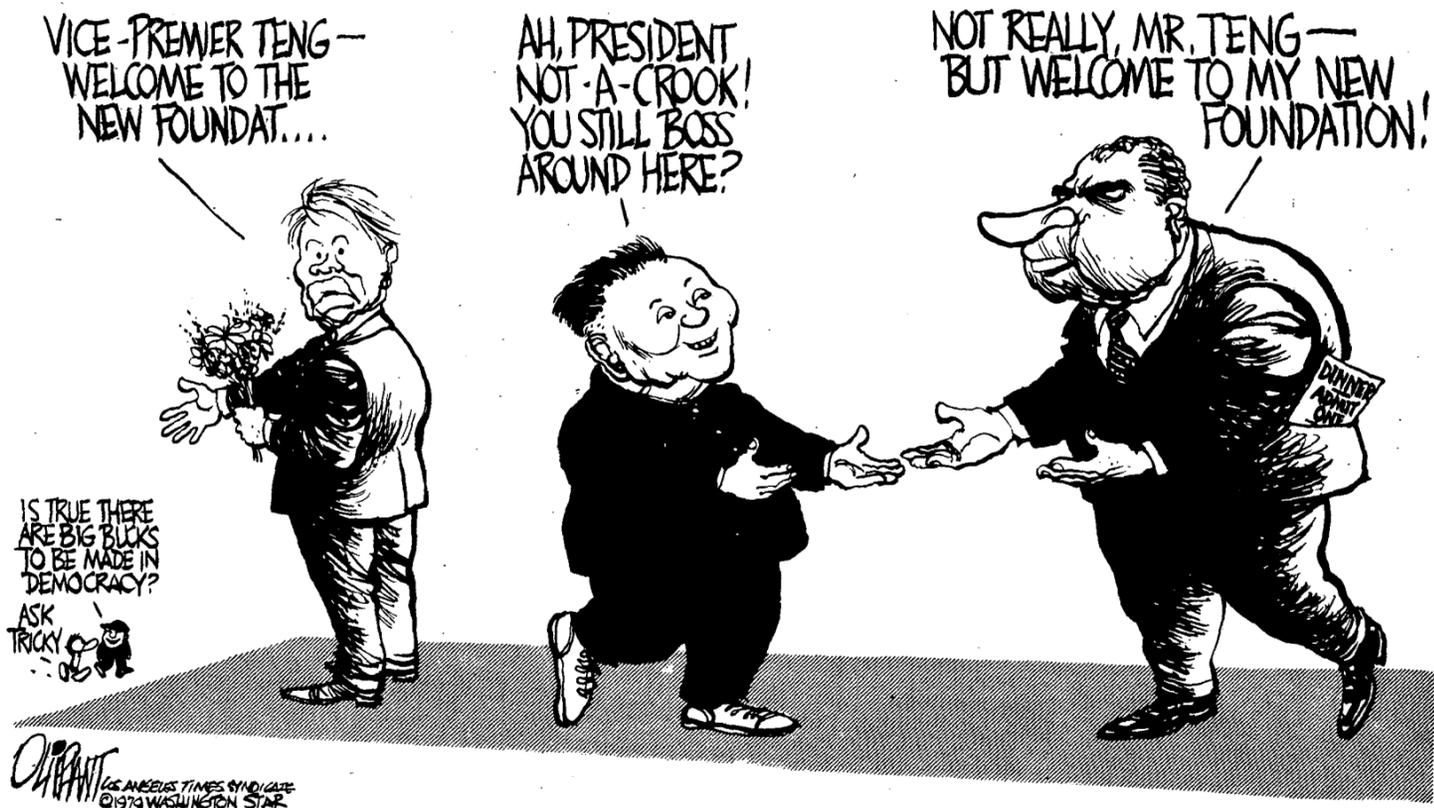


EDITORIAL



China's development takes road to the West

Deng Xiaoping's visit to the U.S. registers the emergence of a new era in world politics. The capitalist vs. communist conflict that dominated world politics for nearly three decades after World War II has given way, since the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, to an emerging and still undefined configuration of international alignments and conflicts. But one thing is clear: partisanship to socialism or capitalism no longer serves as a guide to international alignments.

In this context, the normalization of relations between the U.S. and the Peoples Republic of China raises new questions for socialists about foreign affairs. And it has raised with renewed urgency among American socialists questions concerning the very nature of China's social system.

American socialists who do not consider the Soviet Union's pursuit of detente and western trade as sufficient grounds for determining its socialist or non-socialist character should not apply a double-standard to China.

There is a noticeable irony in the idea, held by many socialist and leftist Americans, that China's current renunciation of "revolutionary self-reliance" is the equivalent of "counter-revolution." Classical Marxist thought, including that associated with Lenin, held that socialist revolutionary change must be "international," especially in the case of pre-industrial countries like Russia and China. National self-reliance was a matter of necessity, not of choice.

In seeking modernization, China, it is accurately said, has embarked upon an uncharted sea involving the breakup of the simple agrarian ways of the past. But this in itself is not a departure from the Marxist or socialist tradition. Revolutionary change lies at the heart of the socialist outlook.

In its 20th century secular forms, socialist revolution meant (among other things) commitment to modernization, industrialization and the just control and distribution of their fruits. "Maoism" came to mean—whether accurately or not—pitting equalitarianism against development. The post-Mao Chinese leadership can hardly be charged with "counter-revolution" for reverting to the original conception.

By and large, Marxian socialists have regarded leaders of agrarian nations who opposed modernization as reaction-

ary—committed to keeping their nation backward and vulnerable to imperial exploitation.

In short, the difference among socialists over the questions of development and equalitarianism is not one of revolution vs. counter-revolution, but of differences among socialists over paths to socialism. These differences permeate the history of socialist politics in and out of power.

Nor, rhetoric aside, is the issue equalitarianism vs. elitism, pure and simple. Remaining largely non-industrialized does not eliminate a society's inequalities.

The real conflict centers on the contradiction between underdevelopment and equalitarianism, as well as between development and equalitarianism—a contradiction that socialist societies no less than others must face and deal with, but that socialist societies are better equipped to resolve by virtue of their commitment to so-

cial ownership and democratic control of production and exchange.

The commitment of the present Chinese leadership to modernization is no grounds for branding them as "counter-revolutionary." Nor is the existence or persistence of inequalities in income or status associated with industrialization. Whether they are desirable is another matter. But the Chinese leadership, in opting for massive infusions of western technology, may very well be seeking to ameliorate inequalities associated with the process of development by heightened productivity.

Whether China ultimately takes the capitalist road hinges on other factors, especially the extent to which private capital is permitted to entrench itself in the Chinese production, distribution, and financial systems.

American socialists may take a keen interest in Chinese developments without falling into the old "missionary" chau-

vinism of presuming to dictate American-bred values (conventional, radical, or utopian) to the Chinese, or preaching to China the glories of agrarianism while ourselves enjoying the benefits of industrialism.

We may also critically judge China's policies in world affairs. China's current campaign to surround the Soviet Union with a hostile alignment consisting of China, the U.S., Japan and western Europe is dangerous to world peace and a disservice to other developing countries that need to draw upon resources that will go to waste in the stepped-up arms race implied in such an alignment.

Friends of China, including American socialists, would do better to stand firmly for international cooperation and disarmament, and more particularly, for a Sino-Soviet rapprochement similar to that now in progress between China and the U.S.

Sweet wafers and grapes of wrath

Pope John Paul II's utterances during his Latin America tour dealt time and again with the issues of social justice. They indicate the Pontiff's recognition that ultimately the survival of the Church will turn less on such volatile issues as abortion, birth-control, and priestly celibacy as on those of class conflict characteristic of modern politics and now intruding upon Church life—from theology to diplomacy—as never before.

What the Pope has been saying on the class question is less important than that he has found it necessary repeatedly to say something about it. But what he has been saying is important.

In the growing polarization within the Church between pro-capitalist and pro-socialist (and anti-imperialist) forces, the Pope is keeping his options open. He does not say that Jesus was not a revolutionary, only that this view does not accord with Church doctrine, which is true enough. He does not, as did past Popes, denounce socialism and praise capitalism, but says instead, "Neither capitalism nor communism will bring peace to the world but only the preaching of justice and human rights."

He says that the Church must not be

involved in politics, must not align itself with specific political movements and secular ideologies, its mission being "religious and not social and political." But that may have more practical impact on the Church's role in Italian and eastern European politics than on the actual activities of leftist parish priests and bishops in Latin America.

For, at the same time, the Pope takes evangelism to include education toward "a more just and equitable distribution of goods," toward a society in which "no longer will there be systems that permit the exploitation of man by man or by the state."

In this vein, the Pope pledges the Church to "put her life on the line" against suffering and hunger, affirming the need for "early and profound action"; "daring and profoundly innovative transformations must take place...without further delay." In Oaxaca, he warned against hatred and violence, a familiar Christian principle, but declared, "It is not just, it is not human, it is not Christian to maintain clearly unjust situations."

The Pope's statements are not an endorsement of the "theology of liberation," but neither are they a repudiation. Indeed,

they vindicate—wittingly or not—many of the central ideas of the theological left in the Church.

Though the Pope permitted invitations to the Episcopal Conference at Puebla, Mexico, to be stacked in favor of the conservative forces, and though the Conference's document may be more conservative than the Medellin document ten years ago, it is doubtful that he will move against the social involvement of the left-wing parish priests and bishops in Latin America (or elsewhere). To do so would risk schism and a drastic weakening of the Church in Latin America where over 40 percent of the world's 700 million Catholics live.

The Pope is issuing warnings to the left, not papal bulls or excommunications. The Church's survival is, in the end, more important to this Pope than capitalism's. And he seems to know that the Church can more easily survive the defection of the right than the left. He is straddling the class conflict, but slightly to the left, and in terms of modern Church history, dramatically to the left. To the Church's right wing he is throwing sweet wafers on such issues as abortion, but grapes of wrath on issues of class conflict.

LETTERS

WILL NOT RUN

THE SUGGESTION BY JAMES H. DURKIN (*ITT*, Jan. 24) that I be a candidate for U.S. President is quite flattering, but for the record I must offer a General Sherman statement. The only presidency I'm a candidate for is the UAW presidency when my current term expires in 1980.

There are few things that Henry Kissinger and I have in common, but being ineligible to hold our nation's highest office is one. Even if I possessed the desire to run, my birthplace being Glasgow, Scotland, would make me ineligible.

Douglas A. Fraser
President, UAW
Detroit, Mich.

MEXICAN OIL

I STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH LARRY Remer's view of the Mexican oil scene (*ITT*, Dec. 27, 1978), but understand that it is virtually impossible to report on it from San Diego. The evidence in Mexico points to the fact that Mexico is acting out of weakness with its oil, not strength. Lopez Portillo has overthrown protective PEMEX policies in order to produce enough oil in a big hurry to save Mexico from the critical debt crisis it faced in 1976.

Back then, Mexico's international, U.S. dominated creditors made it clear that oil was the only way to go. Remer's report of the gas-pipeline deal is just plain wrong. Mexico had been burning off gas long before Schlesinger said no. The country needed badly to sell the gas, and was forced, once again, to turn to the U.S. as a single buyer; it was deeply embarrassed by that no. The work on the gas pipeline could not be halted (in part because Mexico had already incurred \$1 billion in debts for its construction), and PEMEX resorted to thin excuses about conveying Mexican industry to gas, though it's doubtful that Mexico can absorb such a giant supply. It was a powerplay, and Mexico lost, and will lose again until its asking price comes

down, if Schlesinger has his way.

The Mexican left is still chewing over its positions on the oil matter. Regardless, it seems clear that Mexico cannot be benefitted by draining away in such haste a non-renewable resource that could be used for many decades to build refined-petroleum industries and grease the wheels of autonomous national development.

-Julia Preston
Chapel Hill, N.C.

SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM

IN HER RECENT LETTER TO THE EDITOR (*ITT*, Jan. 10), Peggy Dennis says that a number of additional titles of Soviet anti-Semitic writings were eliminated from her article on the subject (*ITT*, Dec. 20, 1978). But a careful examination of content that includes full quotations, in context, is really needed, not a list of titles. The debate on Soviet anti-Semitism is sufficiently clouded by the debate over Zionism that a catalog of titles and paraphrases, as given in Dennis' article and letter, only arouses suspicions that the writings may be under attack because they are actually anti-Zionist. It does not put those suspicions to rest.

I was able to check only one of the articles cited by Dennis (A copy is enclosed so that the editors may satisfy themselves that I'm stating the case fully and fairly.) It cannot support her argument.

About the article, "Nazism, Zionism, Maoism: nationality policy" by Fyodor Breus (*Daily World*, Sept. 16, 1978), Dennis wrote: "The term *Judaism* is used throughout more than the term *Zionist*. Judaism and Maoism are declared to be synonymous with Nazism and all three have 'identical values.'" That simply isn't true.

The article contains only two sentences pertaining to Jews, Judaism and Zionism. Here they are, in full:

"On the strength of the same principle [as the Nazis used], the Tel Aviv Zionist leaders demand that the Jews living in different countries with different so-

cial systems should promote Israeli government policies."

"Zionism, which sets all Judaic and Israeli values in opposition to those of humanity at large, has bred the tragedy of the Palestinians, has made other Arab nations suffer and has resulted in discrimination against dark-skinned Jews in Israel itself."

Neither of these statements can be considered anti-Semitic, though they clearly are anti-Zionist. If the rest of Dennis' evidence is this flimsy, Soviet anti-Semitism remains to be demonstrated.

-Ken Lawrence
Jackson, Miss.

TUNNEL VISION

A MICHEL POLIZZI'S LETTER (*ITT*, Jan. 24) is typical of the blind dogmatism concerning the issue of Israel and Zionism currently pervasive on the left. In his ardor to present a "materialist," progressive analysis of the situation, he swallows the tunnel-vision propaganda so popular today.

If one is really concerned with national liberation, Zionism is a good place to start. Forcibly expelled from their homeland, the Jews remained in exile for centuries, but always maintained some connection with Palestine. The Jews were never Europeans, constantly barred from the mainstream of social, political and economic life. Finally, a national liberation movement forms, and the Jews are able to end their exile.

Polizzi refers to the "class nature" of Zionism. He conveniently forgets that labor-oriented and socialist pioneers built the state of Israel. The kibbutz, despite its flaws, is still an example of this historical movement.

In his desperate attempt to heroify the Arab world, Polizzi ignores the support of Iraq, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and Syria for the Nazis during World War II. Perhaps the funding of the PLO by the oil sheikdom of Saudi Arabia is also irrelevant to Polizzi's world outlook.

The Palestinians do have a right to a homeland. Both Jews and Palestinian Arabs have national rights and are victims of persecution and manipulation. Additionally, the policies of the Israeli government have often been flawed and discriminatory. But this does not delegitimize Zionism as a national liberation movement.

Polizzi's dogmatism is typified by his claim that the PLO fights a war against Zionism, not the Jews. This should certainly be a great relief to the traumatized parents and relatives of murdered children and other innocents.

-Reuven Belfort
Member, Hashomer Hatzair
Socialist-Zionist Youth Movement
New York

DISRUPTING SOCIETY

I APPRECIATE *ITT*'S COVERAGE OF THE continuing suppression of free speech at Boston University, particularly the firing of Steve Slade, executive producer at the radio station WBUR. It's a shame, though, that you didn't have space to include details of Slade's firing. One of the censored tapes was a speech given at the university by William Kunstler. In some remarks urging his listeners to consult the Church Committee Report on the intelligence agencies, Kunstler said the book was probably in the library. "With all that Mr. Silber has done to expunge free speech on this campus (applause) he probably hasn't...I don't think he's closed the library yet, but maybe I'm mistaken (laughter)...maybe he'll just take away university funding."

So far the B.U. administration hasn't found that necessary. But judging from its dismissal of Slade, who refused to edit out that remark, we might expect the administration to fire any unruly librarians.

Clearly, too, "ruly" custodians can be found. The person who fired Slade has been rewarded with the title of "acting" general manager, and the newly appointed B.U. overseer of the station, an "acting" dean of the School of Public Communications, gave a speech last spring in Rhode Island arguing that free speech is not a license to disrupt society. Apparently, the current administration of Boston University regards free speech itself as a disruption of its society, and I for one wish someone would challenge its license to run a public radio station.

-Gail Fuhrer
Cambridge, Mass.

CORRECTION

Gil Schrank photographed Robert Lipsyte for the interview that appeared last week.

DIALOG

BY MIKE LAVELLE

YURI KAPRALOV, THE FIRST SECRETARY OF THE SOVIET Embassy, shows up at a Rockefeller built and endowed church in New York to confer with anti-American Americans with pro-Soviet views. He "warmly praised the convocation's goals and clearly won the sympathy of the audience with his direct style" (*ITT*, Dec. 20, 1978). The credibility of those in attendance at the two-day convocation is unquestioned as long as they restrict themselves to talking to each other and the Soviet Embassy, unquestioned, that is, within the confines of their own self-imposed isolation.

They represent yet another example of some segments of the American left who seem to have an absolute mania for self-destruction. What else did Rev. Coffin, Cora Weiss, et al. expect Kapralov to do but "warmly praise" a meeting where Coffin draws a scenario in which American computers "misread a radar screen" and the Soviet computers, as perfect as everything Soviet, "accurately" read their own radar screens. Thus evil America plunges the world into war.

Kapralov's German counterpart in the late '30s would also have "warmly praised" a pro Nazi rally in Madison Square Garden whose purpose would have been "peace" by Nazi definition.

The credibility of the American left centers very much on what they mean by "peace," by "morality," by that whole semantic grab-bag of humanistic utter-

ances. Unfortunately, the leftists who have yielded to the totalitarian temptation have taken on the totalitarian usage of language and contorted out of human shape desperate hearts and minds who sincerely wish to believe that "peace" means valued, inviolate human lives. Cynicism is the bitter legacy they leave to the rest of us.

During the Vietnam war a slogan much in use by the left was "Silence is assent." The silence of the left concerning the barbarisms of left-wing police states indicts it with the Carthaginian "peace" in Cambodia, and the poison gas used by the North Vietnamese army against the Meo Tribes in the Vietnam mountains.

You cannot expect to wade through communist gulags as though they did not exist, and to be believed on other selective outrages, fascist or whatever.

Those in attendance at the convoca-

tion on the arms race will no doubt respond by dismissing critics like me as political *naifs* or as fascistic right-wingers. They will preach to their already converted and wonder why the rest of us are not listening or believing. They will also wonder why they seem to provide fertile ground work for right-wing conversions.

David Moberg's article in the same issue of *ITT* suggests that the San Francisco left's silence and self-censorship on the doings of Jim Jones was partially responsible for the horrors of Guyana. It was a microcosm of the predilection on the left to ignore the biblical injunctions (St. Matthew, Chapter 7, Verse 5): "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

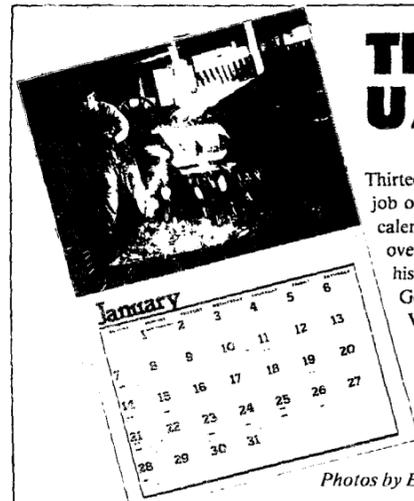
The tragedy on the domestic scene is that segments of the American left have goals in the social area shared by many non-leftists, but they still carry pro-Soviet (or pro-Chinese, etc.) and anti-American

millstones around their necks. It mutes their message and distorts their image. A truly American left that values our democratic traditions and beliefs is sorely needed.

What is not needed is the knee-jerk anti-Americans who seek the approval of Soviet colonialists instead of the approval of their fellow Americans. You do not shit on the dinner table and then announce a come-you-all banquet.

Flag waving? Sure, and so what? The American labor movement was not built on messages from Moscow, and neither will our society move toward a more equitable America led by those with a visceral hatred for the America they wish to change. You do not call your mother a base whore and then proceed to preach virtue to her.

God help us if patriotism becomes the sole property of right-wingers—by default. Mike Lavelle writes the *Blue Collar Views* column in the *Chicago Tribune*.



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