvinism and national egoism...

...It is exactly the same as Hitler of the past in his aggression against Czechoslovakia and U.S. imperialism of today in its aggression against Vietnam. The Soviet revisionist clique of renegades has long degenerated into social-imperialism and social-fascism.³

After Zhou's August 23 speech, the People's Daily published four editorials within four months, criticising the SU's intervention.⁴

To justify the SU's invasion of Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev proclaimed his so-called "Brezhnev Doctrine" on November 12, 1968, in his address to the 5th Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party. The Doctrine asserted that when internal and external forces of a country hostile to socialism attempted to turn the development of any socialist country in the direction of the capitalist

³Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 4, p. 2179.

⁴They were "The Bankruptcy of Soviet Union's Modern Revisionism," on August 23, 1968; "A Deal under the Bayonet," on August 30, 1968; "Soviet Revisionist Is the New Tzar Sitting Astride on People's Heads," on November 10, 1968; and "The Students of Dean Acheson," on December 17, 1968.

system, it became not only a problem for the people of that country but also a general problem of concern to all socialist countries, and the SU had the right to alter or replace the regime at its discretion.⁵ Those countries' sovereignties were limited. The implication was underlined the following spring (1969), when violent military clashes erupted over disputed sections of the Sino-Soviet border.

The SU's invasion of Czechoslovakia and the announcement of the Brezhnev Doctrine had tremendous impact on the PRC. The nightmare of a two-front war was a strong possibility.⁶ Instinctively, the PRC roundly denounced the Brezhnev Doctrine. The belated Twelfth Plenum of the Eighth CCP Party Congress was hastily held in October 1968, in order to stop the domestic chaos caused by the Cultural Revolution and prepare to resist aggression from the north.⁷

A critique of the Brezhnev Doctrine was continuous throughout the CCP's Ninth Party Congress, held in April 1969. In his political report to the Congress, Lin Biao, assigned as Mao's successor in the new amended party constitution during the session, stated:

⁵Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, "The Strategic Triangle: An Elementary Game-Theoretical Analysis," p. 496. Colin Brown and Peter F. Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

⁶King Chen, *op. cit.*, China and the Three Worlds, p. 29.

⁷Chi Su, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

...Its dispatch of hundreds of thousands of troops to occupy Czechoslovakia and its armed provocations against China on our territory Chenpao Island are two foul performances staged recently by Soviet revisionism.

In order to justify its aggression and plunder, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique trumpets the so-called theory of "limited sovereignty," the theory of "international dictatorship," and the theory of "socialist community." What does all this stuff mean? It means that your sovereignty is "limited," while his is unlimited. You won't obey it? He will exercise "international dictatorship" over you—dictatorship over the people of other countries, in order to form the "socialist community" ruled by the new tsars, that is, colonies of social-imperialism, just like the "New Order of Europe" of Hitler, the "Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere" of Japanese militarism, and the "Free World Community" of the United States.⁸

The PRC's anxiety over a war with the SU was not groundless. Even before the clash on the border of the Ussuri River, the SU started to strengthen its forces along the Sino-Soviet border. There were about 15 Soviet divisions facing the PRC in the mid-1960s;⁹ between 1967 and 1972 the number grew to at least 46 divisions.¹⁰ Also, the movement of nuclear missiles into the arc surrounding Northeast China, and the appearance of a new Soviet airfield in

⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2236.

⁹Paul H. Nitze, "Assuring Strategic Stability in an Era of Détente," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1976, Vol. 54, No. 2, p. 208.

¹⁰Rajan Menon, "China and the Soviet Union in Asia," *Current History*, October 1981, p. 329. See also p. 172 of this dissertation.

Outer Mongolia posed a formidable threat that put the incident of Czechoslovakia into alarming perspective for the PRC.¹¹

(ii) The Ussuri River Border Clash

The SU's invasion of Czechoslovakia and its proclamation of the Brezhnev Doctrine was the harbinger of the Ussuri clash. The unsolved problem of the "unequal-treaty" border was the inherited condition. The People's Daily, September 3, 1963, deplored the SU's intervention in Sinkiang Province of China in April and May 1962,¹² and on February 4, 1964, the same newspaper reiterated:

The leaders of the C.P.S.U. have violated the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance, made a unilateral decision to withdraw 1,390 Soviet experts working in China, to tear up 343 contracts...They have provoked incidents on the Sino-Soviet border and carried on large-scale subversive activities in Sinkiang....¹³

On February 25, 1964, negotiations on the border disputes between the PRC and the SU were held for the first time in Beijing. There were three areas of contention. The talks lasted about eight months but without any result.¹⁴ The

¹¹Allen S. Whiting, "The Sino-American Détente: Genesis and Prospects," in Ian Wilson, ed., China and the World Community, Sydney: Angus and Robertson Pty. Ltd., 1974, p. 74. Luke T. Chang, op. cit., p. 119.

¹²See p. 109.

¹³Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 2, p. 1175.

¹⁴The talks terminated on October 15, 1964, when the SU asked for a change of site to Moscow. See 1970 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., p. 5:13.

three issues were: firstly, the PRC asserted that all pre-1917 treaties were unequal and hence, invalid. This idea was rejected by the SU. Secondly, the PRC upheld the principle of Thalweg in the river boundaries, i.e., the dividing line of an international river was the centre of the main channel. According to this principle of international law, most of the riverine islands would belong to the PRC. The SU rejected this and offered maps and other evidence to challenge the claim. Thirdly, the PRC refused to recognise the Soviet-presented map, based on the Treaty of Peking of 1860. It was to a scale of 1:1,000,000 which was far too small to be used to determine ownership with accuracy.¹⁵ Therefore, border disputes between the PRC and the SU lacked conciliatory minds that would look for satisfactory resolutions for both sides.

The long-standing disputes over the river boundaries led to the Chenpao or Damansky Island bloodshed, which occurred on March 2 and 15, 1969, along the Ussuri River. The first clash was a two-hour skirmish and the second one was a regular battle, involving larger forces.¹⁶ These military incidents were the first such actions between the PRC and the SU. In fact, these serious border clashes were only the beginning of many other small incidents that

¹⁵Luke T. Chang, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 120.

occurred during the late spring and summer of 1969 along the Amur River and the Sinkiang Province borders.¹⁷

Which side initiated the March 2 military clash and why? Beijing blamed the Soviet side as the initiator, and almost simultaneously the Soviets accused the Chinese. There are persuasive reasons for believing that the incident of March 2 was started by the PRC side.¹⁸ The March 15 incident was Soviet revenge with the additional purpose of putting pressure on the PRC to negotiate a settlement of the border issues.¹⁹

Although both sides continued to quarrel, and the border clashes went on, they agreed to reopen the negotiations on October 20, 1969. On September 11, 1969, on his way back home from attending the funeral of Ho Chi Minh, the then Soviet prime minister, Kosygin, stopped over in Beijing to have a talk with Zhou Enlai and, on October 7, the PRC announced its agreement to reopen the border talks at the vice-foreign minister level, with the SU. This was the first indication that Beijing had, in effect, yielded to Soviet pressure to hold talks.²⁰

¹⁷Michael I. Handel, The Diplomacy of Surprise: Hitler, Nixon, Sadat, Rensselaer, N. Y.: Hamilton Printing Company, 1981, p. 188. The SU was believed to have staged several incidents, of which the most serious one was on August 13, 1969, along the Sinkiang border. See Shao-chuan Leng, "Legal Aspects of the Sino-Soviet Dispute," Asian Survey, June 1972, vol. XII, No. 6, p. 501.

¹⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 4, p. 2211. See also Gerald Segal, op. cit., p. 209. He argues that the PRC took the initiative to demonstrate that it was a tougher nut to crack.

¹⁹Luke T. Chang, op. cit., p. 120

²⁰Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 4, p. 2259.

The next day, October 8, Beijing laid out its five principles for the settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary dispute:

First, distinguish between the right and wrong in history and confirm that the treaties relating to the present Sino-Soviet boundary are unequal treaties imposed on China by tsarist Russian imperialism in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century when power was in the hands of neither the Chinese people nor the Russian people.

Second, in consideration of the actual conditions, take these treaties as the basis for an overall settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary question through peaceful negotiations and for determining the entire alignment of the boundary line. China does not demand the return of the Chinese territory which tsarist Russia annexed by means of these treaties.

Third, any side which occupies the territory of the other side in violation of these treaties must, in principle, return it unconditionally to the other side, but necessary adjustments of the areas concerned on the border may be made by the two sides in accordance with the principles of consultation on an equal footing and of mutual understanding and mutual accommodation and in consideration of the interests of the local inhabitants.

Fourth, conclude a new equal Sino-Soviet treaty to replace the old unequal Sino-Russian treaties and carry out boundary survey and erect boundary markers.

Fifth, pending an overall settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary question through peaceful negotiations, maintain the status quo of the border, avert armed conflicts, and disengage the armed forces of the Chinese and Soviet sides by withdrawing them from, or refraining from sending them into, all the disputed areas along the Sino-Soviet border, that is, those areas where the two sides disagree in their delineations of the boundary line on the

maps exchanged during the 1964 Sino-Soviet boundary negotiations.²¹

The first principle was the premise that the PRC insisted upon. The second one clearly indicated the PRC's concession in the talks. However, apart from the fourth one which would take time to carry out, substantially the third and the fifth conditions were more flexible and within the scope of negotiation. Therefore the third and the fifth guidelines were the ones the PRC was more concerned about.

The reason the PRC was willing to compromise, was because it knew it would come off badly in a direct confrontation with the SU. Besides, in the late part of the 1960s, the PRC began to build a nuclear strike capability that could threaten the SU.²² After the Chenpao incidents, the SU considered launching a nuclear strike to destroy PRC's nuclear facilities at Lop Nor,²³ and the PRC capitulated and agreed to reopen the border negotiations with the SU. In its October 7, 1969,²⁴ announcement, the PRC proclaimed that nuclear intimidation from the SU was possible:

China develops nuclear weapons for defense and for breaking the nuclear monopoly. The Chinese government has declared solemnly on many occasions that at no time and under no

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 2266.

²²John T. Rourke, *Making Foreign Policy*, Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1990, p. 33.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 33. See also Gerald Segal, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

²⁴The same day the PRC announced its agreement to reopen the border talks with the SU.

circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons. It is both ridiculous and absurd to vilify China as intending to launch a nuclear war. But at the same time, China will never be intimidated by war threats, including nuclear war threats. *Should a handful of war maniacs dare to raid China's strategic sites in defiance of world condemnation*, (emphasis added) that will be war, that will be aggression, and the 700 million Chinese people will rise up in resistance and use revolutionary war to eliminate the war of aggression.²⁵

The new talks limped along. Each side just attempted to present itself as the reasonable party and ascribed the other as opposing a settlement to their disputes. It proved very difficult to bring the Sino-Soviet border negotiations to a successful conclusion; only in 1977 was limited agreement reached on rules of navigation on the Ussuri River.²⁶

In fact, both sides increased their armed forces along the border after the Chenpao incidents. As mentioned above, there were about 15 Soviet divisions facing the PRC in the mid-1960s; between 1967 and 1972 the number grew to at least 46 divisions. By 1972 about one-fourth of the SU's ground forces and 11 per cent of its military spending was directed toward the PRC.²⁷

Conversely, the PRC's armed forces were kept busy with the Cultural Revolution: strengthening its border forces was not an easy option.²⁸ However,

²⁵Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 2259-2260.

²⁶Luke T. Chang, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

²⁷Rajan Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

²⁸Chi Su, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

on August 28, 1969, when the border clashes were at their apex, a directive from the central committee of the CCP to the provincial revolutionary committees was issued, calling for preparations for war. In the directive, ostensibly the US was also treated as an enemy, and in fact it would make us believe that Beijing was very concerned about a SU invasion and initiating a border war after the Czechoslovakia and Chenpao incidents.²⁹ The wording of the directive was like this:

...The American imperialists and Soviet revisionists have intensified their collusion and conspiracy to invade our great mother country....The border of our great mother country is sacred and should not be invaded. To safeguard one's mother country is the sacred obligation of every citizen; but it is especially the army and the people along the border who directly shoulder the burden. In order to safeguard our mother country, our border...the Central Committee of the Party commands you: First, resolutely respond to Chairman Mao's great call to promote vigilance, safeguard the country, and *prepare for war*...(emphasis added)
 Second, in the face of powerful enemies, *unite all the army and the people as one person and deal with the enemies with combined efforts*...(emphasis added)³⁰

The word "border" was mentioned many times and the technique of "United Front" restated here. What was true was that the PRC had started to treat the SU as its number 1 enemy and its United Front policy was manipulated

²⁹Robert G. Scutter, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

³⁰Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 2219-2220.

to unite all possible strength to fight against the SU, though, in the meantime the PRC made some temporary concessions to the SU on the border talks.

B. US-PRC Rapprochement

Under the guideline of the United Front policy, the tremendous pressure from the SU made the PRC change its tactics to try to unite with the US to overcome the SU's intimidation.

A Chinese proverb says "one hand can not clap." This phrase can interpret Sino-US relations in the late 1960s. The time was ripe for the two parties to become reconciled; for the PRC it was after the Czechoslovakia invasion by the SU and the Sino-Soviet Chenpao border military clashes, and for the US it was the inauguration of the new administration of President Nixon. Nixon was not alone. His national security adviser, Dr. Henry Kissinger, was the other person to design and carry out the new US China policy. Due to his campaign platform promise to bring back home US forces from the Vietnam theatre,³¹ the ending of US involvement in the Vietnam War was definitely high priority for President Nixon. Thus, the new China policy of the US had its inevitable link with its policy to Vietnam.

³¹Richard M. Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, New York: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1990, p. 298.

(i) President Nixon plus Henry Kissinger

US domestic public opinion had already begun strongly to oppose the Vietnam War during President Johnson's administration. The heavy pressure forced President Johnson to announce, on March 31, 1968, his withdrawal from the presidential re-election campaign, and US willingness to process peace talks with North Vietnam.³² Once the momentum of withdrawal from Vietnam started, like a snow ball, it would get bigger.

To consolidate his idea of "negotiation replacing confrontation," on July 25, 1969, in Guam, President Nixon said:

So, what I am trying to suggest is this: As we look at Asia, it poses, in my view, over the long haul, looking down to the end of the century, the greatest threat to the peace of the world, and, for that reason the United States should continue to play a significant role....

Now, one other point I would make very briefly is that in terms of this situation as far as the role we should play, we must recognize that there are two great, new factors which you will see, incidentally, particularly when you arrive in the Philippines—something you will see there that we didn't see in 1953, to show you how quickly it has changed: a very great growth of nationalism, nationalism even in the Philippines, vis-à-vis the United States, as well as other countries in the world. And, also, at the same time that national pride is becoming a major factor, regional pride is becoming a major factor.

The second factor is one that is going to, I believe, have a major impact on the future of Asia, and it is something that we must take into account. Asians will say in every country that we visit that they do not want to be dictated to from the outside, Asia for

³²Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: A History, p. 684.

the Asians. And that is what we want, and that is the role we should play. We should assist, but we should not dictate. At this time, the political and economic plans that they are gradually developing are very hopeful. We will give assistance to those plans. We, of course, will keep the treaty commitments that we have.

But as far as our role is concerned, we must avoid that kind of policy that will make countries in Asia so dependent upon us that we are dragged into conflicts such as the one that we have in Vietnam.³³

This speech was interpreted as the "Nixon Doctrine," which reinforced the US determination to let the Vietnam War be Vietnamized. To the South Vietnamese, the content of this Nixon Doctrine, was a decided US retreat from the Truman Doctrine of 1947 (the containment policy),³⁴ though Nixon did not want to be the first American president to lose a war.³⁵

President Nixon had been an advocate of US anti-communist policy during his tenure as Vice President during President Eisenhower's administration.³⁶ His changing attitude toward China first emerged in his

³³Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1968-1969, pp. 332-333.

³⁴Dennis J. Duncanson, "South Vietnam: Détente and Reconciliation," International Affairs, October 1973, p. 555. Some scholars argue that the containment policy was the main cause of US failure in Vietnam, see George C. Herring, America's Longest War: the United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1979, pp. 270-271.

³⁵Stanley Karnow, op. cit., Vietnam: A History, p. 594.

³⁶During his presidential campaign, in a televised debate with John F. Kennedy on October 13, 1960, Nixon argued that the Chinese Nationalist-held off-shore islands of Quemoy and Matsu were crucial to US security. See also Michael I. Handel, op. cit., p. 216. Nixon earned his notoriety as an ardent anti-Communist in the famous Alger Hiss case of Un-American Activities in the early 1950s. See Michael B. Froman, The Development of the Idea of Détente, London: Macmillan, 1991, pp. 37-39.

October 1967 Foreign Affairs article, "Asia after Vietnam." In that article, although Nixon urged that the US give even greater assistance to its Southeast Asian allies to contain the PRC militarily, and he reaffirmed his opposition to granting the PRC diplomatic recognition, UN membership, or trade privileges, he ambiguously implied that:

...There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation. But we could go disastrously wrong if, in pursuing this long-range goal, we failed in the short range to read the lessons of history. The world cannot be safe until China changes. Thus our aim, to the extent that we can influence events, should be to induce change. The way to do this is to persuade China that it must change. That it cannot satisfy its imperial ambitions, and that its own national interest requires a turning away from foreign adventuring and a turning inward toward the solution of its own domestic problems.

...If our long-range aim is to pull China back into the family of nations, we must avoid the impression that the great powers or the European powers are "ganging up;" the response should clearly be one of active defense rather than potential offense, and must be untainted with any suspicion of racism.

For the short run, then, this means a policy of firm restraint, of no reward, of a creative counterpressure designed to persuade Peking that its interests can be served only by accepting the basic rules of international civility. For the long run, it means pulling China back into the world community—but as a great and progressing nation, not as the epicenter of world revolution.³⁷

³⁷Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, October 1967, pp. 121-123.

In contrast to the 1950s and 1960s when “the China threat” was the rationale for American involvement in wars in Korea and Vietnam, the US gradually saw that the PRC was not threatening US interests in Southeast Asia.³⁸ As the Cultural Revolution and Vietnam War ran apace, it also became abundantly clear in the late 1960s that neither the turbulent PRC nor the war-burdened US had any intention of starting a war against each other.³⁹

Nixon, an experienced politician, dropped the anti-Beijing legacy of the past, giving the US a free hand and new opportunities in dealing with both the PRC and the SU simultaneously.⁴⁰ Even implicitly he began to perceive that Mao might be receptive to a rapprochement with the US as a counterweight to

³⁸In fact as early as February 12, 1966, William P. Bundy, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, in a speech called for a reassessment of American policy toward the PRC. He de-emphasised the necessity of militarily containing the PRC and argued that the major thrust of Chinese policy in Asia must be countered by its neighbours, rather than the US. President Johnson in another speech in the same month reiterated Bundy’s point that the US did not want a war with the PRC. Also commencing with Bundy’s speech the word “Peking” rather than “Peiping” (used by the KMT) became officially accepted when American officials referred to the capital of China. See Frank E. Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-309. Some observers assert that another Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Roger Hilsman’s China speech of December 13, 1963, delivered in San Francisco two weeks after the Kennedy’s death, was regarded as a watershed of US new China policy. Hilsman was the first high-level official to acknowledge publicly the permanence of the Chinese Communist state and to offer the prospect of eventual US accommodation with the PRC. Thomas C. Thomson, Jr., “On the Making of U. S. China Policy, 1961-9: A Study in Bureaucratic Politics,” *The China Quarterly*, April/June 1972, pp. 229-230.

³⁹King Chen, *op. cit.*, *China and the Three World*, p. 29.

⁴⁰Walter C. Clemens, Jr., “The Impact of Détente on Chinese and Soviet Communism,” *Journal of International Affairs*, 1974, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 140.

the SU.⁴¹

To translate these abstract speculations into reality would require some more diplomatic manoeuvring. He selected Henry Kissinger to control the rudder.

The philosophy underlying US foreign policy during the Nixon-Kissinger years began with the assumption that international politics was not a fight between the good and the bad. All states, communist or non-communist had the right to exist and pursue legitimate interests. A nation, therefore, did not launch crusades against an adversary on the assumption that difference of interests represented a conflict of virtue and evil. It was wise for a nation to learn to live with other countries, to resolve their differences and to build on shared interests.⁴²

Henry Kissinger, a man without much experience or patience with bureaucracy,⁴³ believed that in creating a design for world order, realism was more compassionate than romanticism. The great American moralists, in his

⁴¹Some observers have argued that President Nixon's underlying objective in fostering the Sino-American rapprochement was to persuade Beijing to use all its influence on Hanoi so that US troops might be withdrawn from Vietnam with minimum humiliation to the US. See Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 131. Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: A History, p. 583.

⁴²John Spanier, *op. cit.*, American Foreign Policy since World War II, p. 190.

⁴³Those bureaucrats he could not dominate, Kissinger would manipulate, and those whom he could not manipulate, he would try to bypass. "Shuttle" and "Secret" diplomacy was Kissinger's preferences. See Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 504.

judgement, were failures. In other words, Woodrow Wilson had proved ineffectual, and John Foster Dulles had turned foreign policy into a crusade that had led straight into the Indochina quagmire. He did not try to justify his policy. He merely wished to make the world safer and more stable.⁴⁴ The opening up of the PRC was probably one of Kissinger's greatest triumphs in his tenure as a government official. Nevertheless, President Nixon's main interest was a broad foreign policy, and he distrusted both the State Department and the CIA.⁴⁵ The centre of authority, Nixon believed, ought to be the White House. The then Secretary of State, William Rogers' unfamiliarity with international affairs, guaranteed the direction of policy from the White House. The anti-bureaucratic Kissinger, working as the National Security Adviser stationed at the White House, unquestionably became President Nixon's closest ally in dealing with foreign affairs. The Vietnam War, the opening of China and the détente with the SU were top priorities.

(ii) The Seriousness of the Vietnam War

In spite of his electoral promise to bring the US involvement in the Vietnam War to an end, over 56,000 American servicemen died in Vietnam, and the US spent about \$155 billion in South East Asia between 1950 and

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 505.

⁴⁵Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: A History, p. 587.

1975.⁴⁶ No one could deny the seriousness of the casualties and financial burden.⁴⁷

Worse than that, in civilian terms, those senators, congressmen and columnists who had formerly supported the war were trying to back off from their commitment. The relentless repetition of the US media dominated domestic opinion and seriously demoralised the home front. The huge gathering of the Moratorium demonstrators and Kent State University campus' student deaths showed a society in chaos.⁴⁸ On June 24, 1970, the US Senate, in full flight, repealed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution.⁴⁹ Therefore it was quite clear that Nixon should put the solution to the Vietnam problem as a very high priority in his Administration's programme.

During the six weeks of the Tet offensive, public approval of President Johnson's overall performance dropped from 48 percent to 36 percent, and endorsement for his handling of the war fell from 40 percent to 26 percent. The country's trust in his authority had evaporated.⁵⁰ Mr. Daniel Ellsberg, the man who leaked the Pentagon Papers to the New York Times, once said, "After the

⁴⁶Thomas G. Paterson, ed., op. cit., p. 444. See also Congress and the Nation, vol. IV, 1973-1976, Washington, D. C. : Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1977, p. 909.

⁴⁷For the seriousness of financial burden, see p. 99 of this dissertation.

⁴⁸Richard M. Nixon, op. cit., The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, pp. 350, 412, 457.

⁴⁹Philip B. Davison, op. cit., p. 628.

⁵⁰Stanley Karnow, op. cit., Vietnam: A History, p. 546.

Tet offensive in February 1968, essentially everyone—with the exceptions of Johnson, Rusk and Rostow as some people used to say—had concluded that our (the US) effort was hopeless in Vietnam.”⁵¹

The new policy did not lead to any de-escalation on the ground in Indochina. Indeed, to reinforce Vietnamization, Nixon intensified the bombing. The US obliterated the enemy-held areas in South Vietnam, and initiated covert air operations over Laos and Cambodia to disrupt enemy supply lines. In time, the bombing of North Vietnam was resumed. From January 1969 to March 1971, the US dropped more than two and a half million tons of bombs on Indochina, more than the Johnson administration had dropped between 1965 and 1968.⁵²

In April, May and June 1970, Nixon attempted to shore up Vietnamization by expanding the war into Cambodia. But in the face of growing congressional and civilian opposition, particularly from the campuses of colleges, President Nixon had no choice but to rapidly withdraw US troops from Cambodia.⁵³ Less than a year later, in February and March of 1971, to buy time for a faltering Vietnamization, President Nixon again broadened the war.

⁵¹Michael Charlton & Anthony Moncrieff, Many Reasons Why, New York: Hill and Wang, 1978, p. 176.

⁵²George C. Herring, op. cit., FA 076, p. 11.

⁵³Ibid., p. 11.

This time into Laos, and the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam), backed up only by American helicopters and bombers, was given the combat responsibility. However, the Laotian operation proved to be a disaster.⁵⁴ Its outcome indeed, proved the ineffectiveness of the Vietnamization policy. The other alternative, direct and secret US-North Vietnam negotiations gradually emerged as the only means to enable the US troops to withdraw from Vietnam.

(iii) The Commencement of Sino-American Rapprochement

The new contacts between the US and the PRC shook the world and were the main factor in the formation of a new triangular relationship. Indirect confrontation shifted to subtle rapprochement. The new Nixon administration was very keen to use peace talks to replace the existing harsh Vietnam policy. The PRC's "indirect confrontation" policy would accommodate this US policy change. In other words, there was no need for even an indirect confrontation, if the US itself did not want to prolong the fighting in Vietnam.

Originally, American leaders had justified intervention in Southeast Asia as a struggle to "contain" Chinese expansion. Now, given the more tolerant view of the PRC, and considering its preoccupation with the SU threat, there seemed little danger of armed PRC expansion in Asia. This factor undercut the

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, p. 12.

US position in Vietnam, while the war itself only inhibited closer Sino-American relations.⁵⁵

Which country, the US or the PRC initiated the normalisation of their bilateral relations? The shifting of the relations was a possibility within the mechanism of the Dittmer models. However it is important to trace the evolution of the bilateral contacts in more detail. For it was the PRC which seems to have made the first move. After Nixon was elected US president in November 1968, the PRC moved to reopen the 135th Warsaw Talks that had been postponed since the previous May due to PRC's unhappiness about the Paris peace talks. It was the first step initiated by the PRC to substantially improve Sino-American relations.⁵⁶ This proposal was withdrawn by the Chinese side due to its chargé d'affaires a. i. in the Netherlands, Liao Hosu's defection to the US. The 135th Warsaw Talks were held in January 1970, more than a year later.

The Warsaw Talks were postponed, but President Nixon in his inauguration address of January 20, 1969, advocated the policy of "Negotiation Replacing Confrontation":

As we learn to go forward together at home, let us also seek to go forward together with all mankind.

⁵⁵Michael Schaller, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

⁵⁶John Garver, *op. cit.*, p. 214. See also Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2203.

Let us take as our goal: Where peace is unknown, make it welcome; where peace is fragile, make it strong; where peace is temporary, make it permanent.

After a period of confrontation, we are entering an era of negotiation.

Let all nations know that during this administration our lines of communication will be open.

We seek an open world—open to ideas, open to exchange of goods and people—a world in which no people, great or small, will live in angry isolation.

We cannot expect to make everyone our friend, but we can try to make no one our enemy.⁵⁷

The whole speech was translated and published in the Red Flag.⁵⁸ That implied the PRC's willingness to negotiate.

On July 21, 1969, four months after the Chenpao incident, the US State Department announced a relaxation of the restrictions on American travel to the PRC. Henceforth, students, scholars, doctors, and scientists would be issued with passports specially validated for the PRC. Since Beijing still barred most Americans, this act was largely symbolic. Nevertheless, the announcement was the first sign of an American policy change in many years.⁵⁹

The next activity was that the US suspended routine naval patrols by its Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Strait on November 7, 1969, as a friendly gesture

⁵⁷Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., Documents on American Foreign Affairs 1968-1969, pp. 41-42.

⁵⁸Red Flag, No. 2, 1969, pp. 11-14.

⁵⁹Michael Schaller, op. cit., p. 167. See also King Chen, op. cit., China and the Three Worlds, p. 30.

toward the PRC.⁶⁰ The Taiwan issue was the most contentious problem between the two sides on the agenda of the Warsaw Talks, which were now resumed on an important new basis. On January 8, 1970, when a US State Department spokesman announced the resuming of the talks, for the first time, the official used the PRC's formal name.⁶¹

The belated 135th Warsaw Talks were held on January 20, 1970. The atmosphere was completely different from all the previous talks. The 136th talks on February 20, 1970, were even more conciliatory.⁶² The 137th meeting, scheduled to be held on May 20, 1970, was suddenly cancelled by the PRC due to the US intervention in Cambodia, as a result of which Sihanouk had been overthrown.⁶³ This made the improvement in Sino-American relations slow down—but only marginally.

On February 18, 1970, President Nixon for the first time seriously publicised his attitude to the PRC in his special report to Congress, entitled, “U. S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s: A New Strategy for Peace”:

The Chinese are a great and vital people who should not remain isolated from the international community. The principles underlying our relations with Communist China are similar to those governing our policies toward the USSR. United States

⁶⁰Michael I. Handel, *op. cit.*, p. 222. See also Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁶¹Michael I. Handel, *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁶²Harish Kapur, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 79.

policy is not likely soon to have much impact on China's behavior, let alone its ideological outlook. But it is certainly in our interest, and in the interest of peace and stability in Asia and the world, that we take what steps we can toward improved practical relations with Peking.⁶⁴

After the cancellation of the 137th Warsaw Talks, the PRC revived its eagerness to contact the US. The first public indication of the new Chinese attitude occurred on October 1, 1970, when the CCP's old friend, the author of Red Star Over China, Edgar Snow, was pointedly placed next to Mao, in Tien An Men Square, on the PRC's national day.⁶⁵

About two weeks later, on October 26, 1970, at an official White House dinner in honour of the Romanian President, an American president used the term "People's Republic of China" for the first time in public.⁶⁶

In November 1970, Zhou Enlai gave the Pakistan President, Yahya Kahn, then in Beijing, a personal message for President Nixon, declaring that the PRC would welcome a high-level US envoy to Beijing to discuss the withdrawal of US troops from Taiwan.⁶⁷

Then, in December 1970, Mao spoke to Edgar Snow:

In the meantime, he said, the Foreign Ministry was studying the matter of admitting Americans from the left, middle and right to

⁶⁴Michael I. Handel, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 192.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁶⁷Robert S. Ross, "From Lin Biao to Deng Xiaoping: Elite Instability and China's U.S. Policy," The China Quarterly, June 1989, pp. 271-272.

visit China. Should rightists like Nixon, who represented the monopoly capitalists be permitted to come? He should be welcomed because, Mao explained, at present the problem between China and the USA would have to be solved with Nixon. Mao would be happy to talk with him, either as a tourist or as President.⁶⁸

On February 25, 1971, for the first time, “The People’s Republic of China” was used in an official US government document—President Nixon’s second “State of the World” message to Congress.⁶⁹

On March 14, 1971, Zhou Enlai told a European diplomat in Beijing that the PRC had finally decided to open high-level talks with US leaders.⁷⁰ This decision was about four months before Kissinger’s first visit to Beijing.

On April 10, 1971, before the high-level US envoy visited Beijing in July 1971, Mao thought the time was ripe to suit actions to words and the PRC authorities invited the US table tennis team, which was in Tokyo for the world championship competition, to visit China.⁷¹ The team was the first organised US group to visit the Chinese mainland since its fall to the communists in 1949. Four days later on April 14, the US government announced its lifting of the embargo on the PRC.⁷²

⁶⁸Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁶⁹Michael I. Handel, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 199.

⁷¹1973 *Yearbook on Chinese Communism*, *op. cit.*, p. 3:8.

⁷²Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., *American Foreign Relations 1971: A Documentary Record*, New York: New York University Press, 1976, p. 341.

The real breakthrough in that long and arduous process came on April 27, 1971, when Pakistani Ambassador Hilaly presented Kissinger with a handwritten letter from Zhou inviting the US to send a special envoy to Beijing.⁷³ Kissinger first visited Beijing from July 9 to July 11, 1971, and paid his second visit to Beijing from October 20 to October 26, 1971. One of his main purposes was to arrange the programme for President Nixon's official visit.

President Nixon visited the PRC from February 21 to February 28, 1972. This historical milestone in international relations set the seal on Sino-American détente. The signing of the Shanghai Communiqué was regarded as the basis for further US-PRC rapprochement. The visit was to lead to the beginning of almost a decade of a Chinese "tilt" toward the US in order to deter the perceived Soviet threat.⁷⁴

In February 1973, during his fifth visit to the PRC, Kissinger reached an agreement with the PRC authorities to establish the so-called "liaison offices" in each other's capitals.⁷⁵ They actually functioned as embassies. The following year, however, the unexpected development pertaining to the Watergate crisis had so weakened Nixon's political position in the country that

⁷³Michael I. Handel, *op. cit.*, pp. 201, 230.

⁷⁴Gerald Segal, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 209.

⁷⁵Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982, pp. 60-63.

the process of US-PRC normalisation from the American end came to a complete halt.⁷⁶ They only recognised each other diplomatically on January 1, 1979.

C. The Paris Peace Talks

The Paris peace talks served as a good illustration to examine how the PRC utilised dual tactics to achieve both aims of its United Front at that stage, reconciliation with the US to counter the SU in the north, and preserving the southern border's security. Thus, when the US concentrated on talks, the PRC also paid much attention to this approach, since the result of talks would affect the US Vietnam policy, which was at that time under heavy domestic pressure to withdraw from the Vietnam theatre. This would lead the PRC to decide how and when to adapt its Vietnam policy to accommodate the US policy.

The PRC was prepared so to adapt because it intended to grasp this long-awaited opportunity to deal with a more conciliatory US. The course of the Paris negotiations was prolonged and difficult. There were both regular and secret talks. The final result was in North Vietnam's favour but was facilitated by US military power. The US had lost its patience. The PRC leaders watched

⁷⁶Harish Kapur, *op. cit.*, p. 83. Michael Schaller, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175.

the changes of direction, they also saved time to pacify domestic opponents, and put forward pertinent action to appease the US.

(i) The Causes for Peace Talks

President Johnson's speech on March 31, 1968, announced a partial halt in the bombing of North Vietnam, a willingness to open serious peace negotiations, and his own withdrawal from the presidential race.⁷⁷ The Americans had finally given up hoping for victory. There were several reasons behind Johnson's decision and what followed.

Firstly, the US sought to utilise the PRC's help in the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. The rapprochement of the US and PRC at the end of 1960s and beginning of the 1970s gave the PRC new opportunities to play in the US-PRC-SU strategic triangle as the US assumed the pivotal position in a "romantic triangle." The rules of the game on Dittmer's model were that the pivot would try to prevent the two wing players getting close and constructing an anti-pivot united line, and the wing players would prevent the other player from uniting with the pivot to form a "stable marriage" and let itself be a pariah. Thus the rapprochement of the "pivot" US and the "wing player"

⁷⁷Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1968-1969, p. 236.

PRC followed the game rule and tended to build a “stable marriage.” In fact, this happened in the late 1970s. The reconciliation of US-PRC relations would be taken into account by US leaders as a lever to deal with North Vietnam in their plan to bring the US troops home. President Nixon saw an autonomous role for China and sensed the possibility of triangular diplomacy designed to capitalise on deepening Sino-Soviet differences.⁷⁸

A second factor was the turnaround of US leaders. President Nixon, who had once been vice president in the Eisenhower administration, advocated sending US troops to Vietnam solely if the situation warranted it.⁷⁹ He applied the tactics of détente with the PRC and arranged the retreat of US forces from Vietnam. The designer of the US troop buildup, Secretary of Defence, Robert McNamara, also became a dove.⁸⁰

The author of the anti-Vietnam War book, The Arrogance of Power, (New York: Vintage Books 1966) Mr. J. William Fulbright, led Congress in the repeal of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution on June 24, 1970, in his position as the chairman of the foreign relations committee of the Senate.⁸¹ This resolution had permitted the US president to send armed forces to Southeast Asia and it was

⁷⁸Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 131. Roy Medvedev, *op. cit.*, China and Superpowers, pp. 102-103. Gabriel Kolko, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: Anatomy of War 1940-1975, pp. 342-343.

⁷⁹Richard M. Nixon, *op. cit.*, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, pp. 152-153.

⁸⁰T. Louise Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁸¹Philip B. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 628.

passed on August 7, 1964, with a landslide vote of both houses,⁸² when Mr. Fulbright had the same official status.

A third factor was the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. Both the government and civilian leaders or agencies had shifted their attitudes to oppose the war. What was the reaction of the man in the street? Basically, the shift in people's attitude was caused by the Tet offensive. The offensive was so shocking that it legitimised the reversal of opinions.⁸³ This led to the large-scale demonstrations during the Nixon administration.

Fourthly, there developed a rational evolution of the concept of "limited war." The Korean War was the first US war without a clear-cut victory. It had been confined as a limited rather than an all-out war.⁸⁴ Furthermore, US troops in Vietnam never crossed the 17th parallel, which the US feared would lead the PRC's "volunteers" to join the war again. It would not be easy to have a war with the most populous country in the world. To use nuclear weapons was inconceivable, and to use conventional weapons to conduct a limited war, and then through negotiation, to obtain peace or armistice was the only possible answer.

⁸²Senate was 88 to 2, House of the Representatives was 416 to 0.

⁸³T. Louise Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁸⁴Henry A. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, Nuclear Power and Foreign Policy, pp. 43-44, 46-48.

(ii) The Process: Two-track Talks

(a) The Regular Peace Talks

On April 3, 1968, three days after President Johnson's offer of peace talks, North Vietnam replied with a positive gesture.⁸⁵ The talks commenced on May 10, 1968. The US delegates were headed by W. A. Harriman and the North Vietnamese by Xuan Thuy. Hopes ran high among the US delegates, as they expected that a settlement was only months away. However, the talks reached an impasse within weeks, as the spokesmen for both sides repeated the same arguments. The US insisted on the withdrawal of the North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam, and Xuan Thuy maintained that the Saigon regime should be reshuffled to include Vietcong representatives.⁸⁶ Obviously, the two sides could not easily agree with each other. South Vietnam and the Vietcong (NLF) joined these regular peace talks from January 25, 1969.⁸⁷ One other cause of the impasse was the North Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Nguyen Duy Trinh, who said on January 28, 1967, in a interview with an Australian journalist, Wilfred Burchett, that the prerequisite for talks with the US was an unconditional halt to US bombing raids and all other acts of war against North

⁸⁵The Pentagon Papers, op. cit., p. 591.

⁸⁶Stanley Karnow, op. cit., Vietnam: A History, p. 566.

⁸⁷Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1967-1968, op. cit., pp. 23037-23042. See also Congress and the Nation, Vol. III, 1969-1972, op. cit., p. 938.

Vietnam,⁸⁸ and he reiterated the four-point stand raised by the Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, in April 8, 1965, as the basis for solving the Vietnam problem.⁸⁹ All those conditions were restated by Trinh on December 29, 1967.⁹⁰ For the US, this proposal was out of question since military power was the lever which North Vietnam was worried about most, and for the Nixon administration that took office in 1969 it was an essential supporting tactic in its new policy of “Negotiation Replacing Confrontation.”⁹¹ This deadlock did not discourage US leaders from starting talks through other channels.

⁸⁸Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1967, p. 194.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 193. See also T. Louise Brown, op. cit., p. 76. The four points were:

1. Recognition of the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people: peace, independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity....

2. Pending the peaceful reunification of Vietnam, while Vietnam is still temporarily divided into two zones the military provisions of the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam must be strictly respected: the two zones must refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries, there must be no foreign military bases, troops and military personnel in their respective territory.

3. The internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves, in accordance with the programme of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, without any foreign interference.

4. The peaceful reunification of Vietnam is to be settled by the Vietnamese people in both zones, without any foreign interference.

See Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1965, p. 148.

⁹⁰Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., Documents on American Foreign Relations 1967, p. 251.

⁹¹Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked, Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institute, 1979, p. 356.

(b) The Secret Peace Talks

Henry Kissinger and Xuan Thuy first held secret talks in Paris on August 4, 1969, but without any immediate result. The stalemated regular talks were in session as scheduled, while the secret ones were held in Paris. The negotiators of the regular talks met 174 times from January 25, 1969, to January 18, 1973, but in vain.⁹² There are no statistics for the secret meetings, but Kissinger and Xuan Thuy or Le Duc Tho met at least 20 times, and they reached an agreement eventually in January 1973 at the expense of the Thieu government.⁹³ South Vietnam never participated in those secret talks though the agenda related to its interests.⁹⁴

(iii) The Contents of the Secret Talks

From February 20, 1970, to April 1970, Kissinger went to Paris four times to have secret talks with Le Duc Tho. For the first time the US side set the condition of a total withdrawal of armed forces from Vietnam in exchange for North Vietnamese forces withdrawal from South Vietnam. But Tho demanded the US declare a withdrawal deadline first. Also, Tho reiterated North Vietnam's demand for the creation a coalition government in the South which

⁹²Congress and the Nation, Vol. III, 1969-1972, op. cit., p. 938. See also Allan E. Goodman, The Lost Peace, Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1978, p. 91.

⁹³Stanley Karnow, op. cit., Vietnam: A History, p. 538.

⁹⁴Tad Szulc, "Behind the Vietnam Cease-Fire Agreement," Foreign Policy, Summer 1974, No. 15, p. 28.

would include some communists.⁹⁵ The secret talks, in fact, had the same kind of difficulties as the regular ones. Unless one side made concessions or forced the other side to make them, the deadlock would persist.

The second round of intensive secret talks was held from May 31, 1971, to the end of that year. There were six bilateral meetings. The first one started on May 31, 1971, and the US agreed to fix a timetable of troop withdrawal in exchange for the North's agreeing to stop penetrating the South. Also, once the withdrawal started, the cease-fire should cover the whole Indochina peninsula, but this was opposed by Xuan Thuy who regarded the dissolution of the Thieu government as a precondition of a cease-fire. The US was concerned about the POW issue, and North Vietnam was willing to discuss the matter but with no guarantees,⁹⁶ because it was a lever for North Vietnam.

⁹⁵Henry A. Kissinger, White House Years, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979, pp. 444-446.

⁹⁶Ibid., pp. 1019-1020.

On June 26, 1971, Xuan Thuy initiated a nine-point⁹⁷ peace plan as the basis for negotiations. It was the first solid proposal from the North Vietnamese side, though there were no fresh points in Xuan Thuy's proposal. The disputed question of US troop withdrawal, POWs and a newly organised South Vietnamese government remained the main stumbling blocks. The two sides

⁹⁷The nine points were:

1. The withdrawal of the totality of U.S. forces and those of foreign countries in the U.S. camp from South Vietnam and other Indochinese countries should be completed within 1971.

2. The release of all military men and civilians captured in the war should be carried out parallel and completed at the same time with the troop withdrawal mentioned in Point 1.

3. In South Vietnam, the United States should stop supporting Thieu-Ky-Khiem so that there may be set up in Saigon a new administration standing for peace, independence, neutrality and democracy. The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam will enter into talks with that administration to settle the internal affairs of South Vietnam and to achieve national concord.

4. The U.S. Government must bear full responsibility for the damages caused by the United States to the people of the whole Vietnam. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam demand from the U.S. Government reparations for the damages caused by the United States in the two zones of Vietnam.

5. The United States should respect the 1954 Geneva agreements on Indochina and those of 1962 on Laos. It should stop its aggression and intervention in the Indochinese countries and let their peoples settle by themselves their own affairs.

6. The problems existing among the Indochina countries should be settled by the Indochinese parties on the basis of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and noninterference in each other's internal affairs. As far as it is concerned, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is prepared to join in resolving such problems.

7. All the parties should achieve a cease-fire after the signing of the agreements on the above-mentioned problems.

8. There should be an international supervision.

9. There should be an international guarantee for the fundamental national rights of the Indochinese people, the neutrality of South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and lasting peace in the region.

The text see Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., American Foreign Relations 1971: A Documents Record, pp. 304-306. See also Henry Kissinger, op. cit., White House Years, p. 1023.

met in July, August and September 1971. In October, South Vietnam had presidential election, and the US proclaimed its neutral stand.⁹⁸ However, Thieu won a landslide victory. In 1971, there had been no visible progress in the peace talks.⁹⁹

In March 1972, one month after President Nixon's visit to the PRC, the North Vietnamese launched a large-scale onslaught across the demilitarised zone, with seven divisions. To counter North Vietnam's offensive and to stabilise the Vietnamization effort, on April 15, 1972, Nixon authorised the bombing of an area near Hanoi and the seaport, Haiphong. One Soviet vessel was wrecked due to the US air raid.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, that did not postpone Kissinger's planned visit to Moscow. He arrived in Moscow on April 20, 1972, to prepare Nixon's summit meeting with Brezhnev on May 20, the first US presidential visit in Moscow.

When Kissinger was in Moscow, his mission produced what probably was the first major turning point in the history of the Vietnam negotiations. He told Brezhnev that the US would be willing to accept a cease-fire in exchange for the withdrawal of the North Vietnamese forces which had entered South

⁹⁸Henry Kissinger, *Ibid.*, p. 1032.

⁹⁹Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁰⁰T. Louise Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

Vietnam since the start of the offensive on March 30, 1972; but they would not demand the withdrawal of the North Vietnamese troops who had been in the South prior to the offensive. It was the first time that the US explicitly agreed to let any North Vietnamese forces stay in the South.¹⁰¹

Kissinger and Tho met again on May 2, 1972, but what Kissinger had said to Brezhnev was not divulged on that occasion. Six days later, on May 8, Nixon announced the mining of Haiphong harbour, the destruction of the PRC-North Vietnam railroad system, and the intensification of US bombing of North Vietnam.¹⁰² Obviously, North Vietnam's Spring offensive was successful in keeping it in a high-profile position in the peace negotiations, which persuaded Nixon to take drastic action. But the outcome of the Moscow summit was fruitful for the Americans also. On June 15, when the SU head of state, Nikolai V. Podgorny, visited North Vietnam, he persuaded North Vietnam to deal more flexibly with the US in the negotiations.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

¹⁰²Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, *Vietnam: A History*, p. 685. The same day, President Nixon spoke to the nation about his decision. The most notable feature of his speech was the omission of any suggestion that a North Vietnamese withdrawal from the South was required as a condition for ceasing the bombing and mining. This was consistent with the remarks Kissinger made to Brezhnev when he was in Moscow. The omission of any reference to North Vietnamese withdrawals was deliberate. It was a sort of "carrot-and-stick" tactics. Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁰³Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, *Kissinger*, Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1974, p. 337.

The third round of intensive secret talks started on July 19, 1972. Because neither the PRC nor the SU condemned the US for its escalation of military action, and because of the evolution of the triangular relationships, North Vietnam was afraid of losing its supporters.¹⁰⁴ In this round of talks, North Vietnam changed its guideline to consider a compromise temporary settlement that would bring about a US troop withdrawal, otherwise so long as the US armed forces were stationed in Vietnam, it would lessen the possibility of a military victory for North Vietnam and make the defeat of the South Vietnamese government an impossible dream. Thus, on October 8, 1972, in the secret talks, Tho proposed other points which Kissinger recognised as a breakthrough. Tho suggested that North Vietnam and the US sign an agreement settling the military questions between them—withdrawal, prisoners, cease-fire. Politically, Tho just wanted some agreed principles, and to facilitate this, North Vietnam made a concession by giving up its insistence on a coalition government in the South, and having an “Administration of National Concord” to replace it, organised by the Thieu government and the PRG (Provisional Revolutionary Government). North Vietnam also agreed to allow US military

¹⁰⁴John G. Stoessinger, Henry Kissinger: The Anguish of Power, New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1976, p. 64.

aid to the South before the final settlement. Tho never mentioned the withdrawal of North Vietnam's troops from the South.¹⁰⁵

North Vietnam used the "two-track approach" to separate political issues from military ones.¹⁰⁶ Hanoi this time presented a genuine negotiating document and many concessions rather than just a series of demands. Hanoi was no longer demanding Thieu's removal as an a priori condition. The long-elusive breakthrough in the Vietnam peace talks finally came,¹⁰⁷ though the formidable problem of North Vietnam's troops in the South still remained unsolved.

On October 18, 1972, Kissinger flew to Saigon to brief Thieu on the progress of the latest US-North Vietnamese talks, since Thieu and his men never had any opportunity to take part in those secret talks. A draft agreement drawn up by its enemy and its protector secretly was hard for Thieu to accept.¹⁰⁸

With respect to the US-North Vietnam draft itself, Thieu indicated three items he could not accept. They were: firstly, in the Vietnamese version of the draft, the National Council of Reconciliation and Concord was translated as a "coalition government," not just an "administrative structure" as Kissinger had

¹⁰⁵Henry A. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, White House Years, pp. 1143-1145.

¹⁰⁶Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

¹⁰⁷Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁰⁸Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

said. Secondly, the draft agreement said there were three governments in Vietnam, North, South and a provisional one in the South. If Thieu accepted this provision, it would damage South Vietnam's sovereignty. Thirdly, there was no word stipulating the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops from the South, and this would legalise the North's infiltration.¹⁰⁹

These three points were what the South worried most about from the very beginning of the talks. The draft agreement looked like a concession from the US side, but not a breakthrough. Although there was a serious risk that, given strong anti-war pressure in the US, prolonged peace negotiations would only bring more concessions from the United States. To Thieu and his people this draft agreement meant life or death, so they turned it down. Kissinger left Saigon on October 22, 1972, empty handed. There would be no peace agreement before the November 7 American presidential elections. Kissinger was therefore forced to make his famous "peace is at hand" statement with the three fold objective of putting pressure on Thieu, reassuring Hanoi and undercutting Nixon's radical anti-war opponent George McGovern.¹¹⁰

On November 7, 1972, Nixon duly won the presidential election. Over the next five weeks the peace negotiations effectively broke down. Thieu

¹⁰⁹Henry A. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, White House Years, pp. 1378, 1382.

¹¹⁰Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-59.

remained adamant; the North Vietnamese became concerned at intensive US aid improving the South's military position; and the US began to feel that anti-settlement factions were gaining strength in Hanoi.¹¹¹

On December 18, Nixon duly ordered very intensive bombing of areas around Hanoi and Haiphong; raids which continued for eleven days.¹¹² The US once again tried to use superior military power to force North Vietnam to submit.¹¹³ The air raids totalled 40,000 tons of bombs which was recognised as the heaviest air campaign in human history to date.¹¹⁴ This escalation of bombardment brought North Vietnam back to the negotiating table. She had

¹¹¹Ibid., pp.58-59.

¹¹²Stanley Karnow, op. cit., Vietnam: A History, p. 686.

¹¹³It was hard for North Vietnam to continue its resistance to the extremely destructive US bombing, when it had only limited support from its allies. As well as the emergence of the triangle, and the US air aids, North Vietnam had also experienced heavy sacrifices at both 1954 and 1962 Geneva Conference. The communist bloc had been represented by the PRC and the SU, and North Vietnam did not enter into direct negotiations with the Western powers. Although Beijing opposed the DRV's peace negotiations with the US, the PRC simultaneously began its own rapprochement with the US. More than any other factor this contradiction served to revive basic Vietnamese fears of a Han double-cross. Therefore, unless it had adequately counterbalanced power to deal with the players of the triangle, North Vietnam would have no other choice but to comply with the objective of a direct negotiation with the United States. However, North Vietnam used the talks as a path to achieve its final goal of expelling foreign invaders and unifying Vietnam and therefore its stand at the talks was intransigent and did not concede anything of substance at all. See King Chen, op. cit., China and the Three Worlds, p. 37. Ishwer C. Ojha, op. cit., p. 43. Steve Smith, ed., op. cit., National and International Society, p. 57. Douglas Pike, War, Peace, and the Viet Cong, Boston: The M. I. T. Press, 1969, p. 40. North Vietnam also knew how to take the aid from both the PRC and the SU and the advice from neither. Ho, too, was adept at playing to one of both a nationalist and a communist. Thus, it is believed that to play a neutral role or a double-track approach would best fit North Vietnam's national interest.

¹¹⁴Stanley Karnow, op. cit., Vietnam: A History, pp. 652-653.

become virtually defenceless from the air.¹¹⁵ On January 8, 1973, the last round of secret talks opened. Both sides reconfirmed the October 8 draft agreement, and added Communist recognition of the National Council of Reconciliation and Concord as an administrative structure.¹¹⁶ The final “Agreement of Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam” was signed on January 27, 1973, by the four concerned parties: the US, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the PRG in the South.

For the US the agreement meant the withdrawal of US troops, the return home of the POWs and the release of the domestic anti-Vietnam War pressure. Thieu did not lose his sovereignty due to the North’s concession in recognising the National Council of Reconciliation and Concord as only an administrative structure. Nixon and Kissinger had obtained in addition “a text with the maximum ambiguity of language so as to give the United States all the flexibility possible in supporting South Vietnam military after the truce.”¹¹⁷ As Allan Goodman, author of The Lost Peace wrote recently, “I have no doubt at all that when the agreement was being negotiated, the US side had every expectation of being able to punish for any violation and considered the

¹¹⁵North Vietnam was down to only a two day supply of air defence missiles. See Tad Szulc, op. cit., p. 62.

¹¹⁶Gareth Porter, A Peace Denied: The United States, Vietnam and the Paris Agreement, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975, p. 172.

¹¹⁷Tad Szulc, op. cit., p. 63.

resumption of B-52 bombing as a powerful deterrent to any large scale breach.”¹¹⁸

The war would go on as North Vietnam had not given up its objective of using its armed forces to unite Vietnam.¹¹⁹ Paris agreement only required all foreign troops to be withdrawn from South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, but not North Vietnam’s forces from South Vietnam.¹²⁰ When the “peace” accord were signed there were about 145,000 North Vietnamese troops left in South Vietnam, and these remained in battle positions.¹²¹ Within a year about 40,000 more North Vietnamese troops had infiltrated into the South.¹²²

For the purpose of the withdrawal of US troops, the return of POWs, and the carrying out of the cease fire, Article 16 of the Agreement stipulated the organising of a Four-Party Joint Military Commission, but this lasted only sixty

¹¹⁸Correspondent^{cf} with the author, February 18, 1999.

¹¹⁹William J. Duiker, *op. cit.*, p. 297. In Vietnam, the US fought not just communism, but uncompromising nationalism which determined the final showdown. A temporary compromise at the Paris talks would not endanger North Vietnam’s nationalism. Without a similar perception of nationalism in South Vietnam, no matter what military success the US achieved the US would lose the war. See Stanley Karnow, *op. cit.*, Vietnam: A History, p. 505.

¹²⁰Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., *op. cit.*, American Foreign Relations 1973: A Documentary Record, pp. 40-42.

¹²¹Philip B. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 731. See also Robert Randle, “Peace in Vietnam and Laos: 1954, 1962, 1973,” ORBIS, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, Fall, 1974, p. 897.

¹²²John Lewy, America in Vietnam, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 206. Some said 75,000 men penetrated South Vietnam after the Paris agreement. See T. Louise Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

days.¹²³ This was enough to achieve the first two objectives but not the third. The cease-fire was difficult to enforce, since there were hundreds of thousands of North Vietnamese forces in the South, Thieu's force, had also rallied and been strengthened and Hanoi and Saigon were prepared both psychologically and physically, for the continuation of the war.¹²⁴

Based on Article 19 of the agreement, within thirty days of the signing of the agreement, an international conference was to be held to guarantee the ending of the war. The said conference was held in Paris from February 26 to March 2, 1973, with thirteen countries or authorities attending. Though an Act was signed, the participants could not guarantee the fulfilment of the January 27 agreement, and on April 20, 1973, the US issued official complaints concerning North Vietnamese and PRG violations of the cease-fire.¹²⁵

As Nixon later said, "The Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam was not perfect. But it was adequate to ensure the survival of South Vietnam—as long as the United States stood ready to enforce its terms."¹²⁶ At first the US reacted robustly to North Vietnamese provocations.

¹²³Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., American Foreign Relations 1973: A Documentary Record, pp. 46-49.

¹²⁴T. Louise Brown, op. cit., pp. 257-259.

¹²⁵Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., op. cit., American Foreign Relations 1973: A Documentary Record, pp. 67-74.

¹²⁶Richard M. Nixon, No More Vietnams, New York: Avon Books, 1985, p. 166.

In February 1973, only a few days after signature on the Paris accords, the US began the aerial bombardment of Laos and Cambodia. A US Special Advisory Group (USSAG) was set up at Nakom Phanom air base in northern Thailand to coordinate the bombing. This operation was due to ^{it} becoming apparent that the North Vietnamese had no intention of withdrawing their forces from those countries.¹²⁷ In March, however, things began to change. As Kissinger noted, although violations were continuing, the President “approached the problem of violations in a curiously desultory fashion. He drifted.”¹²⁸ The reason was the developing Watergate crisis.¹²⁹ This new factor paralysed Washington by debilitating the executive branch and by allowing anti-war and anti-South Vietnamese sentiment in Congress to dominate US policy.

On June 25, 1973, budgetary cuts curtailed the bombing of Laos and

¹²⁷Frank Snepp, *Decent Interval*, New York: Random House, 1978, p. 51.

¹²⁸Henry A. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, *Years of Upheaval*, p. 318.

¹²⁹McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the US Presidents for National Security Affairs from 1961 to 1966, however, argues, “It was not Watergate that in the end made Saigon’s survival impossible; it was the relative weakness of the unhappy non-communist society of South Vietnam, and the fatal and enduring imbalance between what it would have needed from us and what our own society would let us provide.” See McGeorge Bundy, “Vietnam, Watergate and Presidential Powers,” *Foreign Affairs*, Winter 1979/1980, p. 407.

Cambodia.¹³⁰ On July 18, the US House of Representatives passed an Act limiting the President's power to send any armed forces overseas. The President had to inform Congress within 24 hours if he did so, and if Congress disapproved, the forces had to be called back within sixty days. This War Power Act was passed by both chambers and entered into force on November 7, 1973.¹³¹ South Vietnam was effectively being abandoned, contrary to the original intentions of both the Nixon administration and the PRC, to whose policy evolution since 1969 we must now return.

4.2. PRC Policy Evolution

A. Policy Statements

The tension along the Sino-Soviet border was intensified after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and the Chenpao incident in March 1969, and the PRC's foreign policy became more pragmatic, rather than ideological. To offset the security threat from the north and to avoid a two-front war both in the north and in the south, a continuation of the Vietnam War with

¹³⁰Before the passing of the War Powers Act, on June 25, 1973, Congress passed the Eagleton amendment, which cut off funds for Cambodia bombing. Although vetoing it at first, President Nixon eventually signed the bill on June 30, 1973. See Henry A. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, Years of Upheaval, p. 357. Richard M. Nixon, *op. cit.*, No More Vietnams, p. 180. Richard M. Nixon, *op. cit.*, The Memoir of Richard Nixon, p. 888.

¹³¹Richard P. Stebbins and Elaine P. Adam, ed., *op. cit.*, American Foreign Relations 1973: A Documentary Record, p. 494.

a reduced US presence became attractive to the PRC. This would reduce both the threat of a Soviet backed DRV or a Thieu government full of US troops. This coincided with the US change in its Vietnam policy and its desire to seek reconciliation with the PRC. A firm strategic triangle was finally established, and the PRC, with its traditional attitude of disdain toward Vietnam, consolidated the Sino-American rapprochement.

The PRC's shift was particularly noticeable in the propaganda machine's reduction in its anti-US rhetoric. For a rigid communist government like the PRC, which could abandon the weight of ideology and submit to pragmatic needs, there had to have been some domestic arguments in support of these adjustments in policy. Besides the PRC is a country totally controlled by the communist party. Therefore crucial and important policy changes had to be reflected in its party congress publications.

(i) The Ninth Party Congress

In April 1969, the long-anticipated Ninth CCP Party Congress was held in Beijing. This was about seven months after the Czechoslovakia incident and one month after the Chenpao Sino-SU border military clash. A shifting in foreign policy appeared in the documents of this congress. The principal document of the congress was the political report of Lin Biao, the then vice

chairman of the CCP, on April 1, 1969.¹³² The contents included two outstanding statements of foreign policy.

The first was anti-US, anti-SU and supported the “proletariat and revolutionary people” of all countries:

U.S. imperialism and Soviet revisionist social-imperialism are bogged down in political and economic crises, beset with difficulties both at home and abroad, and find themselves in impasse...

The nature of U.S. imperialism as a *paper tiger* (emphasis added) has long since been laid bare by the people throughout the world. U.S. imperialism, the most ferocious enemy of the people of the whole world, is going downhill more and more.

Since he took office, Nixon has been confronted with a hopeless mess and an insoluble economic crisis, with the strong resistance of the masses of the people at home and throughout the world, and with the predicament in which the imperialist countries are disintegrating and the baton of U.S. imperialism is getting less and less effective...

The Soviet revisionist renegade clique is a *paper tiger*, (emphasis added) too. It has revealed its social-imperialist features more and more clearly. When Khrushchev revisionism was just beginning to emerge, our great leader Chairman Mao foresaw what serious harm modern revisionism would do to the cause of world revolution...

Since Brezhnev came to power, with its baton becoming less and less effective and its difficulties at home and abroad growing more and more serious, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique has been practicing social-imperialism and social-fascism more frantically than ever....and intensified its threat of aggression against China. Its dispatch of hundreds of thousands of troops to occupy Czechoslovakia and its armed provocations against

¹³²The Ninth CCP Party Congress amended the CCP's 1956 constitution to nominate Lin Biao as Mao's successor.

China on our territory Chenpao Island are two full performances staged recently by Soviet revisionism.

To justify its aggression and plunder, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique trumpets the so-called theory of “limited sovereignty,” the theory of “international dictatorship,” and the theory of “socialist community.” What does all this stuff mean? It means that your sovereignty is “limited,” while his is unlimited. You won’t obey him? He will exercise “international dictatorship” over you—dictatorship over the people of other countries, in order to form the “social community” ruled by the new tsars,...

Today, it is not imperialism, revisionism, and reaction but the proletariat and the revolutionary people of all countries that determine the destiny of the world...¹³³

Lin referred to the US as imperialists, the SU as revisionists, social-imperialists and social-fascists. Both of them were “paper tigers,” particularly the SU for its invasion of Czechoslovakia and armed acts of aggression against the PRC. The SU’s theory of “limited sovereignty” was derided.

Significantly, during the congress the PRC reiterated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence to signal the change in its foreign policy. It will be remembered that this was policy deployed by Zhou Enlai at Geneva in 1954 and at Bandung in 1955, a flexible policy to try to open the PRC’s door to the world. It failed originally due to its unpopularity even with Asian and African nations and escalated antagonism with both superpowers.

Lin said:

¹³³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 2235-2237.

The foreign policy of our Party and government is consistent. It is: to develop relations of friendship, mutual assistance, and cooperation with socialist countries on the principle of proletarian internationalism; to support and assist the revolutionary struggle of all the oppressed people and nations; to work for peaceful coexistence with countries of different social systems on the basis of *the five principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefits, and peaceful coexistence*, (emphasis added) and to oppose the imperialist policies of aggression and war. Our proletarian foreign policy is not based on expediency; it is a policy in which we have long persisted. This is what we did in the past and will persist in doing the same in the future.¹³⁴

The re-assertion of this old pliable thought reflected the need of the PRC to make contact with the US. This in fact, was initiated by the PRC side in its proposal in November 1968 to resume the 135th Warsaw Talks after Nixon was elected US President. Thus, though the PRC still included strongly anti-US rhetoric in Lin Biao's political report for the Ninth CCP Party Congress, with respect to the Vietnam War, in the report there is only one sentence rather than one paragraph in the communiqué of the Ninth Party Congress worth mentioning, which sharply contrasted to the PRC's usual long and fierce words condemning US conduct in Vietnam:

...in their struggle against imperialism and revisionism; we firmly support the Vietnamese people in carrying their war of resistance against U.S. aggression and for national salvation through to the end; (emphasis added) we firmly support the

¹³⁴Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2237.

revolutionary struggles of the people of Laos, Thailand, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, India, Palestine, and other countries and regions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America....¹³⁵

(ii) The Second Plenum

Sixteen months later, the Second Plenum Session of the Ninth Central Committee was held in Beijing from August 23 to September 6, 1970. This was important mainly because it appeared to witness a clash between the moderates led by Zhou Enlai and the radicals led by Lin Biao and Chen Boda.¹³⁶ Lin died in a plane crash as a result of the failure of a coup in September 1971, but, long before that during the Second Plenum, his position had been in doubt, in contrast with the Ninth Party Congress when he was at the height of his power. Lin was a radical, who pushed radical domestic programs that included a partial revival of the Great Leap Forward movement and the Cultural Revolution.¹³⁷ In foreign affairs, he was opposed to rapprochement with the US; in fact, he was anti both the US and the SU.¹³⁸ In contrast, Zhou, who initiated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in the 1950s, was happy to see the revival of the Five Principles from the Ninth Party Congress, and this time, hopefully, the

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 2237.

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 2296.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 2296.

¹³⁸See p. 236.

Five Principles would lead to the PRC working effectively with the US, something which the PRC had failed to achieve in the 1950s.

Traditional anti-US and anti-SU rhetoric could still be found in the communiqué of the Second Plenum:

In response to Chairman Mao's solemn call "heighten our vigilance, defend the motherland," the great Chinese People's Liberation Army, the People's Militia, and people of the whole country, in order to guard against imperialist and social-imperialist aggression on our country, have further enhanced by their preparedness against war ideologically, materially, and organizationally.¹³⁹

However, it also said:

Beset with troubles both at home and abroad, U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism have become increasingly isolated and are besieged by the revolutionary people the world over. In contrast, China's foreign relations are daily developing. On the basis of adhering to the *five principles*, (emphasis added) we strive for *peaceful coexistence* (emphasis added) with countries having different social systems.... We have friends all over the world.¹⁴⁰

It indicated the prevailing atmosphere of the new Sino-American relations, and a pragmatic diplomacy, anti-US superficially pro-US substantially, was in place.

¹³⁹Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2296.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 2297.

During this period, the restriction of US travellers to the PRC was relaxed by the US; US naval patrols through the Taiwan Strait were suspended; the official title of “the People’s Republic of China” was officially used by US officials; the Warsaw Talks resumed in a friendly atmosphere. All those friendly gestures were reciprocated in the PRC’s invitation of an old friend, Edgar Snow, to visit the PRC again, in October 1970.¹⁴¹ PRC-US relations were perceptibly improving. Thus, it is not surprising that there were again, as in the Ninth Party Congress, very few references concerning Vietnam. We can find only the following:

The development of the international situation in the past few months has testified to this scientific thesis of Chairman Mao’s. The people of the three countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia are continuously winning new victories in the war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation....¹⁴²

(iii) The Shanghai Communiqué of February 27, 1972

The Communiqué was issued just before the conclusion of the historical Nixon visit to the PRC. While both sides, the PRC and the US stated their different views about the Vietnam War,¹⁴³ the PRC took this opportunity to put the “Five Principles” in words in terms of its relations with the US:

There are essential difference between China and the United

¹⁴¹See p. 187.

¹⁴²Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2297.

¹⁴³See pp. 246-247.

States in their social system and foreign policy. However, the two sides agreed that countries, regardless of their social system, should conduct their relations *on the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, nonaggression against other states, noninterference in the internal affairs of other states, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.* (emphasis added) International disputes should be settled on this basis, without resorting to the use or threat of force. The United States and the People's Republic of China are prepared to apply these principles to their mutual relations.¹⁴⁴

(iv) The Tenth Party Congress

The next relevant document that we need to mention is the news release of the Tenth CCP Party Congress, held in Beijing from August 24 to 28, 1973, almost three years after the Second Plenum and seven months after the Paris peace agreement. The Paris peace agreement had already been signed, but since the variation of the PRC's foreign policy has its roots like every country's, a clue to the PRC's foreign policy can still be found by reviewing the reports from this Tenth Party Congress.

Between this conference and the Second Plenum in August 1970, the hard-liner Lin Biao died in September 1971. There was thus no real hindrance to the progress of Sino-American rapprochement, and progress was made. The US table tennis team was invited by the PRC to visit mainland China; the US lifted its embargo on the PRC; and the PRC invited the US to send their special

¹⁴⁴Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2363.

envoy. Kissinger secretly visited Beijing to arrange President Nixon's forthcoming sojourn in the PRC and during his visit, the President signed the Shanghai Communiqué which highlighted the first stage of Sino-American rapprochement.

Lin Biao had been betrayed, and was dead,¹⁴⁵ and Zhou Enlai replaced him. Zhou's speeches revealed the failure of the opposition toward the Sino-American rapprochement and the rise of new pro-US-PRC relations. In his report to the Tenth Party Congress, he said on August 24, 1973:

In the international sphere, our Party and government have firmly implemented *the foreign policy laid down by the Ninth Congress*. (emphasis added) Our revolutionary friendship with fraternal socialist countries and our cooperation with friendly countries have been further strengthened. Our country has established diplomatic relations with an increasing number of countries on the basis of *the five principles of peaceful coexistence*. (emphasis added) The legitimate status of our country in the United Nations has been restored. The policy of isolating China has gone bankrupt; *Sino-U.S. relations have been improved to some extent*. (emphasis added) China and Japan have normalized their relations. Friendly contacts between our people and the people of other countries are more extensive than ever; we assist and support each other, impelling the world situation to continue to develop in the direction favorable to the people of all countries.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵See p. 227.

¹⁴⁶Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2464.

As Zhou reported, The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence had led to some progress for the PRC in the foreign relations arena.¹⁴⁷

He went on to say:

...it is mainly the two nuclear superpowers—the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. that are contending for hegemony. While hawking disarmament, they are actually expanding their armaments everyday. Their purpose is to contend for world hegemony. They contend as well as collude with each other. The collusion serves the purpose of more intensified contention. Contention is absolute and protracted, whereas collusion is relative and temporary....The U.S.-Soviet contention for hegemony is the cause of world intranquility. It cannot be covered up by any false appearances they create and is already perceived by an increasing number of people and countries. It has met with strong resistance from the Third World and has caused resentment on the part of Japan and West European countries. Beset with troubles internally and externally, the two hegemonic powers—the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.—find the going tougher and tougher...¹⁴⁸

The word “hegemony” appeared many times and characterised the US and the SU as belonging to the same group. The speech showed the world that the PRC had its own thoughts about international relations, and that it had the

¹⁴⁷In fact, after the CCP’s Ninth Congress in April 1969, the PRC resumed the dispatching of all those ambassadors who had been recalled home for the Cultural Revolution. This meant the weakening of the Cultural Revolution and the need to develop foreign relations under the restored principle of “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence” in the Ninth CCP Party Congress. The result of the increase of countries with diplomatic relations, see the footnote 230 of this Chapter.

¹⁴⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, pp. 2466-2467.

strength, orally at least, to oppose both superpowers at the same time. It gradually became more self-confident.

Zhou also referred to the Vietnam situation relating it to the superpower's hegemony:

The awakening and growth of the Third World is a major event in contemporary international relations. The Third World has strengthened its unity in the struggle against hegemonism and power politics of the superpowers and is playing an even more significant role in international affairs. The great victories won by the people of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in their war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation have strongly encouraged the people of the world in their revolutionary struggles against imperialism and colonialism.¹⁴⁹

From all above-mentioned documents of different CCP congresses, a probable scenario of the PRC's Vietnam policy variations can be identified:

Firstly, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence were applied successfully for the first time in international affairs. The principles were initiated in the first half of the 1950s, and Zhou Enlai tried hard to gain ground in the PRC's foreign relations through these pragmatic guidelines. However, the PRC's worsening relations with the two superpowers made these tactics difficult to apply, and even Asian and African nations were antagonistic toward the PRC. Thus although the PRC wanted to be more internationalised, it was in

¹⁴⁹Ibid., p. 2466.

vain. At the PRC's 1969 Ninth CCP Party Congress, the Five Principles were reiterated in order to unite with the US to fight against the SU's serious threat to the PRC's national security. Between the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969 and the Tenth Party Congress in August 1973, the Five Principles were mentioned repeatedly and the Sino-US contact was revealed in Zhou's report, in the Tenth Party Congress. For the first time the PRC was fully integrated into the international system through the application of pragmatic ideas in foreign policy.

Secondly, in contrast to the building up of Sino-American relations, Sino-North Vietnamese relations were deteriorating. In the documents of the party congress, the CCP mentioned the war or the latest situation in Vietnam less and less. Obviously, the Ninth Party Congress was a watershed. In that congress, the PRC reiterated the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and this paved the way for Sino-American reconciliation. The Vietnam War was becoming a disastrous affair for the Americans. The more moderate wording meant the PRC cared more about US concerns, though its coolness to North Vietnam might push it into the arms of the SU.

Thirdly, the emergence of the concept of "hegemony" was vital the nature of the PRC's dual tactics toward the US. The concept was underlined in

the documents of the Tenth Party Congress. The subjects of hegemonism included both the SU and the US. The domestic problem of the cultural revolution and the external security threat from the SU lessened in 1973, and so the PRC became more independent as a wing player of a “romantic triangle” in the strategic triangle. However, the PRC tried to promote its relations with the US and at the same time to reshape the triangle in the shape of a Sino-American “stable marriage” with the SU as a pariah. The PRC’s dual tactics were successfully applied to the US. The game was played according to the rules, and this meant the PRC would assume a more influential role and even before the conclusion of the January 1973 Paris peace agreement, the PRC was in a position of rapprochement with the US to safeguard itself from the SU security challenge.

Fourthly, the documents showed the triumph of the faction, which advocated pro-Sino-American reconciliation led by Zhou. The main opponent, Lin Biao, delivered the political report and was appointed Mao’s successor at the Ninth Party Congress. But his value faded as the Cultural Revolution was replaced as top priority in national security consideration by the Sino-Soviet military clash at Chenpao, and as tension eventually relaxed, Lin’s fall became inevitable. Zhou’s advocacy of a reconciliation with the US and the successful

reiteration of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, as CCP documents revealed, were what the PRC needed most at that moment. Zhou was in power, and although the “Gang of Four” rose and persisted in power until 1976,¹⁵⁰ this inner power struggle did not hinder the momentum for Sino-American reconciliation.

All in all, the tension with the SU in the late 1960s compelled the PRC to move to a more pragmatic than an ideological approach in foreign affairs. To consolidate this more pragmatic policy, the top priority of the PRC’s foreign relations was to achieve reconciliation with the US, and accommodate the US Vietnam policy of achieving an agreement in the peace talks. Otherwise it would be difficult and risky for the PRC to confront the SU’s formidable bullying threats to its national security.

B. Internal Factors Leading to Change

(i) The Fall of Lin Biao and His Clique

The revival of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was included in Lin Biao’s political report for the Ninth CCP Party Congress in April 1969. If he was the man to assert this, why did he later evolve as an anti-US hard-liner

¹⁵⁰See p. 232.

doomed in his power struggle against Mao? Was Lin's behaviour contradictory? The questions are addressed in the following analysis.

Lin was a tool used by Mao to suppress the chaos of the Cultural Revolution. The Nixon administration tried to withdraw its troops from Vietnam. In Beijing, meanwhile, the decline of the Cultural Revolution in 1969 was followed by domestic normalisation evidenced in the gradual reappearance of many intellectuals and bureaucrats, chastened or subdued by farm work in May 7 cadre schools.¹⁵¹ This did not mean that society was back to normal. The Cultural Revolution had been a severe power struggle, in which Mao basically tried to uphold his position as the leader of the CCP. In the Cultural Revolution, Mao originally expected the "Red Guard," led by the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group, controlled by Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, to pursue what he needed to hold on to his power. Tens of millions of "Red Guards" were defeated by local cliques, united with farmers and workers. This forced Mao to change his mind and call on Lin Biao to assist him to implement the Cultural Revolution.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ John King Fairbank, The United States and China, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 458.

¹⁵² 1972 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, *op. cit.*, p. 5:9.

Lin had replaced Peng Dehuai as the minister of national defence in September 1959.¹⁵³ Lin was also the leader of the famous Fourth Field Corps, and once he became the minister of national defence, hardly anyone could compete with his status in the People's Liberation Army.

Furthermore, after Lin had used his military influence to help Mao to consolidate his status, the Chenpao and Czechoslovakia incidents persuaded the PRC to adopt a more pragmatic way of dealing with foreign relations. The importance of the military forces was underlined as a deterrent against a possible SU invasion. Thus in the CCP's Ninth Party Congress held in April 1969, one month after the Chenpao incident and eight months after the SU invasion of Czechoslovakia, Lin was publicly described as Mao's "close comrade-in-arms and successor" in the new party constitution.¹⁵⁴

Lin Biao was killed in an air crash on September 12, 1971, on his way trying to flee, after the failure of his planned coup.¹⁵⁵ Why did a beloved comrade turn into a fugitive and die less than two and a half years later? During and after the cultural revolution, Lin's influence on the PLA was used by Mao to control and take power domestically, and to counter the SU's possible

¹⁵³Peng was purged mainly due to the outcome of the failure of PRC's bombardment of Quemoy in August 1958.

¹⁵⁴Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2239.

¹⁵⁵1972 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., p. 5:5.

invasion that was expected. In some sense the Cultural Revolution was a joint effort for Mao and Lin—Mao used Lin's power to consolidate his position in the CCP, and Lin profited by this chance to be promoted as the “successor” of Mao. However, once the Cultural Revolution weakened and the threat of a SU invasion receded, the collaboration dissolved. On the other hand, judging from Mao's old assertion—“political power grows out of the barrel of a gun,”¹⁵⁶ he could not let Lin command the power of the PLA for too long .

After he had reached the apex of his power in the Ninth Party Congress, Lin cooperated with Chen Boda to unify their opposition to Mao. Chen, a theorist of the CCP, had been appointed as the group leader of the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group in the vanguard of Mao's plan for the cultural revolution. The failure of the Red Guards, which were directed by the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group, made Chen realise he was doomed. During the second plenary session of the Ninth Central Committee of the CCP, from August 23 to September 6, 1970, Chen openly opposed Mao's proposal of not setting up the position of a “Country Chairman.”¹⁵⁷ Thus after the Second Plenum, Chen disappeared from Beijing's political arena.¹⁵⁸ The

¹⁵⁶Warren Kuo, *op. cit.*, Analytical History of Chinese Communist Party, Book Four, pp. 1-2.

¹⁵⁷1972 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, *op. cit.*, p. 4:6.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., p. 5:13.

recoil from Mao was the cause. The defeat of Chen brought Lin nothing, but accelerated his coup. The unfortunate Lin was betrayed by his own daughter,¹⁵⁹ and on September 12, 1971, he fled and was killed in an air crash. Lin's rise and abrupt fall showed the superiority of Mao in the PRC's domestic power struggle at that stage, having both used and destroyed Lin.¹⁶⁰

(ii) The Victory of Zhou and his Clique

Zhou always proved himself to be pragmatic, as illustrated by his actions in the first half of 1950s, and he never allowed himself to be restrained by inflexible dogmas.¹⁶¹ Zhou Enlai's position was rather isolated from the power struggle between Mao with Lin and Chen. Mao was dissatisfied with Zhou's coolness toward the Cultural Revolution.¹⁶² However, at the Second Plenum, Mao instructed his personal following, including Jiang Qing, to support Zhou

¹⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 2:17, 4:7.

¹⁶⁰An observer remarks that Lin's fall was far more than the purging of a single individual. It was preceded by an elaborate conspiracy against Mao that involved a large number of individuals and was followed by a purge of virtually all of China's ranking central military leaders. In retrospect, the Lin Pao affair represented a crisis stage in the struggle for power between the pragmatists and elements of the military that had been under way since the winding down of the Cultural Revolution in 1968. See Roger Glenn Brown, "Chinese Politics and American Policy: A New Look at the Triangle," Foreign Policy, Summer 1976, p. 9.

¹⁶¹Kuo-Kang Shao, op. cit., "Chou En-lai's Diplomatic Approach to Non-aligned States in Asia: 1953-60," p. 337.

¹⁶²1972 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., p. 4:5.

against Lin.¹⁶³ The Second Plenum was the watershed of the new union between Mao and Zhou against Lin and Chen.

Zhou and Lin were also adversaries in international relations. Zhou was pro-US and Chinese rapprochement, and Lin was rather conservative and reluctant. Lin was in power before the Second Plenum held in August and September 1970. During the first period of Sino-American reconciliation in the early part of 1969, the new idea of détente with the US was hindered by conservatives like Lin. Zhou, having replaced Lin, spoke at the Tenth Party Congress. The power struggle between Zhou and Lin was evident from their different interpretations of the new Sino-US relations.

The drastic change in the PRC's foreign policy in dealing with the US made some conservatives of the CCP hesitate about extending their support. Among them Lin Biao was the most powerful and subtle. Zhou's idea of rapprochement with one of the superpowers contrasted with Lin's concept of a continuation of simultaneous conflict both with the USSR and the United States.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2296.

¹⁶⁴James T. Myers, et al., ed., *Chinese Politics—Documents and Analysis*, Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1989, Vol. Two, p. 18.

In his last recorded public speech, delivered on October 1, 1970, the national day of the PRC, Lin took a straight dual-adversary line that had not been mentioned at all in Zhou's speech one day before at a National Day reception.¹⁶⁵

Lin said:

A new upsurge in the struggle against U.S. imperialism is emerging in the world. As Chairman Mao pointed out in his solemn statement of May 20 this year, "the danger of a new world war still exists, and the people of all countries must get prepared. But revolution is the main trend in the world today." Throughout the world, the people's revolutionary struggles are developing vigorously, and the *united front* (emphasis added) against U.S. imperialism is constantly expanding and growing in strength. U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism are most isolated and are having a very tough time. China's foreign relations are daily developing.¹⁶⁶

When was Zhou's idea first aired? It was started in August and September 1970,¹⁶⁷ about the time of the Second Plenum. Originally, the leadership of the PRC was divided over how to deal with the US. Lin was against reconciliation, some other officials rejected the idea that relations could be improved, while the US remained committed to the defence of Taiwan.

¹⁶⁵Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, pp. 2321-2322.

¹⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 2322. Some scholars suggest that Lin opposed "opening" to the US as a means of defusing the danger of Soviet attack, and instead might have favoured certain measures to seek rapprochement with the Soviets. See Parris H. Chang, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

¹⁶⁷It was about this time Mao instructed his personal following, including Jinag Qing, to support Zhou against Lin. See Harold C. Hinton ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2296.

Nevertheless, between August and September 1970, Zhou's more moderate policy prevailed. The opponents understood that the PRC could not possibly deter a Soviet attack if the US remained an active enemy. Liberating Taiwan was an issue that could be postponed for a later solution.¹⁶⁸

Zhou replaced Lin as the main figure of the CCP, next to Mao. In summer 1971, Zhou and the other representatives of the anti-Lin coalition succeeded in bringing Mao over to their side.¹⁶⁹ In August 1971, before Lin's September destruction, Mao managed to separate the strongest base of Lin's 4th Field Corps loyalty group, the Canton Military Region Command, from him,¹⁷⁰ so that, even before Lin's death, the successful isolation of Lin and his followers in the central military was achieved.

After the fall of Lin, in December 1971, in his "Internal Report to the Party on the International Situation," Zhou criticised Lin for having once said that the US-PRC relations were a betrayal of principle and of revolution. Zhou denounced what Lin had said as nonsense and an insult to the party.¹⁷¹

Foreign policy issues were an integral part of the struggle between Zhou's pragmatists and Lin's military coalition. Mao and Zhou were

¹⁶⁸Michael Schaller, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

¹⁶⁹James T. Myers et al. ed., *op. cit.*, Vol. Two, p. 19.

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁷¹King Chen, *op. cit.*, *China and the Three Worlds*, p. 33.

undoubtedly engaged in a broadly-based campaign to prevent Lin and the military from expanding their power further. In the aftermath of Lin's fall from power, Zhou's pragmatists implemented a wide range of policies designed to enhance the PRC's power and status in world affairs.¹⁷²

The fall of Lin Biao did not mean the termination of the voice of opposition in the PRC's new policy toward the US. The "Second Cultural Revolution" was launched in August 1973,¹⁷³ and it revealed the counter offensive of the clique who were pro-the Cultural Revolution.

The editorial of the People's Daily on February 2, 1974, under the title "Carry the Struggle to Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius through to the End," pointed out that the purpose of criticising Lin and Confucius was to protect the development of the Cultural Revolution, and it said:

Lin Biao, this bourgeois careerist, conspirator, double-dealer, renegade and traitor, was an out-and-out disciple of Confucius. Like all reactionaries on the verge of extinction in history, he worshipped Confucius and oppressed the legal school, attacked Chin Shih Huang, the first Emperor of the Chin Dynasty, and used the doctrine of Confucius and Mencius as his reactionary ideological weapon in plotting to usurp Party leadership and state power and restore capitalism. Therefore, only by criticizing the doctrine of Confucius and Mencius advocated by Lin Biao can we repudiate the ultraright essence of his counterrevolutionary revisionist line penetratingly and thoroughly. This is of great immediate significance and far-

¹⁷²Roger Glenn Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁷³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2482.

reaching historic importance in strengthening education in ideological and political line, adhering to and carrying out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, consolidating and carrying to a higher stage the tremendous achievements of the great *Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, (emphasis added) consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, and preventing capitalist restoration.¹⁷⁴

What were Confucius and Mencius really advocating?

...Confucius and Mencius held that "the elite are born intelligent and the lowly are born ignorant; this cannot be changed." Lin Biao played up the same idealist conception of history and vilified the working people as capable of wishing only "good fortune and wealth" and thinking only about "oil, salt, vinegar, and firewood."

Confucius and Mencius praised "virtue," "benevolence and righteousness," and "loyalty and forbearance," and Lin Biao clamored that "those who rule by virtue will thrive; those who rule by force will perish." Here he used the Confucian language viciously to attack revolutionary violence and the dictatorship of the proletariat....¹⁷⁵

Lin was the symbol of ^{the} anti-cultural revolution. The proponents of the Cultural Revolution, led by Jiang Qing and later the "Gang of Four," were actually manoeuvred by Mao himself. Mao instructed Jiang Qing to support Zhou against Lin in their conflict over the PRC's policy toward the US. At the apex of Zhou's power, during the Tenth Party Congress in August 1973, the "Second Cultural Revolution" movement criticising Lin Biao and Confucius

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 2482-2483.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2483.

was launched to denounce Lin superficially, but it also substantially condemned Zhou, a moderate within the Cultural Revolution. Mao and the “Gang of Four” now freed by the outcome of the Paris negotiations could not stand another person in power with ideological differences. In the end, the death of Mao and the arrest of the “Gang of Four” in 1976¹⁷⁶ signalled the final victory of Zhou and his faction in their new policy toward the US.

C. Dual Tactics—“Pulling While Dragging”

In the Ninth Party Congress, the CCP adopted the old strategy of the PRC’s contacts with foreign countries—the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Their approach to rapprochement with the US was pragmatic as they needed US backup to face intimidation from the SU after its invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Chenpao incident. The change of the PRC’s foreign policy from anti-US to pro-US, looked superficially like a solid decision from the CCP and the result of the domestic power struggle. Nevertheless, as has been mentioned before, the new Sino-US relations were “collusive” rather than “cordial.” Both the PRC and the US had their own strategies to best serve their own interests.

¹⁷⁶On October 6, 1976, Prime Minister Hua Guofeng, with the support of the military, the public security apparatus, and moderate politicians, ordered the arrest of the four radical politicians subsequently labelled the “Gang of Four.” See Robert S. Ross, *op. cit.*, “From Lin Biao to Deng Xiaoping: Elite Instability and China’s U. S. Policy,” pp. 284-285.

The US, in a pivotal position of a “romantic triangle” after President Nixon assumed office, would be forced to deal with the other two wing players, the PRC and the SU, simultaneously and cautiously, which fitted US best interests as the Dittmer model demonstrated. For the PRC a Sino-American rapprochement had become desirable, but it was necessary to take into account the evolution of US-SU relations and what the SU’s tactics to the triangular relations would be.

To handle this complex situation, the PRC’s tactics were “Pulling While Dragging.”¹⁷⁷ It meant that the PRC put its relations with the US as its first priority, accommodating contemporary US Vietnam policy, mainly to accelerate the resolution of the Paris peace talks. However, the PRC did not want the creation of a reunified Vietnam, especially one close to the USSR. Thus the PRC’s approval of the Paris peace talks only came into effect after it seemed that they would provide a divided Vietnam. When the case was settled, the PRC could resume its anti-US rhetoric, perhaps fuelled by the unexpected American betrayal of Thieu and apparent US connivance at an expansion of Soviet power at the PRC’s expense.

¹⁷⁷It is Chinese Communist jargon, “Yow Daa Yow Lha,” which means dual tactics to hit and help somebody at the same time, depending on the situation.

(i) The Old and New “Three Antis”

In his political report to the Ninth CCP Party Congress, Lin Biao recalled the old policy of the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.” In the same speech, some sort of “dual tactics” policy was advocated, because not only the traditional anti-US stand would be reaffirmed in the early phase of a new policy, but in fact in Lin’s report, anti-American imperialism, SU revisionism and all reaction were the common enemies of the party direction of the Congress—the “three antis.”

Lin stated in his speech:

We firmly pledge that we, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people, are determined to fulfill our proletarian internationalist duty and, together with them, carry through to the end the great struggle against *imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction* (emphasis added)...

...The existence and development of these contradictions are bound to give rise to revolution; according to the historical experience of World War I and World War II, it can be said with certainty that if the *imperialists, revisionists, and reactionaries* (emphasis added) should impose a third world war on the people of the world...

Chairman Mao teaches us: “all reactionaries are paper tigers.” “Strategically we should despise all our enemies, but tactically we should take them all seriously.” This great truth enunciated by Chairman Mao heightens the revolutionary militancy of the people of the whole world and guides us from victory to victory in the struggle against *imperialism, revisionism and all reaction*. (emphasis added)

...Today, it is not *imperialism, revisionism, and reaction* (emphasis added) but the proletariat and the revolutionary

people of all countries that determine the destiny of the world...¹⁷⁸

The three antis of the Ninth Party Congress had changed somewhat by the time of Zhou Enlai's political report to the CCP Tenth Party Congress. The new three antis were anti-imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism.

Anti-hegemonism was mentioned by Zhou in his political report on the CCP's Tenth Party Congress, and primarily denoted the US and the SU.¹⁷⁹

However, the old three antis had still been reiterated in Zhou's same report:

The present international situation is one characterized by great disorder on the earth. "The wind sweeping through the tower heralds a rising storm in the mountains." This aptly depicts how the basic world contradictions as analyzed by Lenin show themselves today. Relaxation is a temporary and superficial phenomenon, and great disorder will continue. Such great disorder is a good thing for the people, not a bad thing. It throws the enemies into confusion and causes division among them, while it arouses and tempers the people, thus helping the international situation develop further in the direction favorable to the people and unfavorable to *imperialism, modern revisionism, and all reaction*. (emphasis added)¹⁸⁰

Zhou continued to advocate the new three antis:

In the excellent situation now prevailing at home and abroad, it is most important for us to run China's affairs well. Therefore, on the international front, our Party must uphold proletarian internationalism; uphold the Party's consistent policies;

¹⁷⁸Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 2234-2237.

¹⁷⁹The CCP's Tenth Party Congress was held in August 1973, but the wording "hegemonism" was already mentioned in the February 27, 1972, Shanghai Communiqué during Nixon's visit to the PRC.

¹⁸⁰Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2466.

strengthen our unity with the proletariat and the oppressed people and nations of the whole world and with all countries subjected to imperialist aggression, subversion, interference, control, or bullying, and form the broadest united front against *imperialism, colonialism, and hegemonism* (emphasis added) of the two superpowers—the U.S. and the U.S.S.R....

We must uphold Chairman Mao's teachings that we should "be prepared against natural disasters, and do everything for the people" and should "dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere, and never seek hegemony," maintain high vigilance and be fully prepared against any war of aggression that imperialism may launch and particularly against surprise attack on our country by *Soviet revisionist social-imperialism*. (emphasis added)¹⁸¹

Zhou's advocating rapprochement with the US prevailed after years of struggle with Lin Biao and his clique, and the Tenth Party Congress denounced the SU's "social-imperialism" more severely than US imperialism. However, at the same time Zhou mentioned the contending US-SU hegemonism and reiterated the old three antis. Therefore, though the new three antis signalled the PRC hatred of Soviet social-imperialism, nevertheless, it still deployed "Pulling While Dragging" dual tactics against the US.

In the same speech Zhou, in fact, elaborated on the PRC's compromise with the US, and said:

We should point out here that necessary compromises between revolutionary countries and imperialist countries must be distinguished from collusion and compromise between Soviet revisionism and U.S. imperialism. Lenin put it well: "There are compromises and compromises. One must be able to analyze

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 2467-2468.

the situation and the concrete conditions of each compromise, or of each variety of compromise. One must learn to distinguish between a man who gave the bandits money and firearms in order to lessen the damage they can do and facilitate their capture and execution, and a man who gives bandits money and firearms in order to share in the loot.” The Brest-Litovsk Treaty concluded by Lenin with German imperialism comes under the former category; and the doings of Khrushchev and Brezhnev, both betrayers of Lenin, fall under the latter.¹⁸²

The PRC officials had accused the Soviets of being revisionists since the Twentieth CPSU Party Congress in 1956 because Khrushchev had initiated SU détente with the US and the western world and had scorned the leadership of Stalin, who had been loyal to Lenin according to the Chinese communists. Thus Zhou referred to the PRC as an associate of Lenin’s faction, and the reason why the PRC dealt with the US was to give the bandits money and firearms in order to lessen the damage they could do and facilitate their capture and execution. This was the nature of the PRC’s dual tactics policy toward the US.¹⁸³

(ii) An Analysis

Two characteristics are shown to compare the old and the new three antis:

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 2467.

¹⁸³These “dual-tactics” were also applied to the PRC’s relations with the SU at the same time, and though the PRC was frightened by the Chenpao incident in March 1969, it agreed to talk the issue over with the SU in October, the same year. See p. 169 of this dissertation.

Firstly, the new three antis manifested the PRC's clarification of its stand toward its relations with the US as a response against the old guard's accusations. The philosophical disorder caused by an abrupt policy shift would logically create some opposition. Zhou won the struggle but was aware of this die-hard opposition. The new three antis were the PRC's trump card to counter the tension caused by the scepticism of the opposition.

Secondly, the PRC's claim of anti-superpower hegemonism enhanced its standing in the international political arena. The status of the PRC in the strategic triangle was implicitly elevated because it could oppose the two superpowers at the same time. The PRC had the confidence to initiate the policy and actually the idea had already been put forward in the 1972 Sino-US Shanghai Communiqué. The content of the Communiqué read:

With these principles of international relations in mind the two sides stated that:
 Progress toward the normalization of relations between China and the United States is in the interests of all countries; both wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict; neither should seek *hegemony* (emphasis added) in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such *hegemony*, (emphasis added) and neither is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreement or understanding with the other directed at other states.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴Harold C. Hinton, *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2363.

There was no direct condemnation of the country that would be defined as hegemonic in the Communiqué. If there was such a country in their minds, it would be the SU. The new three antis of the Tenth Party Congress defined both the SU and the US as hegemonic nations. This maturer opinion was regarded as the PRC's perception of the strategic triangle. Therefore, the PRC became pragmatic, but without giving up its original goal. It got close to the US for many complicated reasons. The US was just a "temporary" friend.¹⁸⁵ What the PRC tried through "Pulling While Dragging" tactics was to deal with the US and the SU simultaneously, in order to suit its own national interests.

4.3. The PRC's Policy Response to the Paris Peace Talks

To accompany its foreign policy change, around 1969 the PRC's Vietnam policy was down-graded to second rate importance in comparison to the tension in the north between the PRC and the SU. As a consequence the PRC promoted a Sino-American rapprochement. However, the Vietnam War still concerned the US and the PRC. Traditionally the PRC regarded the Indochina peninsula as within its sphere of influence. However, the lesson of

¹⁸⁵The PRC was getting more confidence, on April 10, 1974, in his speech at the UN general assembly, Deng Xiaoping denounced both the US and the SU as belonging to the "First World," and China was among the developing countries' "Third World." See Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2431.

the Korean War made it prefer the indirect involvement of an extended war in Vietnam, which served the best interest of the PRC before 1969.

The 1969 Sino-American rapprochement was the new impetus to further the PRC's interest. The US desire to attain a peace agreement in the Vietnam War would not hinder Sino-American reconciliation: indeed it would help it. A gambit move was set to gain further advantages later. The PRC, after 1969, would not oppose the US-DRV Paris peace talks. To prove that the emergence of Sino-American rapprochement influenced the PRC's attitude toward the Paris peace talks on the Vietnam War is the main thesis of this dissertation.

The following is a detailed elaboration of the shifting of PRC's attitude toward the Paris peace talks due to the need to keep the new Sino-American reconciliation working. Also it will be clear, after detailed analysis, that the PRC's change was only temporary, since it would endeavour to stick to its basic interest of opposing a too successful outcome to peace talks through adroit use of dual tactics.

A. A Chronological Elaboration

In April 1968, when the DRV agreed with President Johnson's initiative to join in the Paris peace talks, the PRC was the only country to oppose such talks. Once the US-DRV delegates met in Paris on May 10, 1968, to

commence the negotiations, the PRC postponed the 135th Sino-American Warsaw Talks scheduled on May 29, 1968, thus displaying its displeasure.

The postponement was ended by the PRC when they proposed a resumption of the talks in November 1968, the month Richard Nixon was elected US President and three months after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The 135th talks were postponed again, however, due to a PRC's diplomat defection in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the first step had been taken.

After President Nixon assumed his office as US President, a series of friendly gestures were reciprocated between the two countries. Nixon's official visit to the PRC and signing of the Shanghai Communiqué in February 1972 was the highlight. The Paris peace agreement was signed in January 1973. The long process of US-DRV peace talks in Paris from 1968 to January 1973 was the period when the US-PRC rapprochement initially began to develop. Three significant factors, which affected the strength of the influence of Sino-American rapprochement on the PRC's attitude to the Paris peace talks, are worth mentioning.

Firstly, the change in the PRC's attitude from opposition to approval of the talks was rather passive; in other words, it would vary depending on what

the US peace talks produced in terms of US policy. It meant if there was no breakthrough in the talks, there would be no need for the PRC to assist in their completion. A continuing war and a divided Vietnam had served the best interests of the PRC before 1969. A Vietnam that continued to be divided was thus a desirable goal for the negotiations. Secondly, a consequence of the PRC's shifting of foreign policy turned out to be an improvement in its role in the triangular game. Toward the US, PRC tactics of "Pulling While Dragging" were guidelines. The Sino-American rapprochement could be defined as collusive, rather than cordial. Thirdly, the drastic policy change caused some negative repercussions domestically, and the PRC needed time to assimilate a pro-US-PRC reconciliation policy.

Considering these factors, the whole picture of the PRC's variation in its posture to the Paris peace talks becomes clarified.

(i) A Passive Change before 1972

(a) A Divided Vietnam through Negotiation

As mentioned above, if there was no breakthrough in the US-DRV Paris peace talks, the war would continue. So long as a reunified Vietnam was a distant prospect, the PRC would encourage the war, but a divided Vietnam

resulting from the Paris peace talks would not be too far from what the PRC really aimed for.

The PRC did not attend the Paris peace talks at all, so that it was impossible for it to behave as it had in the 1954 Geneva Conference. Altogether, the US-DRV talks lasted more than four and a half years, with the withdrawal of the US troops from Vietnam, the release of US POWs, and the withdrawal of the DRV's forces from South Vietnam, as the main issues on the agenda. To construct a unified Vietnam was beyond US initial objectives. Therefore, for the PRC it was clear that the US had no resolve to win, or even to obtain fair and advantageous concessions. What the US did was in secret, without the Thieu government's participation, with the aim of bringing the US ground forces home. Sooner or later the US would fundamentally revise its military posture vis-à-vis Vietnam. Taking into account the post-war situation, only a divided Vietnam would prevent the DRV dominating Indochina, threatening the security of the PRC and allying with the SU to create a double-front war against the PRC. If it had had to do the talking, only a negotiated divided Vietnam could optimally serve the PRC's interest.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶Robert S. Ross, *op. cit.*, The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy 1975-1979, p. 24. See also Richard C. Thornton, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

(b) An Independent Deployment of "Dual Tactics"

The PRC had its own perception about the Paris peace talks. It could not attend the talks, but it had to respond to the resulting situation according to its own best interest. Before May 1972, a breakthrough in the Paris talks occurred, and dual tactics achieved the PRC's objectives.

President Nixon's inaugural speech delivered on January 20, 1969, advocated the idea of "Negotiation Replacing Confrontation," of which every word was translated and put in the Red Flag. That suggested that at least the PRC was preparing to consider the idea.

The DRV's prime minister, Phan Van Dong, visited Beijing in October 1969, a South Vietnamese communist delegation followed during the next month, and both were warmly welcomed in Beijing. At that time the Paris peace talks, secret and regular, had been in session for more than a year. The DRV was willing to talk due to the need for aid but its leaders were intransigent over concessions. For the time being, the DRV's positions in the Paris peace talks were endorsed by the PRC.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷Robert G. Scutter, op. cit., p. 15.

The PRC was well known for its early experience of negotiation with the KMT during the protracted Chinese communist uprising.¹⁸⁸ A negotiation could be defined as a chance to obtain some advantage from the situation. Both the US and the DRV preferred negotiation, and there was no reason for the PRC to continue to oppose it at the juncture when it was shifting its own foreign policy to get closer to the US.

During this period (after 1969 and before May 1972), Nixon's China mainland visit was the highlight symbolising a milestone in Sino-American reconciliation. In the Sino-American Shanghai Communiqué of February 27, 1972, concerning Nixon's visit, the PRC did not denounce US activities in Indochina, but merely issued statements explaining their different stances:

...The U.S. side stated: (emphasis added) Peace in Asia and peace in the world requires efforts both to reduce immediate tensions and to eliminate the basic causes of conflict....The United States stressed that the peoples of Indochina should be allowed to determine their destiny without outside intervention; its constant primary objective has been a negotiated solution; (emphasis added) the eight-point proposal put forward by the Republic of Vietnam and the United States on January 27, 1972 represented a basis for the attainment of that objective; in the absence of a negotiated settlement the United States envisages the ultimate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the region

¹⁸⁸Chung-gi Kwei, The Kuomintang-Communist Struggle in China 1922-1949, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970, pp. 72-85. See also what this dissertation established as to how the CCP dealt with the KMT under its guideline of "United Front" in pp. 33-36 of this dissertation.

consistent with the aim of self-determination for each country of Indochina....

...*The China side stated:* (emphasis added) ...The Chinese side expressed its firm support to the peoples of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in their efforts for the attainment of their goal and its firm support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and the elaboration of February this year on the two key problems in the proposal, and to the Joint Declaration of the Summit Conference of the Indochinese People....¹⁸⁹

The US explicitly expressed its stance toward the Vietnam war. The PRC did not oppose the US stance in words, but reiterated its old propaganda in support of the Indochinese people. Chinese leaders took into account the special function of the visit of a long-awaited US president, and realised that it could only pursue the PRC's interests at the expense of Hanoi's bargaining strength vis-à-vis the US.¹⁹⁰ A strong reaction from the DRV was expected. The DRV felt betrayed by the PRC,¹⁹¹ and it was not happy to see one of its main supporters negotiating with its enemy even before any outcome of its own talks with the US. To comfort the leaders of the DRV, Zhou Enlai flew to Hanoi immediately after Nixon's visit to China on March 3, 1972, to explain.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, pp. 2362-2363.

¹⁹⁰Robert S. Ross, *op. cit.*, *The Indochina Tangle: China's Vietnam Policy 1975-1979*, p. 23.

¹⁹¹King C. Chen, *op. cit.*, "Hanoi vs. Peking: Policies and Relations—A Survey," pp. 815-816.

¹⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 816.

These events developed step by step, and the PRC faced considerable pressure of adverse domestic reactions toward the Paris peace talks. This dialectic was solved by the policy of “dual tactics.” Since however, before May 1972, no breakthrough in the US-DRV Paris peace talks was evident, there was still space for the PRC to manoeuvre its strategy of being pro- and anti-US at the same time. The latter was even given priority.

Through 1970 and the early months of 1971, though the theme in the documents of the CCP party congress was of de-emphasising US activities in Vietnam as mentioned above, there were several other official Chinese statements which continued to describe the US escalation of the war in Vietnam as a threat to the security of the PRC.¹⁹³ When the US and South Vietnam troops invaded Cambodia on April 30, 1970, on May 5, 1970, the People's Daily editorial commented:

On April 30, 1970, U.S. imperialist chieftain Nixon flagrantly announced that he had ordered the dispatch of large numbers of U.S. aggressor troops in Vietnam and the puppet troops in South Vietnam to intrude into the territory of Cambodia, thereby carrying out barefaced large-scale armed aggression against that country. By this act of new war adventure, the Nixon government has extended the war of aggression in Vietnam and Laos to the whole of Indochina. This is a frenzied onslaught on the Indochinese people and a grave provocation against the people of Asia and the whole world.

¹⁹³Joseph Camilleri, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

The Nixon government's move of sending large numbers of troops to invade Cambodia has all at once stripped off its mask of "peace" and torn it to shreds. It is clear to the people of the whole world that Nixon has no intention at all to "withdraw" the aggressor troops from south Vietnam and "end" the war of aggression against Vietnam, but rather to further expand this war of aggression, that the U.S. aggressors are not only hanging on in south Vietnam and refuse to quit but they want to forcibly occupy the whole of Indochina. Like his predecessors, Nixon is an extremely ferocious war criminal.¹⁹⁴

After February 1971, when South Vietnamese troops assisted by the US forces entered Laos, Zhou visited Hanoi, and a speech was delivered by him in Hanoi on March 6, 1971:

...U.S. imperialism's subversion and aggression against Cambodia last year have educated and aroused the Cambodia people by negative example. In less than a year, under the leadership of Head of State Samdech Norodom Sihanouk and the National United Front of Cambodia, the Cambodian people's war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation has spread throughout the country like a prairie fire, and seven-tenths of the territory and six-tenths of the population have been liberated, thus dealing heavy blows at the U.S. aggressors and their Phnom Penh lackeys.

Under the leadership of the Laotian Patriotic Front headed by Prince Souphanouvong, the heroic Laotian patriotic armed forces and people, taking the initiative in launching attacks and fighting the enemy courageously, have continuously smashed the encroachment attacks of U.S. imperialism and its lackeys so that the liberated areas have been constantly consolidated and developed.

In his recent "foreign policy report," Nixon vociferously clamored that in the war of aggression in Indochina the United States "will follow the lines" it "has established," take "high

¹⁹⁴Peking Review, No. 19, May 8, 1970. pp. 14-15.

measures of air operations,” and “continue to do what is essential” to deal with the peoples of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. All this has fully revealed the Nixon government’s talk about “negotiations,” “troop withdrawal,” etc. as nothing but a sheer hoax. In actuality, U.S. imperialism is continuing to act recklessly along the old path of expanding the war of aggression in Indochina, making itself the sworn enemy of the three peoples of Indochina and the people of the whole world... Last year, it invaded Cambodia, which ended up in dropping on its own feet the rock it had lifted. This time, in frantically invading Laos and making sinister moves in Cambodia and South Vietnam, it is being dealt telling blows by the Laotian armed forces and people and is being severely punished by the three peoples of Indochina.

We warmly congratulate the Laotian armed forces and people on their brilliant victories won on the battlefields in southern and northern Laos. We warmly congratulate the Cambodian armed forces and people on their victories won on the northeastern battlefields of Cambodia. We warmly congratulate the Vietnamese people on their victories won on the northern battlefields of South Vietnam.¹⁹⁵

Zhou portrayed the Paris peace talks as an American hoax.

The seriousness of US civilian protest against the Vietnam War never abated. The US Congress became more dovelike in the early 1970s, and in January 1971, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was repealed. However, this did not stop Nixon helping South Vietnam to invade Laos, and Nixon’s relationship with the media gradually reached its nadir. Besides, millions of young men escaped the draft and the anti-war students turned more and more to violence.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2358.

¹⁹⁶T. Louise Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 111, 114, 123, 128.

To respond to the serious anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, on April 27, 1971, the People's Daily editorial commented:

A new revolutionary storm is surging up vigorously among the American people against the U.S. imperialists' aggressive war in Indochina. Thousands of ex-servicemen continually took protest actions in the past few days. On April 24, over a million people held demonstrations and rallies on an unprecedented scale in Washington and San Francisco, pushing the struggle to a new high. Their powerful actions showed that the American people stand on the same front as the three Indochinese peoples and the people of all other countries who are fighting against U.S. imperialism....

The demonstrations and rallies which took place in Washington and San Francisco recently assumed a more distinct mass character than all past protest actions. Answering the joint appeal of hundreds of workers, Afro-American, student and women organizations, people of various strata, regardless of occupation, belief, nationality and age, joined the ranks of demonstrators, carrying placards inscribed with the slogan "All U.S. troops out of Southeast Asia" and shouting, "We don't want your war," in indignant protest against U.S. imperialism's slaughter of the Indochinese people. U.S. imperialism's armed forces are tools of the U.S. monopoly capitalist class for committing aggression abroad and suppressing the people at home. However, besides veterans back from the Indochina battlefield, about ten thousand active servicemen took part in this struggle. All this shows a new awakening of the American people.¹⁹⁷

The PRC understood that the ferocity of the US domestic anti-war feeling was one of the main motivations behind the US government seeking a

¹⁹⁷Peking Review, No. 18, April 30, 1971. p. 10.

speedy end to the war. Therefore to criticise that weakness would be in the PRC's favour.

On May 20, 1971, a joint editorial of the People's Daily, the Red Flag and the People's Liberation Army Daily, "A Program for Anti-Imperialist Struggle," was published on the anniversary of Mao's article, "People of the World Unite and Defeat the US Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs!"

The original text of Mao's words on the May 20, 1970, released by New China Daily News Agency, opposed the US incursion into Cambodia, and showed a new surge of anti-American feeling in its language:

A new upsurge in the struggle against U.S. imperialism is now emerging throughout the world. Even since World War II, U.S. imperialism and its followers have been continuously launching wars of aggression and the people in various countries have been continuously waging revolutionary wars to defeat the aggressors. The danger of a new world war still exists, and the people of all countries must get prepared. But revolution is the main trend in the world today.

Unable to win in Vietnam and Laos, the U.S. aggressor treacherously engineered the reactionary coup d'état by the Lon Nol-Sirik Natak clique, brazenly dispatched their troops to invade Cambodia, and resumed the bombing of North Vietnam, and this has aroused the furious resistance of the three Indochinese peoples. I warmly support the fighting spirit of Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State of Cambodia, in opposing U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. I warmly support the joint declaration of the Summit Conference of the Indochinese peoples. I warmly support the establishment of the Royal Government of National Union under the leadership of the National United Front of Kampuchea. Strengthening their unity, supporting each other, and preserving in a protracted people's

war, the three Indochinese peoples will certainly overcome all difficulties and win complete victory.

While massacring the people in other countries, U.S. imperialism is slaughtering the white and black people in its own country. Nixon's fascist atrocities have kindled the raging flames of the revolutionary mass movement in the United States. *The Chinese people firmly support the revolutionary struggle of the American people.* (emphasis added) I am convinced that the American people who are fighting valiantly will ultimately win victory and the fascist rule in the United States will inevitably be defeated.

The Nixon government is beset with troubles internally and externally, with utter chaos at home and extreme isolation abroad. The mass movement of protest against U.S. aggression in Cambodia has swept the globe.

...U.S. imperialism, which looks like a huge monster, is in essence a *paper tiger*, (emphasis added) now in the throes of its deathbed struggle....People of the world, unite and defeat the U.S. aggressor and all their *running dogs*. (emphasis added)¹⁹⁸

Mao tried to organise a new anti-US movement and he denounced the US invasion in Cambodia. The clichés of “paper tiger,” and “running dog” were used as the PRC leaders had often done before. The third paragraph sounded as if the PRC was interfering in US internal politics. The wording of this article was so famous that it was to be frequently quoted by Chinese sources for years afterwards.

One year later, the joint editorial stated:

On May 20, 1970, the great leader Chairman Mao issued the solemn statement “People of the World Unite and Defeat the U.S. Aggressor and All Their Running Dogs!” This solemn

¹⁹⁸ Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 2281.

statement has shaken the world, immensely inspired the people of all countries in their struggle against U.S. imperialism and its running dogs, and exerted a most far-reaching influence on the international situation. This brilliant document of historic significance has become a program for the anti-imperialist struggle waged by the Chinese people together with the revolutionary people throughout the world.

Chairman Mao points out in the statement: "The danger of a new world still exists, and the people of all countries must get prepared. But revolution is the main trend in the world today."... The development of the international situation in the past year has fully borne out Chairman Mao's brilliant thesis that "revolution is the main trend in the world today."

At present, Indochina is the main battlefield in the world people's struggle against U.S. imperialism. The revolutionary situation in this region has undergone a deep-going change in the past year. As a result of U.S. imperialism's expansion of its war of aggression, the battlefields in the whole of Indochina have merged into one and a new situation in which the 50 million people are united in struggle has emerged. The raging flames of the Cambodian people's war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation are spreading rapidly. The Vietnamese and Lao people are persevering in protracted people's war and growing ever stronger in the course of fighting....

U.S. imperialism's war of aggression in Indochina and its fascist rule over the American people have touched off violent revolutionary storms in the United States....¹⁹⁹

This anniversary editorial confirmed that an anti-US atmosphere still existed in the inner circle of the PRC.

¹⁹⁹Peking Review, No. 21, May 21, 1971. p. 4.

(c) The Slow Diminution of Reactions from Domestic Opposition

Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four" were threats to the advocacy of a Sino-American rapprochement. Besides the foreign policy debate on the home front, Zhou Enlai joined the majority of regional commanders in a three point power struggle with Lin and his clique: Firstly, there was a conflict over economic planning and administration. The majority of regional commanders stood for a continuation of the policy of decentralisation that had been introduced in the early 1960s and which they had fully implemented during the crisis of the Cultural Revolution, whereas Lin advocated a policy of recentralisation. Secondly, there was a confrontation over whether one should regard the liquidation of the Cultural Revolution as having ended with the disciplining of the Maoist organisations, which was Lin's view, or whether one should go as far as to suggest a further fundamental revision of the Cultural Revolutionary doctrine, as Zhou and the majority of regional commanders envisaged. Thirdly, a fundamental conflict existed over social policies in the agricultural sector which, during the winter of 1970-1971, had developed into a critical confrontation. Basically, again, Zhou supported the view of the

majority of regional commanders in opposing the role of the armed forces in the state.²⁰⁰

Thus, in addition to the split between Lin's anti-US stand and Zhou's reconciliatory one, the nucleus of the anti-Lin coalition was founded on the basis of full political agreement on all these three major conflict areas. The strength of this new alliance was demonstrated at the beginning of March 1971, when a fundamental change in agricultural policy was carried through.²⁰¹ In the summer of 1971 the coalition brought Mao over to their side.²⁰²

Lin fell in September 1971. He was replaced by Zhou. In other words, domestically, the main opponents of Sino-American rapprochement disappeared only in September 1971. After that, the inner circle's opposition diminished. The Gang of Four was left as the antagonists. In the Tenth CCP Party Congress (August 1973), Zhou delivered the political report, but Wang Hungwen, a young member from the Shanghai radical faction, one of the "Gang," made the official report on the revised party constitution. Wang insisted on a policy of simultaneous conflict with both superpowers:

...This time we have further included "oppose great-power chauvinism" in the draft. We will forever stand together with the proletariat and the revolutionary people of the world to

²⁰⁰James T. Myers et al., ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 18-19.

²⁰¹*Ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁰²See p. 230.

oppose imperialism, modern revisionism, and all reaction, and at present to oppose especially the hegemonism of the two superpowers—the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The danger of *a new world war* (emphasis added) still exists. We must, without fail, prepare well against any war of aggression and guard against surprise attack by imperialism and social-imperialism.²⁰³

Wang's remarks were more radical than Zhou's report concerning the PRC's international relations. What Zhou did was mainly to oppose the superpowers' hegemony, but not to advocate another world war, which is what Wang pressed for. Thus, even in August 1973, when the Paris peace agreement had already been signed, in Beijing the opposition to Sino-American rapprochement still existed. However, the once powerful adversary, Lin, fell and Mao eventually supported Zhou. The intransigent old guard of Gang of Four was totally destroyed in 1976. The drastic change of a nation's policy made some dogmatists panic, but that was natural, and consideration of national security did not hinder the impetus to change its foreign policy.

(ii) A US Concession at the Paris Peace Talks, after May 1972

No matter what variations there were in the PRC's inner political power struggle, before May 1972, the US-DRV Paris peace talks were in stalemate, and thus the PRC's responses to the Paris peace talks were passive. The PRC's posture tended to be in favour of the existence of a divided Vietnam or a drawn

²⁰³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2473.

out war. Thus, rhetorically, a sustained anti-US tone prevailed. A breakthrough in US policy toward the Paris peace talks resolved the deadlock in the talks, and also forced the PRC to accommodate to them.

The breakthrough came from the US side. North Vietnam launched the 1972 Spring offensive in March 1972, and President Nixon ordered the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong on April 15, 1972. Five days later, Kissinger was in Moscow to arrange Nixon's visit to the SU the following month. During Kissinger's stay in Moscow, he told Brezhnev that the US would accept a cease-fire in exchange for the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops who had penetrated South Vietnam since the Spring offensive, and they would not demand the withdrawal of the DRV troops who had been in the South prior to the Spring offensive.²⁰⁴ For the first time, the US articulated its willingness to make some concessions. However, on May 8, 1972, Nixon announced the mining of Haiphong harbour and the stepping up of US bombing of North Vietnam. Neither the PRC nor the SU accused the US of escalating the war. This was due to Nixon's visit to the SU, the first US president to do so. This made the PRC try to avoid any disadvantages resulting from the Nixon visit. Limiting the extent and impact of US-Soviet détente was more important than

²⁰⁴Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

Beijing's relations with North Vietnam, thus it would not have been wise for the PRC to protest against the US escalation of the war in Vietnam. Nixon visited Moscow on May 20, 1972, as scheduled. The USA's later intensification of the war was received with remarkable equanimity by both the USSR and the PRC.

The isolated DRV was back at the negotiating table on July 19, 1972. This round of talks was different. Both sides seemed willing to compromise. First, on September 10, 1972, the Vietcong delegation in Paris issued a new proposal that, for the first time, a cease-fire would be acceptable without prior removal of the South's Thieu regime.²⁰⁵ The official breakthrough came on October 8, 1972, through the secret talks. For the first time, Hanoi presented a genuine negotiating document rather than a series of demands. Hanoi no longer demanded the ousting of Thieu as an a priori condition.²⁰⁶ What North Vietnam proposed this time, the US accepted as a draft for the final agreement. Obviously, there were concessions from both sides, but the most contentious article requiring the DRV troop withdrawal from the South, was omitted.²⁰⁷ The expected result of this situation, a continuation of the war with no US presence on the ground was far from being antithetical to the PRC's interests.

²⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 48-49.

²⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 51-52.

²⁰⁷Ibid., p. 56.

B. To Accommodate the US Concession

The PRC realised its weaker position in the emerging strategic triangle, and also placed as the top priority of its national security the Sino-Russian border military clashes, which had taken place since March 1969. The US was a possible partner for the PRC against further SU intimidation of China. So, in the issue of the Vietnam War, the PRC had no choice but to accommodate US changes in its Vietnam policy. Once the breakthrough in the Paris peace talks happened and it was what the US had anticipated, the PRC's reactions toward the talks shifted from being passive to positive and accommodating.

The SU's response was another story. However, due to the interrelated relations between the three players of the triangle, it is necessary to understand the SU's change of its Vietnam policy. Basically, in the game of the strategic triangle, the SU tried to prevent reconciliation between the USA and the PRC. The SU had had détente with the US for decades, because détente brought trade, technology and nuclear arms reduction benefits to the SU. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the SU did not want to be treated as a pariah after US-PRC rapprochement. To align with the US and approve the Paris peace talks was the rational reaction from the SU, particularly after the breakthrough in the talks during May 1972.

(i) From the SU

(a) Soviet Calculations

The SU's field for manoeuvring over détente was restrained by its basic needs and security considerations. The SU put trade with the Western countries, the importation of technology and machinery from the US, etc., at the top of the negotiations agenda. Besides, the arms control talks with the US were more important than anything else. The inferior military strength of the SU versus that of the US had been made all too obvious. As a result of the Cuban missile crisis, the SU had made up the gap in strategic strike forces. To maintain parity in this field, especially in the face of superior US ABM capabilities, the most promising course of action would be to try to persuade the US to constrain its own strategic power, and a political détente offered the best chance of doing that.²⁰⁸ From 1963, the SU was willing to sign the partial test ban treaty, and afterwards to maintain its version of parity, the SU was keen to make a deal with the US in strategic arms control.

Once the US Vietnam policy veered toward that of negotiation, the SU, in spite of being the main supporter of North Vietnam and showing off its

²⁰⁸Malcolm Mackintosh, "Three détente: 1955-1964," in Eleanor L. Dulles, et al., ed., Détente: Cold War Strategies in Transition, New York: Federic A. Praeger, 1965, pp. 104-115.

strength, calculated the pros and cons of whether to approve US peace initiatives or not. North Vietnam was compelled to take part in the peace talks, and the SU endorsed the talks.

In approving talks, the SU did not much care about what North Vietnam's aims were, when its own national interests and security were jeopardised by other international political developments.²⁰⁹ The SU's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, followed by the Sino-Soviet Chenpao military clashes in 1969, aggravated the SU-PRC bilateral relations. A gradual nuclear arming of the PLA haunted the SU, with the possibility of the outbreak of war following their border clashes. Furthermore, a major policy change also took place in China. It began a rapprochement with the US, a strategic triangle emerged, and the SU had to face collusion between the US and the PRC.

Theoretically, the SU as one sharer of a "détente" between the US and the SU, became, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a wing player of a "romantic triangle" with the US as the pivot. The most worrying thing for the sharer of a "détente" like the partner of "stable marriage," was its partner might defect to the pariah. It happened in this case; the US, the other sharer, defected to the pariah, the PRC. Furthermore, after building the "romantic triangle," the two

²⁰⁹T. Louise Brown, *op.cit.*, p. 95. See also Douglas Pike, *op.cit.*, Vietnam and the Soviet Union, p. 61.

wing players, the SU and the PRC, were not in an anti-US collusion, so that both of them would have to try to prevent the other side from getting close to the US. To achieve this, the SU paid even more attention to the wishes of the US. It was therefore rational for the SU approve the US peace talks initiative in the second Indochina War, otherwise it would become more isolated.

The SU demonstrated that North Vietnam's interests continued to be subordinated in Soviet policy considerations to strategic concerns regarding the United States. Therefore, after the Tet offensive, when the US offered North Vietnam peace negotiations, North Vietnam's positive response was endorsed by the SU.²¹⁰ It was little surprise that the SU's aid also began to reduce after this juncture.²¹¹ The SU pressured North Vietnam to make concessions at the Paris peace talks in order to hasten a conclusion to the war.²¹² That was why Brezhnev received Nixon in May 1972, in Moscow, during one of the heaviest US bombings of the war against North Vietnam.

(b) Action

The US escalation of the war in April and May 1972 had no effect on the improvement in US-SU relations. Indeed that improvement probably allowed

²¹⁰King Chen, *op. cit.*, "Hanoi vs. Peking: Policy and Relations—A Survey," p. 814.

²¹¹See the chart on p. 118 of this dissertation.

²¹²Sheldon W. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

the bombing and mining to occur, with little fear of serious superpower confrontation. Only two days after the US mining of Haiphong harbour, on May 10, Kissinger met the USSR's Ambassador to the US, Anatoly Dobrynin, at the White House, Dobrynin only mentioned a Soviet vessel damaged in Haiphong in April, but nothing about the mining.²¹³ Nor did this new US onslaught impede President Nixon's scheduled summit meeting with Brezhnev in Moscow less than two weeks later. As mentioned previously, the Soviet President was used as an intermediary to convey to the DRV the views Kissinger had expressed in Moscow.²¹⁴ Kissinger's concession in withdrawing his insistence on the withdrawal of DRV's troops from South Vietnam as a prerequisite for agreement was substantiated through the Russian mediator. The next round of US-DRV secret meetings in Paris began on July 19, 1972, and with concrete DRV reciprocal concessions. A final compromise for a US-DRV agreement was under way. The SU's response to the 1972 US Christmas bombing of North Vietnam was also remarkably mild, because the SU would not shift its existing stance and the raid was intended to force the DRV back to the negotiation table.

²¹³Henry Kissinger, *op. cit.*, White House Years, p. 1193.

²¹⁴Tad Szulc, *op. cit.*, p. 44. See also p. 200 of this dissertation.

Generally, the existing SU-US détente and the worry that it might be downgraded to a pariah position after the PRC joined the strategic triangle in the late 1960s and early 1970s, made the SU put its relations with the US at the top of its foreign policy priorities. Before and after the May 1972 Paris peace talks breakthrough, the SU's attitude was one of consistent approval toward the US stance.

(ii) From the PRC

(a) Accommodation

After the PRC's normalisation of relations with the US, initiated in 1969 and which lasted until the DRV's 1972 Spring offensive, the PRC rhetoric was rather passive in supporting US initiatives at the Paris peace talks. Mao still denounced the US as "paper tiger" and a hegemonic power, but US-PRC reconciliation still proceeded. The domestic power struggle in China also needed some time to be resolved.

The breakthrough in US-DRV talks was made known to the PRC leaders on June 16, 1972, when Kissinger flew to Beijing to brief them about the Moscow summit while Podgorny was in Hanoi. Kissinger propelled the Russians into the role of mediator, and was now trying to do the same with the Chinese.

When Zhou met Kissinger, Zhou was less responsive, and he told Kissinger that the PRC would not press Hanoi one way or another. Mao, on the other hand, told French foreign minister Maurice Schumann, in July 1972, in Beijing, that he advised the Vietcong foreign minister, Madame Binh to desist from making demands for Thieu's resignation as a precondition for the talks in Paris. Schumann informed the White House, and the US thought that the SU's and PRC's combined efforts would help the final settlement of the Paris peace talks.²¹⁵ The next round of US-DRV secret talks which began on July 19, 1972, was indeed different. Therefore, judging from this chronological sequence, after the PRC understood the significance of the SU-US Moscow summit and US readiness to grant concessions at the US-DRV talks, the PRC supported the talks and the inevitable breakthrough happened. The US-SU Moscow summit was the watershed.

Before the summit, the DRV launched its 1972 Spring offensive, and the PRC continued to support it. From April 6 to April 30, there appeared one commentator's article and three editorials in the People's Daily, in response to the DRV's Spring offensive. On April 6, 1972, the commentator's article said:

The South Vietnam People's Liberation Armed Forces demolished many puppet army bases in a fierce offensive mounted in the Quang Tri-Thua Thien area in the last few

²¹⁵Ibid., pp. 44-45.

days and killed, wounded or captured many enemy troops. The Chinese people enthusiastically hail this new splendid victory by the south Vietnamese armed forces and people. This offensive of the south Vietnamese armed forces and people has fully demonstrated the dauntless revolutionary spirit of their firm resolve to fight and win and the mighty power of people's war. Concentrating a superior force, charging forward courageously in battle and mounting successive attacks, the people's armed forces have overrun the puppet troops' strongholds in the Quang Tri-Thua Thien area and annihilated large groups of enemy effectives. This is a heavy blow to the "Vietnamization" programme pursued by U.S. imperialism....²¹⁶

On April 18, the editorial commented:

Since late March, the south Vietnam armed forces and people have mounted fierce offensives against the U.S. aggressors and the Saigon puppet troops on various battlefields. In the short period of half a month, they have taken many major strategic posts and military bases, wiped out large numbers of enemy effectives, and won a splendid victory. Under the fierce attacks and heavy blows of the south Vietnam armed forces and people, the Nguyen Van Thieu puppet clique has suffered repeated defeats and was thrown into panic and confusion. Now, the south Vietnam armed forces and people are advancing victoriously to deal the U.S. aggressors and the Saigon puppet troops still heavier blows. This new battle once again shows the heroic mettle and firm resolve of the south Vietnam forces to fight and to win and their growing fighting capacity, testifies to the shattered morale of the Saigon puppet troops and demonstrates the further bankruptcy of the war "Vietnamization" programme of U.S. imperialism and the neo-colonialism it has pushed in south Vietnam.

To check the victorious offensive of the south Vietnam armed forces and people and save the Nguyen Van Thieu puppet clique from defeat, U.S. imperialism has flagrantly employed an

²¹⁶Peking Review, No. 15, April 14, 1972, p. 13, entitled, "Hail the New Victory of South Vietnamese Army and People."

unprecedented amount of naval and air forces to back the Saigon puppet troops in a desperate struggle on the battlefield on the one hand and carry out unbridled bombing in north Vietnam on the other.... This expansion of the aggressive war against Vietnam by U.S. imperialism once again bared its aggressive features and exposed before the people of the world its peace camouflage....

...The 700 million Chinese people provide a powerful backing for the Vietnamese people and the vast expanse of China's territory is their reliable rear area....²¹⁷

On April 25, the editorial commented:

Two years have elapsed since the holding of the historic Summit Conference of the Indochinese Peoples in April 1970. Today, imbued with profound sentiments of comrades-in-arms, the 700 million Chinese people extended warm congratulations to the heroic Cambodia, Lao and Vietnamese people, and heartily rejoice over the splendid victories they have won in the joint struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation in the last two years.

...U.S. imperialism can only draw together in Indochina a handful of traitors and national scum who have long been spurned by the people. It can never conquer the 50 million people of the three Indochinese countries who are resolutely struggling in unity. Today, the U.S. aggressors and their lackeys find themselves in a more difficult position than ever before in Indochina while the heroic people of the three Indochinese countries are greeting their victorious and brilliant future with much greater confidence.²¹⁸

On April 30, the editorial commented:

²¹⁷Peking Review, No. 16, April 21, 1972, pp. 7, 10, with the title, "The Vietnamese People Will Win, the U.S. Aggressors Will Be Defeated."

²¹⁸Peking Review, No. 17, April 28, 1972, pp. 8-9, entitled, "The Three Indochinese Peoples Are Fighting in Unity and Advancing in Victory."

...Of late, the U.S. Government went so far as to use air and naval strength on an unprecedented scale to bomb north Vietnam, including Hanoi and Haiphong. This U.S. imperialist act of aggression has not only met with a solid counter-stroke by the Vietnamese people, but is also indignantly condemned by all the people of the world....

The U.S. Government should realize that none of its military adventures will prevent the Vietnamese people from advancing victoriously in the war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation; they will only bring more disastrous defeats to the U.S. aggressor and its lackeys....

The Chinese people firmly support the Vietnamese people's war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation,...²¹⁹

The hostile rhetoric did not deter Kissinger's scheduled visit to Moscow on April 20, 1972. The PRC's protest about the US May 8 bombing and mining was muted and there was only one short (seven paragraphs) statement on May 11, 1972.²²⁰ The PRC realised its hostility would not stop the US from escalating the bombing, mining and the scheduled US-SU summit from taking place. Thus, it would be wiser to wait and see what the outcome of the impending US-SU summit in Moscow would be. President Nixon went to Moscow on May 20, 1972, as planned. The summit was not impeded by PRC rhetoric.

²¹⁹Peking Review, No. 18, May 5, 1972, p. 18, captioned, "Heroic Vietnamese People Cannot Be Intimidated."

²²⁰King Chen, op. cit., China and Three Worlds, p. 37. See also the text in Harold C. Hinton, ed., op. cit., vol. 5, p. 2409.

The PRC was extremely concerned about the result of the Nixon-Brezhnev summit in Moscow, since those two countries were crucial players in the newly emerged strategic triangle, which directly affected the development of Sino-American rapprochement. If the PRC could not stop the summit from taking place, that underlined its inferior position, so a wise choice for the PRC was to comply with what the US intended to do. This was in line with the PRC's pragmatic foreign policy at that time.

As previously mentioned, in June 1972, Kissinger went to Beijing to brief the PRC leaders about the Moscow summit and the PRC in turn persuaded the DRV to reach a compromise with the US over the Paris peace talks. The PRC leaders were informed of the US intention to make a breakthrough concession to give up the demand for the withdrawal of DRV troops from South Vietnam, as an a priori condition. In fact after Kissinger's briefing visit to Beijing, the PRC stopped condemning US war deeds in Vietnam.²²¹

Effectively, the PRC made several concessions toward Sino-American reconciliation. President Nixon visited the PRC in February the same year, 1972. In April 1972 when Kissinger was in Moscow, the PRC's table tennis

²²¹ King Chen, *Ibid.*, p. 37.

team was at a goodwill tournament in the US, and the PRC did not insist on the team returning home immediately afterwards.²²²

The 1972 Christmas bombing started on December 18, 1972, and two days later, the PRC issued a statement. This time the tone was even quieter than its May 11 one, and for the first time it mentioned PRC anxiety about the impending Paris peace talks:

On December 18 and 19, 1972 the United States dispatched larger numbers of aircraft to carry out massive bombing raids against Hanoi, Haiphong, and other extensive areas...This is a most serious step taken by U.S. imperialism to prolong and intensify its war of aggression against Vietnam and a new obstacle placed by the U.S. government to *obstruct the peaceful solution of the Vietnam problem*. (emphasis added) This act of aggression on the part of the United States is not only a new barbarous crime against the Vietnamese people but also a provocation to the American people and the people of the whole world who *eagerly hope for an early realization of peace in Vietnam*. (emphasis added) ...

Since late October, the U.S. government has time and again delayed the signing of the agreement mutually agreed upon by the Vietnamese and U.S. sides. This is a fact clear to the people of the whole world. The matter has been dragged out to this day precisely because the U.S. side asked to make revisions in the substantive content of the agreement and backed out of the schedule of signing and because it attempted to proceed from a position of strength and insisted on its unreasonable demands. *Now the whole world can see clearly that it is the United States, and not the Vietnamese side, that has gone back on its commitment and delayed the signing of the peace agreement on stopping the war*. (emphasis added)

²²²Tad Szulc, The Illusion of Peace: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years, New York: Viking Press, 1978, p. 541.

...The U.S. government must stop its war of aggression against Vietnam, stop all its bombing raids, mining, blocking, and other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and *speedily sign the "agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam."* ...²²³ (emphasis added)

This was unlike the PRC's former rhetoric. This time it not only publicly approved of the Paris peace talks, but also accused the US of delaying the signing of the treaty. The PRC realised the 1972 October draft agreement was in the DRV's favour, and was aware of the dissatisfaction of the Thieu government. The "unequal" agreement for the Thieu government would not bring any easy peace in Vietnam, but the continuing turmoil in Vietnam would suit the PRC's interest. Besides, to comply with the US desire to have a one-sided peace agreement would be to the PRC's benefit in the game of a strategic triangle.

Less than four weeks before the signing of the Paris peace agreement, by the same tone to urge the US to sign the agreement, on January 1, 1973, a joint editorial of People's Daily, Red Flag and People's Liberation Army Daily commented:

The Chinese Government and people continued to carry out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in foreign affairs and made important achievements on the diplomatic front. China's revolutionary friendship with the fraternal socialist countries continued to grow; her relations of co-operation with friendly

²²³Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, p. 2410.

countries continued to be strengthened; she established diplomatic relations with more countries. The Chinese people had friendly exchanges with other peoples on a wider scale: we support and assist each other, helping the world situation continue to develop in a direction favorable to the people of the world.

...In this new year we shall continue to implement Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in foreign affairs, further strengthen our solidarity with the other socialist countries, resolutely support the revolutionary struggles of the people of various countries, *strive for peaceful coexistence with countries of different social systems on the basis of the Five Principles*, (emphasis added) and work to promote the cause of human progress.

Recently, U.S. imperialism launched massive bombing against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Chinese people voice their extreme indignation and strong condemnation of this act of aggression by U.S. imperialism. If the U.S. Government does not stop the bombing immediately and *sign the "agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam"* (emphasis added) but persist in its war of aggression, the Chinese people, as always, will resolutely fulfill their internationalist duty and give all-out support and assistance to the Vietnamese people in their war of resistance against U.S. aggression and for national salvation....²²⁴

On January 28, 1973, the day following the signing of the Paris peace agreement, the editorial of the People's Daily demonstrated its support, saying:

The agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam was formally signed in Paris on January 27, 1973, by the parties participating in the Paris Conference on Vietnam. Longed for by the people of the world, peace in Vietnam has finally come in conditions conforming with the aspirations of the Vietnamese nation. This is a tremendous victory for the Vietnamese people as well as for the people of the world. *The Chinese people welcome the signing of the agreement* (emphasis

²²⁴Peking Review, No. 1, January 5, 1973, pp. 9-11.

added) on ending the war in Vietnam and extend warm congratulations to the fraternal Vietnamese people.²²⁵

(b) The Revival of the Policy against a Reunified Vietnam

Once the one-sided agreement was signed, the US officially began to withdraw the rest of its forces from Vietnam. The peace agreement resulted in turmoil in Vietnam, as the PRC had anticipated. Unfortunately for the latter, however that turmoil led to rapid DRV victory. Saigon and South Vietnam had been “liberated” in the space of about two years, and it worried the PRC that a reunified Vietnam would not be in the PRC’s interest. Thus on May 1, 1975, the day after the fall of Saigon to the DRV, in the People’s Daily, the PRC was reluctant to recognise North Vietnam’s victory, but rather that of the people of South Vietnam:

On April 30, 1975, the heroic *South Vietnam liberation armed forces*, (emphasis added) striking with the momentum of a avalanche and the force of a thunderbolt, liberated Saigon at one stroke in their victorious advance to punish the South Vietnam puppet clique severely for its violation of the Paris agreement. The Saigon puppet regime collapsed instantly and is finished...
 ...Particularly, in the past ten years or more the *South Vietnamese people*, (emphasis added) holding aloft President Ho Chi Minh’s glorious banner of “determination to fight and to win” and under the leadership of *the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam*, (emphasis added) have waged a heroic and tenacious struggle against U.S.

²²⁵Peking Review, No. 5, February 2, 1973, p. 6.

imperialism and its lackeys and finally won a great victory in the war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation...
 ...with the powerful backing of their compatriots in the north, the *South Vietnamese people*, (emphasis added) who were mobilized on the most extensive scale, threw themselves into the war against U.S. aggression and for national salvation.... This is rare in the history of the world's national liberation movement. Through perseverance in protracted people's war and gradual accumulation of strength in this war the *South Vietnamese people* (emphasis added) have grown from small to big, from weak to strong, and won complete victory.²²⁶

No matter how hesitant the PRC was in recognising North Vietnam's triumph, fact was fact, and the victory of North Vietnam forced the PRC to realise that a continuing war to keep Vietnam divided was no longer conceivable. The "buffer zone" was gone, and the PRC had to take into account the formidable collusion of SU-DRV to encircle the PRC, and also the DRV's ambition to dominate the whole Indochina peninsula.

(c) Back-tracking and Playing Games with the US

Saigon had fallen, and the dust had settled. There was no need to consider the US peace negotiation plan any more. Moreover US inactivity had not aided the PRC's interests. Thus, on May 20, 1975, less than one month after the fall of Saigon, the editorial of People's Daily said:

On May 20, 1970, Chairman Mao issued a solemn statement warmly supporting the revolutionary struggle against imperialism

²²⁶Harold C. Hinton, ed., *op. cit.*, vol. 5, pp. 2444-2445. The same tone is found in the PRC's rhetoric as early as April 1972, see pp. 266-269 of this dissertation.

by the people of the three countries of Indochina and the world over. This is an illustrious historic document which has a far-reaching influence. The Indochinese people have now won world-shaking great victories and the international situation as a whole is better than ever. The development of the situation in the past five years has enabled us to understand more profoundly the great significance of Chairman Mao's statement.

...Historical developments in the past five years have borne out by innumerable vivid facts this great truth pointed out by Chairman Mao. *At present, the tidal wave of the struggle of the world's people against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism is sweeping across the whole globe.* (emphasis added) The third world has further awakened and grown in strength and become the great motive force in pushing ahead world history. Fighting in unity, the people of various countries are handing out heavy blows to the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union...

...No matter what happens in the world, the Chinese people will firmly follow Chairman Mao's teachings, for ever side and fight jointly with the third world's people and the people of various countries the world over, and *carry the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism through to the end.* (emphasis added)²²⁷

This was the fifth anniversary of Mao's article "People of the World Unite and Defeat the US Aggressor and All Their Running Dogs,"²²⁸ which was strongly anti-US. The so-called "struggle against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism," sounded similar to Zhou's "new three-antis" advocacy in August 1973, at the CCP's Tenth Party Congress,²²⁹ an explanation of PRC's "dual

²²⁷Peking Review, No. 21, May 23, 1975, pp. 6-7, "An Illustrious Historic Document: Commemorating the 5th Anniversary of the Publication of Chairman Mao's 'May 20' statement."

²²⁸See p. 252.

²²⁹See p. 236.

tactics”—“Pulling While Dragging” toward the US. All were delicate tactics to apply the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

This editorial sounded like another round of anti-US polemics. Five years before on May 20, Mao’s first statement denouncing the US was due to the US invasion of Cambodia, Lin Biao and other opponents who were anti US-PRC rapprochement existed, and the DRV-US Paris peace talks were lacking a breakthrough. Five years had passed, and all those conditions had changed. All US troops had withdrawn from Vietnam, there was no peace negotiation, Lin was dead and the old guard had faded away. The PRC’s propaganda machine played a similar tune again. It was beyond doubt that if one could conceive of the process of Sino-American rapprochement, the main consideration for the PRC’s strategy was its national security, particularly to unite the enemy’s enemies to oppose the joint enemy. It was a sort of tactic of “United Front” and also fitted Dittmer’s rules of a triangular game. Therefore, basically the PRC designed its US policy under the principle of “dual tactics,” to obtain benefits while playing a game. Strictly speaking, the PRC’s US policy after 1969 was never really pro-US.

4.4. Conclusion

The PRC's foreign policy was affected by variations in the global political environment in the late 1960s and national security was again the fundamental concern. After the Korean War, the PRC once more started to worry about the security of its borderline, this time with the SU. The issue of the historically disputed areas had originated from some sort of "unequal" treaties and had led to repeated skirmishes, aggravated by the psychological influence of the SU's invasion of Czechoslovakia and the announcement of the Brezhnev Doctrine. As the PRC had learned from the Korean War, a direct confrontation with the US would not be in either's interest. Hence, the PRC deliberately avoided another direct clash with the US. Sino-US relations turned to the better, this success being mainly achieved by President Nixon's new attitude toward the PRC.

Nixon's friendly attitude was seized on by the PRC as an opportunity to break its isolation from the outside world, and it encouraged the PRC to revive the Five Principles and also design a new Vietnam policy. Nixon faced formidable domestic pressure to cease the Vietnam War and bring the troops home. He had to adopt a new policy to pursue negotiation instead of confrontation. Thus, President Nixon designed a policy of retreat to deal with

the nightmare Vietnam War, and the US initiated concessions during the protracted Paris peace talks. In order to save its reconciled relations with the US, the PRC accommodated and approved the US Vietnam policy of withdrawing its troops and signing the peace agreement. However what the PRC did was a two-track approach to accommodate but in the mean time reserve its basic anti-US rhetoric.

The CCP Congress documents elucidate the evolution of the PRC policy changes in two respects: the revival of the United Front policy and the mild posture toward US involvement in Vietnam. Domestically it took years for the pro-US faction to win pre-eminence. The rhetoric of those documents also gradually developed the terminology of anti-hegemonism, which implicated both against the US and the SU. This suggests that the PRC had grown in confidence through its dealings with the superpowers.

The PRC enriched its experience in this new US-SU-PRC triangular game. The newly emerged triangle in world politics in the late 1960s may be identified as one in which the US played a “pivot” role in a “romantic triangle.” The comparatively weaker PRC got a chance to apply its United Front policy in

dealing with the US and the SU simultaneously.²³⁰ The PRC recognised its role as a “wing player” of this “romantic triangle,” upgraded from a “pariah” of a US-SU “détente,” and its aim was to prevent the pivot—the US—from collusion with the other wing—the SU. The third phase of Dittmer models emerged. The PRC did play the game well with its tactics of “Pulling While Dragging.” For the “Dragging” side it was illustrated by the PRC’s old and new “Three Antis,” being anti both superpowers substantially, but being more severely directed toward the SU. Conversely the Paris peace talks served as a typical example of the “Pulling” aspect. During the process of negotiation the PRC gave its gradual and passive approval, since this was the only course which would benefit the PRC and provide the required temporary accommodation for the US. However, after the fall of Saigon in April 1975, the PRC immediately resumed its anti-US rhetoric and opposed a reunified Vietnam. This was not only because there was no longer any need to reconcile the US in Vietnam. The US had not only betrayed President Thieu. It had betrayed the PRC in allowing Saigon to fall and the nightmare scenario of a pro

²³⁰Not only the PRC dealt with both superpowers successfully, the countries that had diplomatic relations with the PRC were increased sharply from 47 in 1967 to 109 in 1975. See 1967 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., p. 374, chart 2; 1976 Yearbook on Chinese Communism, op. cit., p. 2:128.

Soviet and anti PRC unified Vietnam to come into being. The PRC probably felt let down.

The “United Front” and its variant, “The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence,” were initiated in the first half of the 1950s but failed. Nevertheless in the late 1960s, aided by the dual tactics of “Pulling While Dragging,” the United Front strategy was revived to initiate the Sino-American rapprochement, and it succeeded. The “United Front” tactic had its historical background in the CCP led revolution. It was a guideline motivated by self-interest. It was designed to be developed in more pragmatic conditions, but its basic aim after 1949 was to protect the PRC’s security. Although the US needed to open China up, and the PRC had become a weaker player of the triangle, this did not mean that the PRC would necessarily lean toward the US. That was the reason the PRC’s response to the Paris peace talks developed from a passive attitude in the early stages, to a positive one, and why, in the end, the PRC reverted to its anti-US stand after the fall of Saigon. The PRC was gradually becoming accustomed to manoeuvring a pragmatic and independent foreign policy.

The PRC adroitly exerted its United Front strategy to win an internationally recognised status. Dittmer’s Rules of Entry worked, a weaker

player was still able to play and manoeuvre in the game if its role was recognised by the other players and they were both affected. The PRC gradually increased its confidence and Dittmer even defined the PRC as playing the “pivot” role in the early 1980s.²³¹

²³¹Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, “The Strategic Triangle: A Critical Review,” p. 40.

PART III

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 5

THE UNITED FRONT POLICY AND THE US-SU-PRC STRATEGIC TRIANGLE

This thesis has sought to demonstrate that the PRC has consistently attempted to pursue a foreign policy based on the ideological guideline of the “United Front.” The utilisation of this guideline has helped the PRC achieve a stronger and more stable place in the international political system.

The essence of this concept of the “United Front” is its characteristic of flexibility. To secure its interests the relatively weak PRC has had to manoeuvre into a more favourable situation. The PRC has never continually fought a “stronger” enemy once its inferiority was perceived. The PRC has tried to mobilise all forces with which it could collude, neutralise the undecided, and pacify or isolate the opposition, in order to destroy the primary enemy.

To verify this strategy, in the three chapters following the introduction, detailed research of the CCP and PRC’s external relations has been completed and put into words. The range it covers is from the early 1920s to 1973, the

time when the CCP was established and the year the Paris peace agreement of the Vietnam War was signed.

The story begins with the CCP's struggle with the KMT to establish a communist regime in 1949. A comparatively weak CCP made a "United Front" with the KMT in 1924, joined the KMT army in 1937 during the Sino-Japanese War, and negotiated with the KMT in Chungking in 1945. In all these cases the CCP was escaping the power of a stronger foe to buy time to build up its own strength. When the timing was ripe the PRC relentlessly overcame its enemy.

After 1949 the story had the same features. From 1949 to 1969 the PRC worked out its foreign policy to face the world as an independent country. However, it met some setbacks. The Korean War taught the newly born PRC the lesson of the importance of the security of its border and the impossibility of another direct military clash with the US. Taking into account those lessons, the PRC, after the Korean War, very naturally designed a foreign policy based on the consideration of the security of its border. The idea of a "buffer zone" was implemented, and a policy of "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" was used to enhance harmonious relations with neighbouring countries, and to try to collude with a few Afro-Asian nations in challenging US containment policy.

The Five Principles were manifested by Zhou Enlai both during the 1954 Geneva Conference, and at the 1955 Bandung Conference. However, the Five Principles did not work properly. The PRC's relationship with the SU deteriorated and that with the US did not improve. Relations with the Afro-Asian third world countries remained messy. Thus the United Front policy seemed to be a failure as an instrument of the PRC's international policy.

The setbacks would not stop the PRC attempting to practice the policy successfully a second time. The opportunity came only in 1969 after the inauguration of the new US President, Nixon, with his new Vietnam and China policies. The PRC's status had been upgraded to that of an equal "player" with the superpowers. A weaker PRC used another tactic of the United Front policy, "Pulling While Dragging," to improve its relations with the US. The resulting "collusive" rather than "cordial" relations between the PRC and the US served both well. For the US it consolidated its status as a pivot of the triangular superpower relationship. President Nixon recognised the value of an improved relationship with the PRC which was reciprocated by the PRC's positive response as relations between the PRC and the SU deteriorated. The PRC was thus able to play a significant role in international politics, though it had no other choice but to follow and approve the new US Vietnam policy. The PRC's

attitude toward the Paris peace talks demonstrated these dual tactics in action. The PRC moved from “opposing” through “passive approval,” to “approval” of the Paris peace talks as the latter progressed. Once the dust had settled, the Paris peace agreement had been signed and Saigon had fallen, the PRC almost immediately started again its “anti-hegemonism” publicity against the US. The PRC had gained greater confidence in playing the triangular game of super-power politics.

Dittmer’s concept of strategic triangular games provides a good explanation of the PRC’s use of the United Front policy. There is no certain and formulaic theory about any aspect of international relations. However, some theories provide rational and acceptable explanations of a situation in some periods. Lowell Dittmer, a neorealist, stresses that every country pursues its national interest and that security is the prime goal of foreign policy. Both its two crucial wars, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, were concerned with the PRC’s border security. Dittmer’s game theory with its diagrammatic explanation of the PRC-US-SU strategic triangle provides one of the best ways to demonstrate and interpret that period. His Rules of Entry and Rules of Play tell us how the three players play the game though they are not of equal status. This provides an explanation of the PRC’s relations with the superpowers,

particularly its interaction with the US after 1969. Dittmer also mentions the importance of an increase in tension as a main factor in decision making, which was exactly what happened when the SU invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968 and PRC-SU had a border clash in 1969. All those facts encouraged the PRC to shift to find an opportunity to collude with the US, and this collusion occurred due to US reciprocal requirements. Dittmer's models also illuminate the potential triangular relations before 1969 and after 1973.

The above-mentioned historical and theoretical analysis leads on to an analysis of the development of the unique United Front policy and how it in turn influences the strategic triangle as follows:

The first period to be reviewed began in 1949 and ended in 1965 when the US intensified its involvement in Vietnam. The Danang marine landing and the Rolling Thunder bombing, led the SU to send its advanced weapons to aid the DRV, and downgraded the PRC's position due to its inferiority in military equipment. The escalation of the Vietnam War also aggravated the already worsening PRC-SU and PRC-US relations. The PRC started to worry about the danger of a two-front war, and the potentiality of a shifting of the PRC's foreign policy emerged.

Mao had successfully applied the United Front strategy during the whole process of CCP's struggle with the KMT until the PRC was formally established in 1949. Mao had learned the idea from Lenin but he interpreted it with his own characteristic ideas. For Lenin, United Front was a transitional policy, a temporary expedient to be employed only during periods of communist weakness. For Mao it was an intrinsic and essential part of the revolutionary process. Therefore Mao and his followers always tried hard to put this manoeuvre into action. At Geneva and Bandung the PRC advocated the concept of "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence." Based on this idea through Zhou's endeavours during the Geneva Conference the DRV made compromises to accept the proposals of an armistice in Indochina, a temporary demarcation line, a political settlement of Vietnam through national elections, and the neutrality of Laos and Cambodia. By these means the PRC built a "buffer zone" along its southern border without the danger of a war with the US. Less nervous about its relations with the US, the PRC, in Geneva was positive to respond to US initiatives and both sides started to have a direct channel of communication, the "Warsaw Talks." For the Bandung Conference, the PRC extended its gestures to the US and Japan to point out its willingness to

solve the Taiwan issue peacefully with the US and have peace treaty with Japan.

Zhou let the world know the PRC's new foreign policy, and to some extent the PRC was recognised as an important participant in international conferences. Zhou also adroitly gained much needed time for the PRC's domestic development. But all this preliminary success was limited because of the antagonism from both the two superpowers and a number of Afro-Asian nations. The US and the SU were the predominant powers in the "Cold War" era. The PRC, after the Korean War, was regarded by the US as an adversary and the major target of its containment policy in Asia. Alongside the Geneva Accords the US set up SEATO, and signed the Treaty of Mutual Defence with the Republic of China. During the two Taiwan Strait crises in 1954 and 1958 the US strongly supported the ROC to defeat the PRC. With the SU, the honeymoon period for its communist comrade was short. The PRC had an ideological dispute with the SU which started from the CPSU's 20th Congress in 1956. Beginning in April 1962 border skirmishes began across the PRC-SU boundary and the PRC began to emphasize the "unequal treaties" that had lost China territory to Russia. The SU never gave the PRC any support during the two Taiwan Strait crises and it unilaterally withdrew its nuclear technical assistance

team from the PRC. Relations therefore deteriorated seriously. Internationally, apart from the superpowers' hostility, some Afro-Asian countries which attended the Bandung Conference opposed the PRC's attendance at the planned second Afro-Asian conference in Algiers. The PRC enthusiastically put its new foreign policy into practice but earned no friends. Domestically, power struggles and the failure of those movements, such as Three Red Flags and Cultural Revolution, caused millions of deaths, and reduced the PRC's international status. The United Front policy had just not worked.

The second phase of the PRC's United Front strategy practice, which was a successful one, began at the end of the 1960s. The Vietnam War is a good case study to explain this change. A "strategic triangle" was emerging among the US, PRC and SU. The weaker PRC's move to approval of the Paris peace talks is a clear example of the PRC's flexibility in using dual tactics of "Pulling While Dragging" for temporarily collusion with the US. What the PRC chose was the "lesser evil" since one outcome of the Paris peace talks might be the DRV unifying Vietnam which would let the DRV collude with the SU to threaten the security of the PRC's borders both from north and south. However, at least the PRC's dealings with the superpowers were improved, and both the US and the SU recognised the PRC's status as one player of a

triangular game. The PRC took its chances and maturely exerted its United Front policy with great “flexibility.” This is the reason the Vietnam War was selected as a case study.

The nature of the drastic change in the PRC’s Vietnam policy after 1969 is clearer if set against the background of its traditional policies toward Vietnam and the Vietnam War. Traditionally the PRC treated the whole Indochina region as its sphere of influence. Before French rule China colonised the area for about sixteen hundred years. To safeguard both its border and the overseas Chinese in Vietnam, China always wanted Vietnam to be divided and weak to facilitate Chinese continuing control of the area. This attitude was demonstrated both in the 1954 Geneva Conference and the Paris peace talks in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the PRC clearly regarded the DRV as less important and, the PRC thought it needed to deal with other powerful countries. Therefore, before 1969, the PRC wished the war in Vietnam to continue and opposed any peace talks. Furthermore, a continuing Vietnam War would benefit the PRC because the war would weaken the DRV, and also weaken the US, militarily, financially and spiritually; it would prevent encirclement by a SU-DRV alliance; and it would undermine US-SU détente since the SU would

not let the DRV collapse and this would cause a continuing indirect confrontation with the US.

The PRC's original calculations about the Vietnam War were altered after the new Nixon administration was inaugurated. The combination of US public opinion and financial burdens pushed President Nixon to design a new Vietnam policy. He intended to bring American ground forces back home, and instead of "Containment" a policy of "Negotiation Replacing Confrontation" was announced. The Paris peace talks started. President Nixon also changed US China policy. He wanted to open China's door. This gave the PRC room to manoeuvre and apply its United Front policy again, and the inferior PRC had to follow the course of US Vietnam policy variations.

The new American policy limited future US involvement and relieved the PRC from the threat of a two-front war. In the north the border disputes between the PRC and the SU never ceased, and in March 1969 a large-scale military clash occurred in Chenpao Island along the Ussuri River. The PRC tried to be flexible again to border talks with the SU in October 1969, but it failed. Also the SU and the PRC seriously competed in their aid to the DRV after 1965. The PRC was inferior in military aid. It refused the SU's proposal of a "united action" program to assist the DRV, and it recommended its

“people’s war” conception in Vietnam. It did not support a conventional invasion but a prolonged struggle of attrition which itself led the Johnson administration into an escalation of the war. In his speech on March 31, 1968, President Johnson mentioned US willingness to have peace talks, but the time was not ripe for the PRC to conceive that such negotiations could enhance the security of its southern border. Therefore the PRC worried about a two-front war. In Dittmer’s terms the PRC was in a “pariah” position with a US-SU “détente.” In the late 1960s, the ice with the US melted and the PRC was relieved from a threat of war with the US in the south.

The new PRC Vietnam policy after 1969 was a policy with the tactics of “Pulling While Dragging” to accommodate the new US Vietnam policy in order to serve its own national security interests. The worsening relations between the PRC and the SU in the late 1960s were pulled even further apart by the Soviet invasion in Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and the proclamation of the Brezhnev Doctrine in November 1968. Fortunately the US shifted its Vietnam and China policies which gave the PRC a chance to try to unite with the US against the SU. A strategic triangle emerged and the still deteriorating PRC-SU relations became the primary contradiction for the PRC. The strategic game was a game, there were no “cordial” relations among them but only

“pragmatic” and “self-interested” ones. Thus the PRC started to play the game cautiously with what it was familiar with, the United Front policy. More complicated than in the 1950s, when it just proclaimed the policy of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the PRC adopted “dual” tactics, which meant it could adjust its relationship with the other players of the triangle, shifting its position depending on how the situation changed. However, the fact was that the PRC was the weakest player meant that its room for manoeuvre was limited. The Sino-American rapprochement began: the US hoped the improved relations with the PRC would help the solution of the Vietnam issue, or at least the PRC could stop its opposition to the Paris peace talks. A continuing war in Vietnam and opposing the Paris talks was PRC’s Vietnam policy before 1969. If this policy had to change the PRC had to think through the pros and cons of its relations with the US. Obviously the PRC would not lose an opportunity to improve its relations with the US, thus it shifted its Vietnam policy to accommodate what the US wanted, but the process was protracted and gradual.

The new PRC Vietnam policy after 1969 was a model of the United Front policy in action in the framework of Dittmer’s strategic triangle. The PRC effectively formed a “United Front” with the US in 1969, withdrawing

military support from the DRV and revising its position on the Paris peace talks. These did not immediately end the conflict, which allowed the PRC to shift its public position slowly, to adjust to domestic pressures. Unless a breakthrough of the talks materialised, the PRC would be able to maintain a cover of anti-American rhetoric. The PRC's objectives, however, were to retain a buffer zone and prevent a direct clash with the US. This fitted the communist concept of dual tactics. When the Paris peace talks had reached their final phase, the publicity of the CCP had to change to approve of the talks. The "approved" attitude was only short lasting, as the US unexpectedly abandoned the Thieu government. Vietnam was reunified by the DRV and the worries of a strong Vietnam and its legacy were given substance. As Dittmer pointed out in his second article US-PRC relations began a new phase at this period, although not quite in the way he argued.¹ For a time PRC attitudes remained cool, with much suspicion of US-Soviet "hegemonism." In some respects the triangular relationship between 1975 to 1978 reverted to a renewal of the "stable marriage" between the SU and the US, although the PRC was not such a "pariah" as it had been before and the SU-US relationship was more troubled

¹Dittmer remark that in 1975-1981 the triangle permuted to marriage between the PRC and the US, leaving the SU in an isolated pariah position. See Lowell Dittmer, *op. cit.*, "The Strategic Triangle: A Critical Review," p. 38.

than it had previously been. From 1979 the situation clarified as the US-Soviet relations began seriously to deteriorate due to latter's invasion of Afghanistan.

In general, despite the setback of 1975 the PRC strengthened itself in terms of its relationship with the superpowers in the period just reviewed. The PRC played the strategic game well and proved itself mature enough to deal with both the US and the SU. The "Pulling While Dragging" strategy provided the means to articulate the PRC's readiness to reconcile with the US, and the PRC's position was indeed upgraded in both the triangular game in particular and international politics in general.

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