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THE CHINESE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE
SINO-SOVIET BORDER DISPUTES

BY

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The Fear Of The Lord Is The
Beginning Of Wisdom, And Knowledge
Of The Holy One Is Understanding.

Proverbs 9:14

The King's Heart Is In The Hand
Of The Lord. He Directs Like A
Watercourse Wherever He Pleases.

Proverbs 21:1

My Son, Give Me Your Heart And
Let Your Eyes Keep To My Ways.

Proverb 23:26

敬畏耶和華是智慧的開端，
認識至聖者，便是聰明。

箴言九章十節

王的心在耶和華手中，好像隴溝的水，
隨意流轉。

箴言二十一章一節

我兒，要將你的心歸我，你的眼目，也要
喜悅我的道路。

箴言二十三章二十六節



謹以此文獻給我敬愛的雙親

文化大革命與中蘇邊界衝突

蔡貴恒

五七年三月

My Thanks To All The
Teachers, Friends, Brothers
And Sisters In Christ.
For Their Helps And
Encouragement.

SKETCH MAP SHOWING SINO-SOVIET BOUNDARY LINE IN CHINESE TERRITORY CHENPAO ISLAND AREA

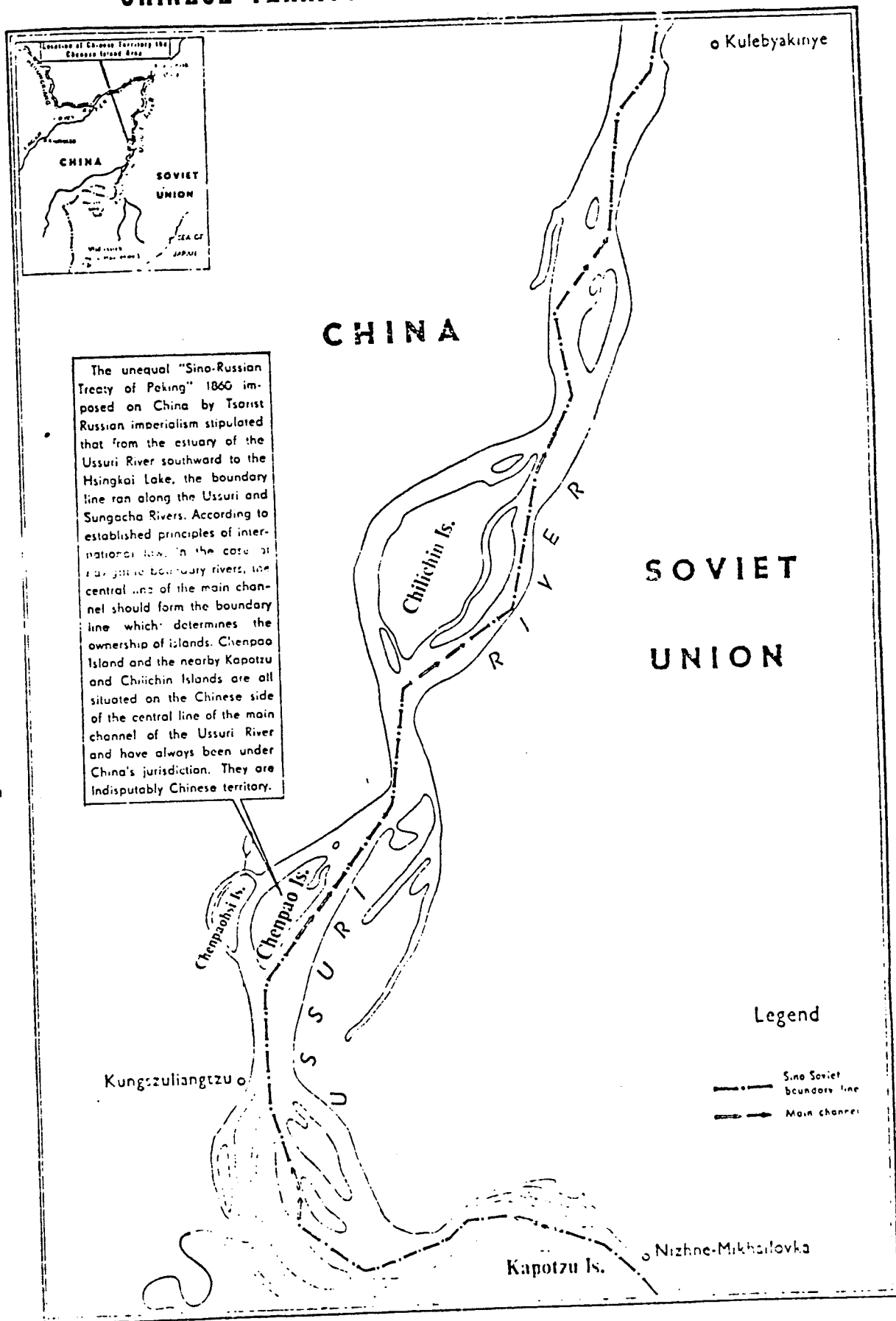


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INTRODUCTION

The topic of this thesis, "The Chinese Cultural Revolution and the Sino-Soviet Border Disputes" warrants study because of the lack of attention given it in the past. The Cultural Revolution in China and the Sino-Soviet border disputes were complicated, interrelated phenomena which demand analysis by any serious student of Chinese politics.

The coincidence in time of these two complex phenomena suggests possible inter-relationships between them. An attempt to understand these possible inter-relationships could well add to some understanding of the fundamental factors underlying these phenomena, and at the same time, provide some basis of predicting future events and their source of development.

There have been a number of theories presented on the historic, social, economic and political factors underlying the Sino-Soviet border disputes and the Cultural Revolution as separate phenomenon, but few have attempted to analyze them as interrelated phenomena.

The Sino-Soviet border disputes¹ involved a number

1. For a chronological study, see Tai Sung An, Sino-Soviet Territorial Disputes, (Philadelphia:Westminster Press, 1973). For a thorough analytical study, see Thomas Robinson, "Sino-Soviet Border Disputes", American Political Science Review, Vol.66 no:6, Dec. 1972. Also see Ch'i Sun, What happened in Chenpao?, (Hong Kong:Seventy Publication, 1972); Leonard Schapiro, "Communism in Collision" and Peter Burton, "Background of the Territorial Issues" in Study of Comparative Communism, Vol.2, no:3 & 4, pp.121-129, 130-148. 珍宝岛事件始末

of political and military conflicts along the 4000-mile border of China and the USSR. At one level of analysis, one could conclude that the fundamental factors underlying the border disputes were economic and territorial in nature. I propose that deeper analysis reveals patterns of symbolic conflicts in other areas of the world, and fundamental antagonisms between the respective social systems of China and the Soviet Union. Some border disputes occurred near Sinkiang, a place where Russia historically had the greatest concentration of interests, and where China today maintains her nuclear installations. However, it was at Ussuri, where, in 1969, military clashes between the parties took place, that the border disputes revealed a higher level of intensity to the extent that both countries increased preparations for war.

The Cultural Revolution was a classic power struggle² with diffuse functions, which lasted from August 1966 to April 1969. It was a conflict over political, economic,

2. See for example, The Great Power Struggle, (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1969); SzeMa Cheng-feng, The Cultural Revolution, Vol.1 & 2, (Chinese Edition), 文革始末 (Hong Kong: Wen-I Book, 1972); Harold Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest, (New York, 1970); Thomas Robinson, The Cultural Revolution in China, (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1971)

military and foreign policy differences.³ As a temporarily successful attempt by the 'radicals' to recapture national leadership, the Cultural Revolution involved the remolding of the party machinery and the purges of many leaders. The strong anti-Soviet revisionist features of the Cultural Revolution further convinced us that it was not solely an internal reconstruction, but was also a mass campaign to articulate internal hostility toward foreign foes. The revolution also turned China into a chaotic stage when thousands of red guards intervened, created an extremely dangerous phenomenon in the late 1960s.

The Cultural Revolution is thus correlated with the intensification of the border disputes, represented by vigorous fortifications and military buildups on both sides of the border. To some extent, it seems Chinese leaders deliberately employed mass domestic mobilization to initiate an anti-foreignism campaign during the Cultural Revolution period. This was reflected in red guard demonstrations against Moscow on the borders. Perpetual Chinese official attacks on Soviet revisionism further enhanced the probability that the border disputes and

3. The functions of the Cultural Revolution were diffuse, but basically anti-revisionism. See for example, Philip Bridgham, "Cultural Revolution: Origin and Development", China Quarterly, no:29 & 34, 1967 and 1968; Stuart Schram, Authority Participation and Cultural Change in China, (Cambridge:Oxford Univ. Press, 1973); Alan P.L. Liu, Political Culture and Group Conflict in China, (Calif. Celio Book, 1975); Baum Richard, China in Ferment, (N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971) and Tai-Sung An, Mao Tse-tung's Cultural Revolution, (N.Y.:Pegasus, 1972).

the Cultural Revolution were interrelated.

Yet, border disputes also appeared to be associated with Sino-Soviet global rivalry for political, economic and ideological spheres of influence. We must thus be very careful in attempting to ascertain to what extent the Cultural Revolution intensified the border disputes during 1966-1969. How may this have occurred? Was the Cultural Revolution the only contributing factor to the intensification of the border conflicts? What was the role of other factors? The central task of this thesis is to explore and attempt to resolve these extremely complicated causal relationships.

It is my contention that the Chinese Cultural Revolution is obviously related, both directly and indirectly, to the intensified border tensions in the period 1966-1969. That the Cultural Revolution itself does not offer a satisfactory answer to the causes of the intensifying border conflicts is substantially explained by the influence of the complicated global politics of the late sixties. Thus, the border disputes represented a typically complex and interactive international political conflict phenomenon. Conscious policy choices, reactive behavior, preventive and pre-emptive concerns, were complicated by an acquired value of the conflict for both sides.

In attempting to analyze and support the central hypothesis of this thesis, I will proceed by attempting a

creative, yet empirically sound, eclectic synthesis of the facts, drawing on various models, theories and research on the Cultural Revolution and the border disputes. One tremendously difficult task, however, is to decide first, to what extent border clashes represented deliberate acts, and then, if so, which side may have been responsible. It is also difficult to be sure one is in possession of reliable data, in view of the propaganda machinery and news control maintained by both sides. As far as possible, multiple sources have been scrutinized to help alleviate some of these problems. For many purposes of this thesis, interpretations of events are themselves the matter of interest. The thesis will thus make use of Chinese and Soviet sources as well as western ones.

The second chapter provides some historical background information fundamental to an awareness of the character of the phenomena discussed in this thesis. Chapter Three analyzes the military dimensions of the border disputes. In chapter four, the discussion will focus on the different periods of the border disputes. The distinctiveness of the period from 1966-1969, when border disputes were aggravated, will be discussed. In chapter five, I will attempt to explain how the border disputes may have been intensified by the Cultural Revolution. Chapter six will examine other explanations for this intensification of the border disputes. Then, I will conclude my findings in the last chapter.

Chapter II

Background To The Sino-Soviet Border Disputes

The Sino-Soviet border clashes at Ussuri and Sinkiang in 1969 and most recently in May 1978 along the Sino-Soviet frontier in Amur, are examples of the long history of political, territorial and economic conflict between these two countries.

Fundamental differences between the two countries in respect to Marxist-Leninist strategy have been manifested in polemics and in rivalry within the international communist movement.¹ Yet, it has also been argued that the belligerents initiated the border disputes in order to achieve certain policy goals.

The existing Sino-Soviet frontier is regarded as de facto only by the Chinese, who claimed lost territories from centuries of Russian encroachments. They have pressed these claims at various stages, but most particularly in the late sixties. Ethnic irredenta and the presence of tribes which span the border have exacerbated the problem.

Economic factors have also been of underlying importance

1. Two useful studies on the Sino-Soviet polemics are John Gittings, Survey of the Sino-Soviet Disputes 1963-1967, (Oxford U. Press, 1968); William E. Griffith, Sino-Soviet Relations 1964-1965, M.I.T. Press, 1967; see also Donald Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict 1956-1961, (Princeton U. Press, 1962); Alfred D. Low, The Sino-Soviet Disputes, Fairleigh U. Press, 1976 and Ch'i Sun, What Happened in Chenpao, (Seventy Publication, 1974, Hong Kong.)

in the Sino-Soviet border disputes. In part, this is related to a legacy of unequal trade relationships from the past. Disagreement over the building of socialism has represented a second phase of economic conflict.

1. The Political Dimensions of the Sino-Soviet Border Disputes

a. Ideological Polemics

In the mid-fifties, the Sino-Soviet discord manifested itself in the political realm in the form of ideological polemics. The dual policy — de-Stalinization and peaceful coexistence — spelled out by the Kremlin in 1956 is identified by the Chinese as the genesis of the split between them and the Soviet leaders:

the 20th Congress of CPSU is the root from which all the evils done by the Khrushchev revisionists grow.... The 20th Congress is the origin of the split in the international communist movement.²

Mao probably felt personally offended when the Soviets attacked the personality cult.³ Moreover, the "peaceful coexistence" policy was regarded by China as a betrayal of Marxist-Leninism and the international communist movement. It was contradictory to the Chinese preference for revolutionary struggle as the general line of foreign policy and the activist Soviet foreign policy Mao may have desired.

The 20th Congress, then, signified the origin of open conflict between Peking and Moscow on ideology. In 1957, the

2. "Statement by Khrushchev", World Cultural Press Recorded, April 1965.

3. Peoples Daily, April 5, 1965.

"Hundred Flowers" campaign in China was launched, with anti-Soviet polemics and personal attacks on Khrushchev. At the international communist conference held in 1957, China refused to follow the Soviet lead, declaring that revisionism was the major danger to the socialist camp; that an unpeaceful transition to socialism was necessary; and that the principle of equality among fraternal parties was not to be abandoned: the Soviets were not to dictate to the international communist movement, even though they might carry greater responsibilities.⁴ Soviet hegemony was thus seriously and openly challenged.

These declarations were not, however, an abrupt change in Chinese policy. Consistent with her earlier ambivalent attitude towards the Polish and Hungarian Revolts in 1956, China decided to stay within the bloc and to maintain the consolidation of the socialist camp. Yet, China's declarations and especially her assertion of the Five Principles of Mutual Respect for the sovereignty and integrity of states, expressed her disapproval of Soviet policy.

From then onward, Chinese were increasingly bold about publicly voicing an independent line. Sino-Soviet ideological disputes were reflected in different approaches to economic policy, world revolution and basic Marxist-Leninist strategy.⁵

4. Peoples Daily and Hung Ch'i joint editorial, February 4, 1964.

5. Alfred D. Low, op.cit., pp.69-102; John Gittings, op.cit. pp.59-85; Donald Zagoria, op.cit., pp.77-224; see particularly Li Wei-han "The Struggle for Proletarian leadership in the Period of the New Democratic Revolution in China" Peking Review, February 23, 1962, p.5.

In 1959, the Chinese Communist Party's interpretation of strategy for the social and economic revolution in China, "The Great Leap Forward" was denounced by the Soviets. On the other hand, the Chinese leadership denounced the "Peaceful Coexistence" policies that Khrushchev had negotiated with President Eisenhower.⁶ While Khrushchev expressed his discontent and denounced the "Great Leap Forward", the Chinese published a condemnation of Khrushchev's foreign policy in a Hung Ch'i editorial "Long Live Leninism".⁷ China also criticized the revisionism of Yugoslavia, identifying revisionism as the main threat to the international communist movement, but refraining from open criticism of Soviet communism until 1963.⁸ At conferences of communist parties, at Bucharest in June 1960 and Moscow in November 1960, differences between Soviet and Chinese approaches to ideology and other policies were confirmed.⁹ In August 1960, the Soviet Union withdrew all aid and personnel from the Peoples' Republic of China, thus shifting the conflict from policy and ideology to practical economic and diplomatic relations between the two states.

The early sixties witnessed the spreading of the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute to other communist states. The

6. Alfred D. Low op.cit., pp.102-104.

7. Peking Review, April 26, 1960; For Khrushchev or Soviet criticism of the "Great Leap Forward", see Life Jan.12, 1959, and Soviet Government Statement, Pravda, 21 & 22, Sept. 1963.

8. PD & Hung Ch'i, joint editorial, Sept. 6, 1963.

9. Alfred Low, op.cit., pp.109-115; Donald Zaroria, op.cit, pp.288-342; CDSP 12, no:6, 1960: PR June 28, 1963.

Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement and the Sino-Albanian alliance were one way in which the Sino-Soviet dispute began to polarize the communist camp. The Soviet attack on Albania's policy of upholding the personality cult had, in turn, led to the Chinese denunciation of the Yugoslav's revisionism. In 1961, the 22nd Congress of the CPSU was the scene of a retaliatory attack on Albania. Chinese representatives supported Albania and walked out after denouncing Soviet revisionism and Khrushchev's new idea about the "State of the whole people".¹⁰ When Soviet aid to Albania was cut off, China started to grant Albania credits and other supplies. As Moscow grew closer to Belgrade, Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated at a more rapid pace.

In 1962, the Sino-Soviet break had become more apparent.¹¹ China had published several articles in the Peoples Daily attacking prominent European Communist leaders who sided with the Soviet Union.¹² Moscow's surrender in the Cuban Missile crisis and "neutral" stance in the Sino-Indian border clashes made matters worse.

In mid-1963, the Sino-Soviet rift became so intense

10. "Khrushchev's Report at the 22nd Congress of CPSU" CDSP, Vol. 12, no.43, Nov. 22, 1961. Khrushchev declared the end of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union.

11. Alfred D. Low op.cit., pp.123-175; John Gittings, op.cit., pp.158-174; Alexander Dallin, "Long Division and Fine Fractions", Problems of Communism, Vol. XI no. 2, March-April, 1962, pp.7-16.

12. Peoples Daily, February 27, 1963; Peking Review, March 1 & 15, 1963. Richard Lowenthal, World Communism Since Stalin, (N. Y. Oxford U. Press, 1964).

that the Soviet leaders decided that an international conference should be called in order to ease their differences with the Chinese leaders. This attempt at negotiation soon failed. China replied to the Soviet Union's proposal with twenty-five conditions for bilateral talks which appeared to imply the removal of Khrushchev who had proposed the policies of peaceful coexistence and peaceful transition to socialism.¹³ Talks scheduled July 5 were eventually forced to adjourn when CPSU denounced CPC publicly and prepared, instead, to sign the Test Ban Treaty with the United States. When China issued the prominent articles on "The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leaders of the CPSU and Ourselves" on September 3, 1963, Sino-Soviet relations came to a decisive break.

The next two years were clouded by public Sino-Soviet vituperation. The Soviets' calls for conferences in 1964 and 1965 to ease the rising differences with China gained nothing but deeper misunderstandings.¹⁴ Despite Khrushchev's fall in late 1964, the new CPSU leaders refused to make concessions to China, apparently following Khrushchev's old line.¹⁵

On April 3, 1965, the Soviet proposal for a tripartite summit meeting to discuss plans of joint action against the

13. Peoples Daily, June 26, 1963.

14. John Gittings op.cit., pp. 228-246; Peking Review vol. VII, no. 19, May 8, 1964; William Griffith, op.cit. pp. 23-24.

15. Red Flag & Peoples Daily, joint editorial. China also attacked Moscow in "Khrushchevism without Khrushchev", March 22, 1965. See also PR Nov. 27, 1964, pp. 6-8.

United States was accepted by Hanoi, but rejected by the Chinese. The Soviet second proposal on April 17 was also ignored. The Chinese government may have feared the Soviet military presence on China's territories as well as in South-East Asia.¹⁶

For the 2nd Afro-Asian Conference, China anticipated enhancing her influence among the Afro-Asian states and excluding Soviet influence from this area. China argued that the Soviets were not qualified to participate in the conference because the USSR was neither a Afro-Asian state, nor was she concerned with the national-liberation movement, the theme of the conference.¹⁷

But the occurrences of certain international events had exacerbated pressures for the postponement of the conference. The coup d'état in the host country, Algeria, the withdrawal of ten African states, the Phillipino proposal for postponement, the Indo-Pakistan war and the crush of the Congo Rebellion, and other Sino-Soviet disputes in the 3rd world worked against bringing Afro-Asian nations together for the conferences. The withdrawal and the proposal of postponement had verified the unwillingness of certain states to stand on China's side. China's prestige became undermined as she failed to give confidence to 3rd world countries in the

16. China denied that the joint action was an imperative requirement of the anti-imperialist struggle. See PR Nov. 12, 1965; CDSP July 7, 1965; John Gittings, op.cit. pp. 254-270.

17. Peoples Daily, June 18, 1965 and PR June 25, 1965.

Congo Rebellion and the Indo-Pakistan conflict.¹⁸

Within the decade from 1956 to 1965, Sino-Soviet conflict was reflected in their increasing rivalry and antagonistic attitude toward each other. In addition to the ideological and foreign policy differences, there were also the territorial aspects to the two countries' political conflict.

b. Territorial Disputes

Historically, Russia had made unilateral gains that cost China approximately a million square miles of territory. The treaties of Sigun (1858), Peking (1860) and St. Petersburg (1881) had ceded the south eastern part of Siberia and the maritime provinces (about 500,000 square miles) of Central Asia as well as the 133,000 square miles of territory east of the Ussuri to Russia. These were the unequal treaties China renounced in the 1960's.¹⁹

Initially, Czarist Russia, despite the treaty of 1689, acquired new territory from a weak China. The new Bolshevik regime promised that all rights and privileges acquired by Czarist Russia would be relinquished.²⁰ However, the new regime did not return any Chinese territories, and even

18. William Griffith, op.cit., pp. 114-118.

19. Peoples Daily, March 8, 1963; Dennis Dollin, Territorial Claims of the Sino-Soviet Conflict, (Stanford U. Press, 1965).

20. See Karakhan Declaration, China Yearbook, 1924, pp. 868-872.

expanded like its predecessor, politically and territorial-
ly into China, notably in the case of South Sakhalin and in
the Kuriles.²¹

In addition, an understanding of the ethnic problem and the border policies of both countries may also be helpful to the overall understanding of the territorial underpinnings of the Sino-Soviet political conflict. To some extent, the present border struggle between the USSR and the CPR represents the unavoidable confrontation of two major powers who were both attempting to colonize and assimilate border tribes. China and Russia/Soviet Union frequently found themselves in conflict as they tried to spread or maintain their political and economic influence in the border areas. Then, there was also the question of national security.²²

From the 1800s onward, Russia was exploring Sinkiang, and supporting subversive activities against China. By 1860, Russian expansion into Sinkiang was marked by their entrenchment along the Amur. In 1864, Russia was able to take advantage of the Moslem Revolt in Sinkiang to capture

21. Francis Watson, The Frontier of China, (N.Y.: Prager 190-195.)

22. Despite her weakness, China engaged her troops frequently on border in order to maintain national security. The few victorious battles against the Moslem rebels in 1876-1877 by Tso Chung-teng were examples of China's attempt to resist foreign intervention. See Cheng Tien-feng, op.cit., p.50, Harry Schwartz, op.cit., pp.57-58

influence in this position of fertile Central Asia. Exploiting the unrest in Mongolia in 1910, Russia stirred up the Mongols to revolt. In December 1911, a "Mongolian Empire" was created. In 1921, the Soviets intervened in Outer Mongolia, expelled the White Russian forces and assisted the Mongol to establish the MPR. (It became a Soviet sponsored Mongolian People Republic in 1921). In 1913, Russia seized Urankhai, made it into a protectorate, renamed it Tannu Tuva, and annexed it totally in 1944. By 1944, Russia had sufficient troops stationed on the border to dominate and influence the Sino-Soviet borderland.²³

Soviet influence in Sinkiang grew steadily from 1917 onward. In the 1930s, the Soviet Union supported the Chinese warlord Sheng Chih-ts'ai in the suppression of the Moslem rebellion which the Soviet Union also feared. General Ma Chung-ying, the brilliant leader of the Moslems was supported by the Imperial Japanese Government. The latter's objective was both to challenge Soviet influence in Sinkiang and to make the Moslems a bulwark of opposition to the Soviets. By 1940, Sinkiang was so under Soviet influence that the latter was able to demand unconditional supplies and exploration of mines.²⁴ From 1941-43, more than 150 tons

23. Russian influence in this area was shown by her complete political and economic control of the Chinese Eastern Railway; see Harry Schwartz, op.cit., pp.84-94.

24. Cheng Tien-feng, op.cit., pp.169-179; Li Chang, "The Soviet Grip on Sinkiang", Foreign Affairs, April 1954, p.491; J.V. Davidson, Russia and China, (London, 1960), pp. 140-161.

of tunsten were sent to the Soviet Union. In 1943, upon Soviet urging, the Kazakhs established the East Turkestan Republic. From 1944-1948, the Soviets supplied arms for rebels in North and South Sinkiang. Rebellion within China by Tadijks and Kazakhs were matched with the Soviet air-planes bombing Chinese government troop. Chinese officals at various posts were murdered.²⁵

After the Communist victory in China, the new Chinese government attempted to seize control over Sinkiang and various borderlands. To minimize the minorities insurrect-ions, a policy of sinification was undertaken. From the early 1950s on, multiple Chinese migrations to the border areas particularly of Sinkiang and Tibet, were supervised.²⁶ Then, in 1955, the Chinese attempted to sinify the border-lands through intensive economic development, resettlement under direct Peking control in Tibet and Sinkiang, and by language reform. The unrest in the Sinkiang Uighur Auto-nomic Region from 1956-1957, the Moslem rebellion in 1958 and the "60,000 Moslems fled" in 1962 were thought to be the result of the colonization policy.

China, in respect to these incidents, denounced the Soviet propaganda which deeply stirred the borderland

25. Li Chang, op.cit., pp.500-502; Ian Morism, "Some Notes on the Kazakh of Sinkiang", Royal Central Asian Journal, Jan. 1949, p.70; P.H.M. Jones, "Sinkiang and the Split", Far Eastern Economic Review, July 23, 1964, pp.159-160.

26. Francis Watson, op.cit., pp.114-125, 54-61, and 169-184.

minorities. China protested to the Soviet government:

The Soviets are carrying out large scale subversive activities in the Ili region ... To this day, the incidents remained unsettled. This is indeed an astounding event, unheard of in the relations between socialist countries.²⁷

The Soviets were charged with supplying ammunition and military training to the borderland minorities rebels. In 1962, China closed all consulates and sealed the borders with increased fortification. In 1964, Peking sent substantial troop reinforcement to Sinkiang and fortified a buffer zone along hundreds of miles of the troubled border to restrict its frontier against the flight or re-entry of Moslem insurgents and against the entry of foreign agents.

In 1965, Peking called for strict surveillance of all activities in the borderlands. The resulting fortification of these areas, Sinkiang, and the Sino-Mongolia border, produced reciprocal Soviet militarization, which in turn heightened the military tension on these areas as the Cultural Revolution advanced.²⁸

Another aspect of the territorial disputes had its root in China's claims for lost territories. Although in the Mutual Assistance Treaty of 1950, the USSR had again emphasised their renunciation of territorial claims, the Soviets did not relinquish conquered territories. They also showed no indication of using the border disputes for

27. "The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leaders of the CPSU and ourselves", Peking Review, Sept. 6, 1963, pp.6-23.

28. Tai-Sung An, op.cit., p.83.

domestic or international political advantages. But shortly after the Communist victory in China, the Chinese leaders started to question their loss of territories. That the territorial issue was considered to be of high priority to the new government could be shown in the Chinese leaders' more frequent references to lost territories. Mao raised the question of Outer Mongolia with Khrushchev in 1954 but was given no response.²⁹ Chou En-lai also failed to raise any discussion concerning territories in 1957.³⁰ During the "Hundred Flowers Campaign", anti-Soviet polemics included the intellectuals' requests for the return of Chinese lost territories. On the other hand, in 1954 China was producing maps which were quite different from those of the Soviets concerning the borderlands.

In spite of all these claims, the Kremlin leaders remained quiet. The border, too, became for a time fairly quiet notwithstanding the Moslem rebellion in 1958 and the border incidents in Kirigiziya, and Sinkiang.³¹ But in 1963, after the serious border incidents of the previous year during which 60,000 Moslems fled to the Soviet side, China publicly renounced the nine unequal treaties signed with Russia, and reiterated the Chinese claims to the lost territories.³² The tensions in the subsequent period drew the

29. "Chairman Mao tells the delegation of the Japanese Party that the Kuriles must be returned to Japan", Sekai Shuho, Tokyo, August 11, 1964, cited from Tai-Sung An, op.cit., pp.81-82.

30. Ibid. (Excerpts from reports of an interview with (Premier Chou, Okada, Socialist Member of the Diet), Tokyo, Aug. 1964.

31. William Griffith, op.cit., p.15.

32. Peoples Daily, March 6, 1963.

belligerents to negotiation in 1964. At this point, the Chinese government stated that the question of the Sino-Soviet boundary is a legacy from the past, and can be settled through negotiation between the two parties:

Although the old treaties relating to the Sino-Russian boundary are unequal treaties, the Chinese government is willing to respect them and take them as the basis for a reasonable settlement of the Sino-Soviet boundary question.³³

Moscow also pledged that:

guided by the interest to strengthen peace and preventing war, it is submitting proposals to the consideration of the government of all states to conclude an international agreement or treaty on the renunciation by states of the use of force for the solution of territorial disputes or question of frontiers.³⁴

The belligerents' willingness to make concessions and negotiate was more apparent than real, however. The negotiations actually served to sharpen the disputes and in particular the territorial problems between them. Their different attitudes and policies toward the Vietnam War and international approaches as well as the CPSU leaders' inclination to follow Khrushchev's line of policy all helped to continue conflict.

33. Letter of CCP to CPSU, February 29, 1964, Peking Review, May 8, 1964.

34. Tass International Service, "Khrushchev's Message to the other heads of States regarding the settlement of territorial disputes.", Moscow, January 3, 1964.

C. Cultural Factors³⁵

Cultural factors have been neglected by most scholars when analyzing the border disputes. This seems unwise, since strong nationalism and chauvinism have been evident in the political rivalries between China and the Soviet Union.

Historically, China's culture has demonstrated a guarded openness or willingness to acquire foreign philosophies and technology. This can be witnessed in the reception of Buddhism and Christianity in the past and science and modern technology in recent time. Czarist Russia, who owned the Romanov tradition for centuries, appeared as a Far Eastern power and a superior force. That Russia failed to understand China's guarded openness, and used force to open trade, hurt their relations from the very beginning. Moreover, the Middle Kingdom was also unwilling to enhance contact with the Russians whom they believed to be inferior barbarians.

The modern period in both countries inherited these patterns of mutual suspicion, particularly the Chinese, who had been humiliated by foreign powers. The CCP did not seem to enjoy her fellowship with Moscow in the pre-communist period. Although the communist brothers had been close for the first few years after the liberation in 1949, Chinese pride, nationalism and past problems separated the Chinese

35. Harry Schwartz, op.cit., pp.6-11; J.K.Fairbank, East Asia: Tradition and Transformation, (Boston, Houghton, 1973); and A.Doak Barnett, China and the Major Powers in East Asia, (Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., 1977), pp.59-62.

further from the Soviet model.

For instance, Chinese nationalism prevailed after 1949 in the seeking of equal treatment, international respect and territorial sovereignty. The Soviet Union, however, was unable to satisfy her comrade with the granting of equal status. The Sino-Soviet alliance was based on self-interest, not solely upon ideological affiliation. This was made evident by the Soviet response to Peking's claims to lost territories, demands for economic aid, the Soviet aid policy during the Korean War³⁶ and the Soviet refusal to support China on the Taiwan Straits incidents of 1954 and 1958. The Soviet Union wanted to follow a coexistence policy towards the United States, and also to consolidate her power.³⁷ The Soviets also preferred to be neutral in the Sino-Indian Wars (1959 and 1962), and actually supplied India with arms in 1962.³⁸ Again in 1959, the Soviets refused China's request for a sample of nuclear weaponry which the Soviets had initially promised in 1957. Apparently, the Soviets had ignored the Chinese decision to develop nuclear weapons. The Chinese and Soviet attitudes certainly reflected cultural factors, and particularly encouraged nationalist hostility.

36. John Gittings, op.cit., pp.51-55; Letter of CCP to CPSU, Feb. 29, 1964, Peking Review, May 8, 1964.

37. Alfred D.Low, op.cit., pp.86-90; Zagoria, op.cit, 236-244, 195-199.

38. Ibid., p.98; "Statement of the Chinese Government" Peoples Daily, September 1, 1963; see also John Gittings, op.cit., pp.174-183.

2. The Economic Dimension of the Deterioration in Sino-Soviet Relations

In the past, economic as well as territorial factors were fundamental in the relations and disputes between the two countries.³⁹ The Russian territorial ambitions and expectation of free trade, certainly, were related to their economic interest. Their grievance was related to the Chinese habit of regarding trade with barbarians (Russia) as a tribute to them.⁴⁰ As a self-sufficient state in the past, China expelled the traders and limited their trade within certain areas.⁴¹ This demonstrated a culture somewhat insensitive to the impact of foreign trade upon economic or material prosperity. Even though trade with Russia had grown from 41,900 rubles in 1693 to 13,000,000 rubles in 1810,⁴² China's economic policy was cautious. This was further proved by the two Anglo-Chinese wars, during which the British demanded an open door. Indeed, China's stubbornness lasted until the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty.

The Russian need of trade increased as she rapidly industrialized in the late 19th century. In the 1890s, Russia began to construct a railway within China, leased a

39. For the Sino-Russian economic condition, refer to Cheng Tien-feng, op.cit.

40. Pavlovsky, "China-Russian Relation", pp.1-2, cited in Cheng Tien-feng, Ibid.

41. Harry Schwartz, op.cit., p.35.

42. Ibid., pp.6-11; also see Li Chien-nung, The Political History of China, 1956, Hong Kong, pp.12-16 and Ssu Tang & J.K.Fairbank, China Response to the West, (Harvard Univ. Press, 1965).

port, and stepped up her involvement in Manchuria. Russian economic interest, however, gradually degenerated as Russia was out-traded.⁴³ Trading activities grew under the Kuo-mintang Government, but failed to satisfy either China or the Soviet Union. Certainly, Russia still had her eyes on Sinkiang and its rich mineral resources. Manchuria was another target of Russia before it was occupied by Japan in 1930s.⁴⁴

During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), the Soviets deliberately tried to stay out of the conflict by signing non-aggression pacts with Hitler and Japan. Stalin supported the Chiang Government with minimum aid. Before the end of the war in 1945, however, Soviet Russia had acquired the lease of the Chinese Eastern and the Southern Manchuria Railway. The Soviet occupation of Manchuria at the end of World War II has often been criticized by observers as a stripping operation. The Pauley Commission report on "United States Relations with China" estimated that Moscow confiscated \$358 million worth of commodities, which had a replacement value of \$2 billion.⁴⁵

Although the Soviet troops finally evacuated by May, 1946 and permitted the influx of the communist force to

43. Harry Schwartz, op.cit., p.63. In 1880, Russia had a trade deficit of 23,000,000 rubles and had difficulty in competing with western goods.

44. Cheng Tien-feng, op.cit., pp. 51-89.

45. Charles B. McLane, Soviet Policy and the Chinese Communists 1931-1946; Raymond Garthoff, "Soviet intervention into Manchuria" in R. Garthoff ed., Sino-Soviet Military Relation, (Praeger, 1966), pp. 57-81.

occupy most of Manchuria, there was still a debate on how substantially Stalin supported the communist force with material aid and ammunition.⁴⁶ From the delayed evacuation and Moscow's willingness to work hand in hand with Washington and London in mediating between the Communist and the Nationalists, it seems highly possible that Stalin anticipated exploiting China's disarray and weakness. In 1947, the civil war broke out again. As the civil war was coming to an end in late 1948, indicating the gradual triumph of the communists, Stalin still suggested the communists should seek a modus vivendi with the Nationalists, who were recognized by Moscow until 1949.⁴⁷ Despite the Soviet advice, the communists were able to triumph over the Nationalists in October 1949.

Apart from Moscow's support of the Chinese communist revolution, the two communist Governments agreed to conclude a treaty of "Friendship, Alliance and Mutual assistance" in 1950. But, instead of aiding communist China to recover, Mao was forced to make some concessions. The naval base at Port Arthur and Dairen (a commercial port) remained under Soviet control until 1952. The Chinese Chanchun Railway was put under joint Sino-Soviet control. There were joint stock companies on the borders where mineral resources were drilled under the Soviet supervision.⁴⁸

⁴⁶. Ibid.

⁴⁷. C.P. Fitzgerald, Revolution in China, (London, 1952), pp.90-118.

⁴⁸. As early as 1935, the Soviets began to prospect for oil at Tu Shantze. By 1942, 35 wells have been drilled with a daily production of 67.3 tons, see Li Chang, op.cit., pp.498, 503.

In the early fifties, financial and technical support was extremely vital to the economic development of China. The Soviets' limited, and specifically the tied nature of Soviet aid, was one of the factors which contributed to the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations after 1956. The 300,000,000 rubles credit (charged with 1% interest) to China was less than the amount of credit (450,000,000 rubles) the USSR granted to Poland.⁴⁹ Although the Soviet credits became exhausted in 1957, China had to repay the debt until 1965.⁵⁰ Considering that Russia regarded China neither as a resource supplier after 1950, nor as a good trading partner, it was not surprising that strong Sino-Soviet economic bonds did not develop.⁵¹

Another factor which aroused conflict was the Great Leap Forward movement, which to Moscow, was a misguided Chinese attempt to modernize their country along a path other than that of the USSR.⁵² The Chinese model and new economic policy, which had many anti-Soviet aspects, challenged the Soviet model and Soviet advice. Perhaps, most significantly, the Chinese claimed to have found a shortcut to communism.

49. Although trade increased after 1950, the net gain by China was limited. Trade strained by mid-1950. For a detailed study, refer to Cheng Chu-yuan, Economic Relations Between Peking and Moscow 1949-1963, (Praeger, 1964), also see Tai-Sung An, op.cit., p.67.

50. Alfred D.Low, op.cit., p.59.

51. John Gittings, op.cit., pp.132-133, 162-163; Harry Schwartz, op.cit., p.158; J.V.Davidson, op.cit., pp.181-182.

52. D. Zagoria, op.cit., pp.128-139; John Gittings, op.cit., pp.93-101; Peoples Daily & Hung Ch'i, joint editorial, Sept. 6, 1963; CDSP, September, 23, 1964.

The Soviets denied that there was an easy way to communism, and attacked the whole commune plan as ideologically and economically unsound.⁵³

As China proclaimed the theory of self-reliance, the Soviets withdrew technicians and experts in July-August 1960. The result was the deterioration of relations between the two communist powers, which further exacerbated the Sino-Soviet animosity. The sudden withdrawal of Soviet advisers, (numbering 1390 specialists) and technical aid severely damaged China and disrupted the national economic plan. The result was the suspension of 343 contracts and 257 projects in which many Soviet specialists were involved.⁵⁴

One result was that after 1960, Sino-Soviet trade declined tremendously. In 1961, trade declined by over 50%.⁵⁵ From 1959-1966, the decrease of goods turnover was 85%.⁵⁶ The Sino-Soviet trade and economic relationships had indeed come to a break by 1966.

Summary

The above factors, regardless of their priority of importance in accounting for the deteriorating Sino-Soviet

53. Khrushchev's speech in Pravda, January 26, 1959. See CDSP, Sept. 23, 1964.

54. Donald Zagoria, op.cit., pp.319-342.

55. John Gittings, op.cit., p.131.

56. John Gurley, China's Economy and the Maoist Strategy, (Monthly Review Press, 1976), p.164; Mai-Ruenn Chen & Walter Galeson, The Chinese Economy Under Communism, (Chicago, 1969), p.54; Alexander Eckstein, Communist China's Economic Growth And Foreign Trade, (McGraw Hill, 1966), pp.135-182.

relations and the Sino-Soviet border disputes, are inter-related. One factor may influence the other and intensify the rift between the belligerents. Over the years, Sino-Soviet antagonism proceeded despite the change of governments in Peking and Moscow. Conflicts continued to multiply after 1949. Certainly, ideological polemics are fundamental to the Sino-Soviet schism in the fifties as well as in the sixties. Yet, this is just a new factor adding to the intensity of the Sino-Soviet animosity, and not the only factor responsible for the dispute. The fact that China appears as an independent political entity, and disregards the guidance of the Soviet Union has constituted the basic root of the unceasing disputes. It can be argued that this results from the fact that the Chinese Communists won power on their own, and never felt indebted to the USSR.⁵⁷ Yet, it is also true that the USSR has never wholeheartedly supported China.⁵⁸

In 1949, when China seemed to start a new relationship with the USSR, past problems had in fact not disappeared. Stalin may have feared that Mao would become another Tito. While he supported China in a lukewarm manner, he emphasised the importance of the Soviet model in the development of

57. Harry Schwartz, op.cit., p. 144; Cheng Tien-feng, op.cit., p.317.

58. Charles B. McLane, op.cit., pp.162-163; Alfred A.Knopf, Russia Since 1917: Four Decades of Soviet Politics, (N.Y. 1957).

China. From the very beginning, however, it can be seen that China preferred to pursue an independently designed policy to achieve socialism.

China insisted on following her own way to build up socialism and also eventually denied that only the Soviets could interpret Marxism-Leninism correctly. This infuriated the Soviets. Moscow's public hostility to China must be related to the threat that the Peking regime offered to Soviet hegemony in the international communist movement. This hostility, reflected in Sino-Soviet polemics, had undoubtedly become an independent factor in the relations between Peking and Moscow.

Recent Sino-Soviet border disputes have been characterized by growing tensions on both sides and can be related to all aspects of Sino-Soviet relations. The above study serves to summarize the thesis that manifestations of the border disputes were visible in conflict and polemics within ideological, economic, cultural, territorial and ethnic fields. Public polemics in turn exacerbated the border disputes, which became heavily imbued with nationalistic rivalries.

Physical confrontations remained a trivial factor until the mid-1960s. Then, a military build up and reinforcement of fortifications on both sides occurred. Armed clashes denoted the drastic changes on the Sino-Soviet frontiers. The actual armed clashes were, then

only the most visible aspects of a very deep seated
conflict of many aspects.

Chapter III

Military Dimensions of the Sino-Soviet Border Disputes

In addition to the politic-economic rivalry, recurring conflicts on the Sino-Soviet Asian frontier were fundamentals of the border disputes. These border conflicts often resulted in Soviet gains. The consequence of these unilateral gains was the elevation of the military tensions on both sides.¹ As the conflict was deepened by Sino-Soviet propaganda, ideological polemics and economic rivalry, tensions along the frontier grew, with both sides increasing their guards and anti-air-craft precautions. Despite the classical rivalries along the Sino-Soviet frontiers, however, it was not until 1959 that border conflicts began to acquire a serious military dimension. By the time of the Cultural Revolution, the threat of large scale warfare appeared very real.

The locations of the border disputes, as in the past, were concentrated in three significant areas: namely, Sinkiang, Mongolia and the North Eastern part of China. One observer has noted some border incidents along the Ussuri river islands as early as 1959.² There were border incidents in Kirgiziya, and Sinkiang too. At this stage, border

1. Edmund Clubb, "Armed Conflicts in the Chinese borderlands, 1917-1950" in Raymond L. Garthoff ed. Sino-Soviet Military Relations, (N.Y.: Praeger, 1966), pp. 9-44; "Military Balance", 1961-1969, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London.

2. Thomas Robinson, op.cit., p. 1177, American Political Science Review. Vol. 66, no:6, 1972.

disputes simply took the form of local clashes or unrest of the local tribes, probably encouraged by the Soviets.³

In 1959-1961, growing tensions were aroused by the programs of sinification on the one hand, and Soviet sponsorship of secessionist movements on the other hand. Minor incidents, like the intrusions in Sinkiang in 1960, and 1961, did occur from time to time. However, the number of border troops on both sides appear to have been minimal until 1962, during which fortification on Sino-Soviet frontier was enhanced. The border policies of both countries by then were becoming stricter, especially toward each other's nationals. Foreigners on the border were subjected to unusual interrogations and special surveillance.⁴

From certain political and military accounts, it is possible to detect fear on both sides. The deployment of forces is certainly one piece of good evidence of the fear of war, and security anxieties. Western accounts claim that extensive new deployment of weapons (including surface to air missiles) began in 1962.⁵

3. Tai-Sung An, op.cit. Sino-Soviet Territorial Disputes p. 73; Peoples Daily & Hung Ch'i, joint editorial, Sept. 6, 1963.

4. China established firm control over the borderlands by means of sinification, colonizations and economic development. See for example Harry Schwartz, "Chinese Migration to North-West China and Inner Mongolia, 1945-59" China Quarterly Oct./Dec. 1963, pp. 62-74. For Soviet secessionist movements, see Tai-Sung An, Ibid., pp. 72-78; Harrison Salisbury, "A Free Sinkiang Held Soviet Aim", The New York Times, March 2, 1973. p. 7.

5. William Whitson, Statement in "U.S. China Relations: A Strategy For The Future", Washington, for the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. Government Printing Offices, 1970, p.14.

While this may have been due to the Sino-Indian War, it was probably also related to the dramatic flight of 60,000 Kazakhs from China into the Soviet territory.⁶ Moreover in the Spring and Summer of 1962, there was apparently a renewal of Sino-Soviet friction in Sinkiang and along the Amur River.⁷ At the same time, Soviet rocket detachments were established in Lake Baikal.⁸

From 1963 onward, Moscow and Peking were both fortifying their frontiers. On the Soviet side, this meant expansion of ground and air forces, and pre-military training; and extensive military exercises on the Ussuri and in Sinkiang. In the mean time, the Chinese also started to push rail and road development in Sinkiang, sending troops to Ladakh (battlefield with India). All this was happening as the Sino-Soviet break manifested itself in open polemics in 1963. Border

6. For a detailed description of the Sino-Indian war, see Francis Watson, op.cit., pp.145-161; and Margaret W.Fisher, Leo E.Rose and Robert A.Huttenbork, Himalayan Battleground, Sino-Indian Rivalry in Ladakh, (London: Oxford University Press, 1964)

7. Harold Hinton, "Conflict in Ussuri: A Clash of Nationalism", Problems of Communism, Vol.XX no:1-2, 1970; William Griffith, op.cit., p.141; CDSP, Vol.XV no:36, October 6, 1963, pp.16-17, 24.

8. Sing Tao Daily, December 2, 1963, Hong Kong. 星島日報 According to Ch'i Sun, op.cit., p.71, the Chinese proposal for peace settlement in August 23, 1963 on the Ussuri frontier was ignored by the Soviets. The Chinese proposal in 1964 was again rejected when the Soviets suggested a new border, which included the disputed islands along the Ussuri in the map of the USSR. Ch'i suggested that severe border clashes began at this stage, when negotiation failed.

disputes thus began to play a more prominent role in Sino-Soviet relations. Continual Chinese charges of Soviet subversion in 1963 reflected the growing tensions along the Sino-Soviet frontiers. Specifically, the Soviets were charged with initiating clashes in Ili and Sinkiang; with falsely accusing the Chinese of persecuting minorities, and with training special intelligence units on borders.⁹ For its part, the Soviet press also recorded Chinese offenses, including illegal intrusions into Soviet territories, and violations of rules of navigation on the river.¹⁰ These actions had allegedly provoked impatient Soviet border guards into ramming the Chinese fishing boats and robbing their nets.

Another factor which may have indirectly affected Sino-Soviet border policies was the nuclear development issues. The signing of the partial test ban in 1963 (and later the Non-Proliferation Treaty) could be seen as a Soviet tactic to prevent Chinese nuclear development. China's determination to develop nuclear weapons independently may help explain China's uncompromising attitude

9. William Griffith, The Sino-Soviet Rift, (Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1964) pp.141-142, 171-172. Also see P.H.M. Jones, "Sinkiang and the Split", Far Eastern Economic Review, July 23, 1964.

10. Dontriyev Yu, "Far Eastern Notebook", CDSP, March 26, 1969; John Gittings, "The Giants Clash", Far Eastern Economic Review, March 13, 1969, pp.446-448.

toward the Soviets.¹¹ Certainly, a strong China with nuclear potential could pose a threat to the Soviet Union. When the first Chinese atomic bomb exploded in 1964, demonstrating China's nuclear expansion and military promise, the Soviet Union became more attentive to its careful border defenses. Together with the Chinese claims to territory and denunciation of Soviet aggression, a crisis situation was established. The minor border clashes which occurred in the following months of 1964 appeared to be a reflection and physical expression of mutual perceived hostility.¹²

By 1964, the Soviet response to the border situation and China's military expansion was impressive. Strategic striking forces, naval forces, and ground forces having nuclear and conventional capability were moved into the borderlands. (One of the three Soviet long range air armies permanently stationed in Far East has 200 bombers.) Soviet ground forces in the area of Vladivostok conducted maneuvers that assumed a non-nuclear Chinese invasion of the maritime provinces. These moves exacerbated Chinese fears. Peking sent substantial troops reinforcements to Sinkiang in 1964 and fortified a buffer zone along hundreds of miles of the troubled border.

11. Peking Review no. 33, Sept. 6, 1963.

12. "The Origin and Development" op. cit. pp. 6-27; William Griffith, op. cit. pp. 141-2.

In November, 1965, the Soviets were charged with harassment on the Mongolia-Chinese border.¹³ China's protests were apparently ineffective, however, as other incidents of Soviet troops crossing occurred. The Chinese called for strict surveillance of all activities on the border, and all activities aboard foreign vessels navigating the border river. In early 1966, increasing Soviet deployment of ground and air forces were again witnessed.¹⁴

The border disputes from 1962-1965, in a way, reflected the strategic security interests of the military of both nations. The regular sequence of border clashes seem to verify this. On the other hand, border disputes expressed, in physical form, reflected and prolonged Sino-Soviet conflict, and intensified rivalry and tensions on both sides. Indeed it can be argued that by the 1960s, the border disputes had acquired a ritualistic character.

Between 1964-1969, the Chinese charged the Soviets with initiating skirmishes on the border at least 5000 times. The Soviets counter-charged that the Chinese were exploiting the frontier disputes as a pretext for wars of seizure. The reliability of such claims and counterclaims is problematical. The frequency of disputes confirmed the habitual character of the disputes. But, does this mean

13. Tai-Sung An, op. cit. p. 85

14. Ibid

border disputes had no specific motives?

In 1964, the Kremlin charged that China's was deliberately provoking troubles on the Sino-Soviet border, while the Chinese responded by accusing the Soviets of imposing unequal treaties. On the one hand, this represented attempts by China to exploit the border disputes to attack the Soviets, portraying itself as the victim of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the Soviets portrayed themselves as a victim of systematic border violations which justified heavier fortifications and attempts to win over borderland minorities. For propaganda and political purposes, both China and the Soviets were willing to escalate the tensions over the border. The failure of sino-Soviet negotiations on border issues, of course, enhanced the belligerents' propaganda denouncing one another.¹⁵

Border disputes, however, were not a means to deepen the misunderstandings related to political controversies, but rather a result of the misunderstandings. Hence, they intensified the polemics which first intensified the border disputes; the border disputes there-by became a symbolic issues.

By 1966, the drastic Sino-Soviet military buildups reflected a new era of Sino-Soviet relations. Hostile mutual

15. Harold Hinton, The Bear at the Gate, American Enterprise Institute, 1971, pp.31-49; CDSP, April 12. Peking Review, March 4, 1969.

images were well developed. This was manifested not only in extensive polemics, but also in rapid fortifications along the border. It appeared that both were preparing for a possible war. The tension was great. Local clashes along the border became more frequent, and fear for a large scale war more widespread.

Militarily, the Soviet buildup on the border from 1966 onward became extensive and provocative. According to the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (1965-1966), Soviet border troops had increased from 230,000 to 250,000. By late 1967, Soviet troops on the border had been raised to 400,000, with an estimated six divisions within Mongolia. Soviet practice drills for a Chinese invasion became frequent. A Soviet-Mongolian mutual defense treaty signed in early 1966 had permitted the emplacement of Soviet missiles within Mongolia. By October, 1967, there were twelve Soviet tank divisions and thirteen rocket divisions as well as operative aircraft on the border. Furthermore, the location of Soviet missiles and rocket forces suggested the possibility of a strike against known Chinese nuclear production, all of which lay within 200-300 miles of the Soviet base.¹⁶ Western sources claimed that the Soviets had

16. N.Y. Times, March 9, 21, 1969; Soviet Union hinted use of military forces equipped with nuclear missiles. See also Red Star, August 1969, cited in Yuan-li Wu, Communist China and the World Balance of Power, (N.Y.: American Enterprise Ltd. 1971) p. 30; CDSP, September 24, 1969 pp. 1-5; Strategic Survey 1969, p. 67; Guardian October 1969 mentioned possible Soviet pre-emptive attack on Lop Nor, China's nuclear weapon centre, cited in Problems of Communism, VOL. XVIII, November-December, 1969, p. 32.

transferred special intelligence units and equipment to the border to monitor Chinese tests of missiles and nuclear warheads.¹⁷ The Soviet leaders constructed an "iron-curtain" type of barrier along the Sinkiang border, and along the Amur and Ussuri rivers where local clashes occurred frequently between border guards and local citizens. Soviet radio broadcasts regularly charged the Chinese with massacres of borderland minority groups.

This substantial preparation of the Soviet-military with superior equipment and buildup suggests serious war expectations.¹⁸ Therefore, many observers tended to argue that the border clashes amounted to preparations for a pre-emptive strike on China's nuclear installations. At minimum, it was clear that the Soviets intended to maintain their influence on the border, as reflected by developments in the Soviet Far East and the rising Soviet military budget.

On October, 1966, the Soviets, announced a rise in their military budget for 1966-1967 of 14.5 billion, which meant a 13.2% increase when compared with 1965-1966, and a

17. New York Times, January 22, 1966.

18. In fact, the Soviets had expressed their concern about the Chinese military threat and the technical and effective defense of the country as early as 1966. Tai-Sung An, op.cit; p. 89; also see H.R. Kinter & H.F. Scott, The Nuclear Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs, (U. of Okhalolma press; Norman, 1968) pp. 324-326; 374-389.

33% increase when compared with 1964-1969.¹⁹ At the same time, the Soviet government declared the construction of a "showcase city" on the Soviet frontier.²⁰ In July, 1967, the Soviet Union unveiled a nine-year economic plan to develop Siberia. (In August 1968, the Soviets announced that the Japanese would participate in this plan.)

Intensive military development on China's side was well known to the world, but the strengthening of the military on the Sino-Soviet frontier was especially clear from 1966 onward. Chinese troops on the border increased 400,000 to 600,000 by the end of 1967, and reached almost 1,000,000 by late 1968.²¹ Chen Yi reflected China's response to the Soviet military buildup by declaring on December 11, 1966 that China was ready to fight with the Soviet Union.²² The Chinese Communist Central Committee even instructed that certain military regions on the border might postpone the Cultural Revolution for the purpose of war preparedness.²³

Sensitivity of security was growing together with the tensions on border. In 1967 and 1968, China poured in

19. Tai-Sung An. op.cit., p. 86; The New York Times, December 19, 1966, p.1

20. Tai-Sung An, op.cit. pp. 86-88.

21. Japan Times Tokyo, March 19, 1967, recorded in Communist China, Union Research Institute, 1966, p. 224, U.S. News and World Report December 6, 1965, p. 44; The Military Balance, 1969-1970, London, 1970.

22. Current Background, No. 852, Mar 6, 1969.

23. Tai-Sung An op. cit. p. 119.

immigrants to Sinkiang to consolidate the "Production and the Construction Corps", which numbered about 600,000, solely for defense purposes.²⁴ In 1966, the Chinese tore up the Russian rail lines and laid their own tracks up to Dzamyn Ude (Chinese-Mongolian frontier). No more Soviet or Mongolian trains were allowed to run on Chinese territories.²⁵ The Chinese denounced the Soviets attempted subversion of national minorities, and closed the two major border crossings north of Kuldja.²⁶ Along the Ussuri, local conflicts increased as the Sino-Soviet governments failed to come to a general agreement on navigation and regulation on the border.²⁷

China's military buildup was most prominent in the northeastern frontier, where local clashes became a common phenomenon.²⁸ As of 1966 about 400,000 Chinese troops were stationed on the Sino-Soviet frontier.²⁹ These were increased to a million in 1968. As part of this buildup, the Chinese held a series of political frontier defense conferences to review past efforts and to 'exchange experiences' gained in building frontier defenses.

24. See George Mosley, A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1966); The N.Y. Times, March 16, 1966, p.8.

25. Harrision Salisbury, op.cit., pp.151-153.

26. John Gittings, op.cit., Far Eastern Economic Review, p.447.

27. Ibid. See also detailed discussion in chapter V.

28. The N.Y. Times, January 24, 1969.

29. See Map II. For example, this compares to 500,000 in Fukien front, 300,000 in the Sino-Indian border and 400,000 in the Sino-Vietnamese border areas.

By late 1968, the border was fortified by almost a million troops supplemented by the production corps. This major change was related first to security on the border, but was also related to internal chaos that led to military intervention. For instances, the upheavals in inner Mongolia had resulted in the purge of the Mongol boss, Ulanfu, in August 1968.³⁰ As a dramatic demonstration of Soviet willingness to use force against fraternal allies, the Czechoslovakian invasion of 1968 added to the already highly charged atmosphere.

The tensions were further intensified by Chinese nuclear tests conducted from time to time between 1966-1969. Moreover, in 1967, China boasted that they had successfully exploded a hydrogen bomb.³¹ China's nuclear development was obviously a means to deter the increasingly menacing Soviet threat, but may also have provoked Soviet insecurity anxieties.

But the disorders in certain border areas, such as Inner Mongolia, had also undoubtedly aroused a fears that anarchy might invite a foreign attack. Border tensions during this period therefore, were related to Chinese anxieties aroused by the problem of local nationalism and the reestablishment of central control over the periphery.

Thus, by 1969, both parties were on guard for a war

30. June Dryer, "Inner Mongolia: Purge of Ulanfu", Current Scene, Nov. 15, 1968, pp.1-13.

31. Communist China, (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1966), pp.70-72.

which seemed inevitable. The prolonged military preparations on the Sino-Soviet frontier added to their long term dissonance. In addition to some international events which probably intensified border clashes (which eventually culminated in the Chenpao incident of 1969),³² various significant factors affecting the series of border incidents from 1966-1969 also deserve our attention. These factors include the Cultural Revolution, the Vietnam War, the improving Sino-American relationships, and the dramatic Czech Invasion. But before we look more closely at these events, an analysis of the changing nature of the border disputes will help to show why the connection between the border disputes and the Cultural Revolution must be explored.

32. See for example, Neville Maxwell, "The Chinese Account of the 1969 Fighting at Chenpao" China Quarterly, No:56, Oct-Dec. 1973.



Chapter IV

The Changing Nature of the Border Disputes

Four distinct periods may be discerned in the Sino-Soviet border disputes since 1949. While there were ideological, economic, territorial and cultural factors underlying the border disputes at all times, different factors were prominent in the different periods. Between 1949 and 1958, border disputes were basically related to the Chinese territorial claims. Between 1959 and 1963, political, economic and territorial interests were important. 1964 and 1965 were comparatively quiet years, a transitional period in which the belligerents, attempted, but failed to negotiate successfully on the border disputes. The fourth period, 1966-1969 was characterized by an intensification of the border disputes and a shift from an ideological and political orientation to a military form. Varied motives of both parties on the border appear to be associated with the different phases. In this chapter, I will attempt to identify the factors which distinguish each phase in an effort to clarify continuities and changes in the sources and functions of the border disputes.

A. 1949-1958

From 1949-1958, the Sino-Soviet border disputes basically centered around the Chinese claims of loss territories. There were some minorities' rebellions and some minor conflicts over the fishing and the navigation

rights on the Ussuri river. The fact that disputes over the confluence of the river continued from the past into the present can be taken as illustrating the belligerents' apathetic attitude toward the borderlands.¹ This probably was due to the close economic and ideological ties between the two communist powers which were developing at that time. Until 1959, Sino-Soviet relations seemed intimate. The distinctive adversary of China in this period was the United States. In the late fifties, territorial aspects of the border disputes may have begun to be obscured by rivalries over ideological and economic approaches. Nonetheless, unresolved Chinese territorial claims were in fact, the fundamental issue in the fifties.

In 1951 and 1957, the Sino-Soviet governments were able to agree on regulations for the Ussuri. The treaties signed in 1951 and 1957 concerning the problem of navigation appear to have been strictly followed by both Peking and Moscow.

Peking claims to China's lost territories were the prominent aspect of the border disputes in the 1950s. Territorial integrity was one of the major goals of the Chinese communists. It had been a national goal before the liberation

1. Local clashes were common, but nothing was done to solve the problem. See George Ginsburg, "The Dynamics of the Sino-Soviet Dispute: The Case of the River Islands", in Jerome Cohen, The Dynamics of China's Foreign Relations, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard East Asian Monograph, 1970); also see John Gittings, op.cit., Far Eastern Economic Review, p.446.

2. Ishwer Ojha, Chinese Foreign Policy in an age of Transition: The Diplomacy of Cultural Despair, (Boston: Beacon Press 1969), p. 148.

and again in 1955, Peking's announcement that "all past treaties should be re-examined", certainly included the "unequal treaties" that had historically cost China a considerable loss of territory to Russia. Formal requests made by Chinese leaders to Khrushchev were echoed in the Chinese press, and encouraged by official Chinese maps which showed an "adjusted" border very different from the de facto one.

From 1956 to 1958, growing discord over ideological divergence and paths to socialism added tension to Sino-Soviet relations. This increased mutual hostility was not immediately reflected at the borders, however. In fact, there was only minor deployment of troops on the border and rarely any reports of direct conflict or military confrontations between PLA and the Soviet troops. But in the second phase (1959-1963) drastic changes took place.

B. 1959-1963

In this period, the Sino-Soviet border disputes became much more than a territorial problem. Ideological polemics and economic factors became involved. This period also witnessed the open diplomatic break between the two countries and the Chinese open denunciation of the Czarist occupation of China's territories. This new phase brought the belligerents' attention to the security of the mutual borders. It also appears that border issues were becoming to some extent symbolic issues which both parties use to manufacture tensions. Border disputes thus became a much more

salient feature of Sino-Soviet relations.

China's decision to pursue its own ideological and economic strategy independently from Moscow's influence (whether or not this amount to an attack on Soviet hegemony of the communist camp) resulted in increasing polemics over Marxist-Leninist strategy. It was perhaps understandable that unresolved territorial disputes would become involved as an issue in these polemics.³ Moreover, the border disputes became more serious and more frequent clashes occurred as the Sino-Soviet "split" widened.

The belligerents did attempt to ease their differences on ideology. Several attempts at reconciliation were made: for instance, Chou's proposal in 1961, the proposals by both parties to stop polemics in 1962, and the conciliatory exchange of letters and proposals in 1963. However, no agreements were reached.⁴

Confrontation and not negotiation was the situation on the borders in this period. Disagreements, controversy, and reported border violations increased. Chen Yi, the foreign minister of China mentioned that the number of border incidents from 1960-1965 was about 5000 initiated by the Soviets alone.⁵ These clashes were

3. "Origin of the Differences" op.cit., pp.6-27.

4. Chou's complaint that "We hold that if a dispute or difference unfortunately arises between fraternal parties... it should be resolved patiently in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and on the principle of equality," may indicate the Chinese were insisting on equal status with the USSR. On territorial issues, this may have meant the Chinese were refusing any compromise short of total reversal of the old unequal treaties. See Peking-Review, April 30, 1969.

5. John Gittings, op.cit., p.160.

probably best represented by the large scale subversive activities in Sinkiang, where Moslem rebellions became frequent. Moscow was accused by Peking as the instigator behind the border tensions. The clashes occurred mainly from 1961 to 1963 in Sinkiang, and according to the Chinese, were initiated by the Soviets.

Yet during roughly the same period, from 1959-1963, China had improved relations with some of her boundary states, particularly Burma, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Outstanding border disputes were settled with Burma in a treaty of June 28, 1960. Soon afterwards, a similar settlement was made with Nepal, which included China's promise of economic aid and a mutual non-aggression pact. In August 1960, a Sino-Afghan treaty was signed, represented closer relations between these two countries. Although there had been minor conflicts between Pakistan and the Chinese government, both eventually agreed to negotiate⁶ by 1962.

The border areas provided a physical setting for manifestations of Sino-Soviet hostility. While the frequency and intensity of actual border clashes increased from 1959-1963, it also was becoming more and more difficult

6. Francis Watson, op.cit., pp.131-138.

to indentify relative importance of the various possible contributing causes and factors. Just because ideological polemics intensified at the same time does not establish the fact that ideological rivalries caused the border clashes. Underlying territorial irredentist claims may be the basic cause which encourages border conflict. But it is also apparent that hostility due to perceived threats, disillusionment, anger, rivalry, suspicion and insecurity can be viewed as the "cause" of both polemics and border clashes. At any rate, by 1963, both China and the Soviet Union began to take steps to improve their border defenses and were physically reinforcing their troops on the border.

C. 1964-1965

From 1964 to 1965, the borderlands on both sides were characterized by the reinforcing of defenses and implementation of special surveillance policies. There was a last attempt in 1964 to mediate Sino-Soviet differences, which failed.⁷

Although there were some minor border clashes and mounted tensions, both Peking and Moscow were extraordinarily quiet. Both may have been contemplating what steps to take in the coming years. This period may be considered as a transitional period, an unusual tranquility before the hurricane.

7. John Gittings, op.cit., pp.169-173; also see Tass International Service, "Khrushchev's message to the other heads of states regarding the settlement of territorial disputes", January 3, 1964, and Letter of CCP to CPSUCC, February 29, 1964, Peking Review, May 8, 1964.

These two years saw extreme hostility develop between China and the USSR. China had explicitly labelled the Soviets as modern revisionists, while Moscow reproached the Chinese for their schismatic activities within the international communist movement. The growing hostility between Peking and Moscow also influenced their reactions to the Vietnam War. China had refused a Soviet request to station part of its army in the southern part of China. In return, Moscow accused China of not cooperating with her in the transportation of supplies to North Vietnam.

In 1965, the Chinese leaders made their first protest against Soviet harassment on the Chinese borderlands in Mongolia, in April and December of that year. There may have been a Chinese motive to portray herself as the victim and thereby exploit the border incidents, in order to gain the support of the third world countries. If the Soviets did initiate these border clashes, they might have been aimed at intimidating or testing China.

D. 1966-1969

In the midst of the Cultural Revolution, clashes on the border occurred mainly along the Ussuri River, and various areas in Sinkiang. Along the Ussuri, both Soviet and Chinese sources recorded the hostile attitude of both

sides in treating the fishing disputes.⁸ As psychological and physical pressures heightened, local war scares entered into a more serious stage. There was the unusual deployment of huge forces, and modern equipment including nuclear weapons. As a result, the feeling of the inevitability of war became prevalent.

Two very serious incidents occurred in 1967: one in January in Amur, and one in December on the Ussuri. The Soviet border guards had cleared away shelters built by the Chinese squatters on some disputed islands along the Ussuri. Sometimes, the fishing nets of the Chinese fishermen were robbed by the Soviet guards. On several occasions, the Soviet border guards encroached upon Chenpao, wounding Chinese frontier guards who were on normal duty, and looting arms and ammunition.⁹ When tension grew, the Soviets even sent their navy to some of the tributaries of the Ussuri to stop and investigate any navigating Chinese vessels. Some of the Chinese crews on board were physically attacked. Indeed, the Soviets aimed to prevent the Chinese, both

8. China noted: "When fish are being caught on the disputed islands of the Amur and the Ussuri, the Soviet border guards often demanded our fishermen leave these islands." See George Ginsburg, op.cit., pp. 3, 53; Eastern Horizon. Hong Kong, 1967.

9. John Gittings, op.cit., Far Eastern Economic Review. Vol. LXIII, no. 11, March 13, 1969, pp. 433-444.

10. Ch'i Sun, op.cit., p. 73.

civilian and military from existing on the disputed islands.¹¹

In January 1968, the Chinese charged the Soviet Union with intruding into the districts around the Chenpao. This again happened in September and in January 1969.

The testimony of local Chinese commanders claims that the Soviet border guards were the aggressors, executing a well-planned armed invasion of one disputed island, whereas the Chinese forces were under instructions not to fight back, although they were to resist being forced off the river.¹²

The Soviet soldiers, complete with armored and command cars, invaded the island of Chenpao. After about an hour and a quarter fight, the Chinese triumphed with a score of killing and wounding about 70 Russians.¹³

On the other hand, the Soviets claimed that the Chinese had initiated the intrusion, which was extremely well planned.¹⁴

11. John Gittings, op.cit. Far Eastern Economic Review. There were altogether 16 incidents in 1967, compared to 18 in 1968. Raillines were built between China and the Soviet military base. See Thomas Robinson, op.cit. American Political Science Review, Vol. 66, no: 6, Dec., 1972. It was also recorded in 1966, 200,000 moslems fled from Sinkiang to Soviet territory, see Evening Bulletin, Philadelphia, January 31, 1967, p. 18.

12. Neville Maxwell, op.cit.

13. Peking Review, March 4, 1969.

14. Soviet government statement of March 29, 1969; Soviet News, April 1; CDSP, April 12, March 26, 1969.

About 300 Chinese troop, dresses in white camouflage, crossed the ice from the Chinese bank to Damansky Island, dug fox holes in a wooden area and laid telephone wire to the command post on the China bank.¹⁵

These men hid until the morning, and appearing before the Soviet guards, suddenly opened fire on Soviet groups. The Chinese were using machine guns and automatic rifles.

Both Chinese and Soviet reports acknowledge that the March 14 and 15 incidents were also intense.¹⁶ Chinese claimed victory on both occasions, despite Soviet artillery bombardment and large number of soldiers up to 3,000. A notable amount of tanks and armoured cars were also employed in the fights.¹⁷ Heavy Chinese casualties numbering about 800 were claimed by the Soviets. Some western observers concluded that the Soviet campaign was revengeful and deliberate, with the employment of much greater forces.¹⁸ Both the Chinese and Soviet sources suggest that the border clashes were indeed severe.

The clashes did not stop after March 15, but continued in different areas, until August 13. Although proposals of peace were made by the Soviets on March 20, clashes went on. In May, there were four incidents in Amur and two in Sinkiang. The war preparedness campaign which began in China in April 1969,

15. Ibid., Soviet government statement.

16. Thomas Robinson, op.cit. American Political Science Review, p. 1198; Communist China, Union Research Institute, Hong Kong, 1969, pp. 129-133.

17. Ibid.

18. Thomas Robinson, op.cit., p. 1189.

reflected these tensions.¹⁹

The disposition of forces still continued, but after the talk between Chou En-lai and Kosygin in September, the border became quiet.²⁰ What accounts for this increase in scale of conflict during the Cultural Revolution? For one thing, it could be argued that the Cultural Revolution's anti-Soviet character and its emphasis on self defense and war preparation were reflected in Chinese belligerence and aggressiveness on the borders. Anti-Soviet demonstrations on the Sino-Soviet border could certainly be expected to provoke Soviet reactions. At the least, the more anti-Soviet atmosphere in China would have contributed to tension in a way that could encourage provocations and incidents.²¹

It must also be noted that intensification of the border disputes during the Cultural Revolution may have been related to Soviet-American detente—or the lack of it—and what may have been maturing Chinese plans to seek a rapprochement with the United States.

It is possible some of the border incidents during this period represented Soviet attempts to take advantage

19. It should be noted that war preparation may also have been used to cover up current economic difficulties in China. Stockpiles of grains and grainaries were built. See NCNA July 13, 1969.

20. Peking Review, October 10, 1969, pp. 3-4; N.Y. Times May 21, 1971, p. 10; New Republic March 20, 1971.

21. Several border disputes in 1967 and 1968, for instance, appeared to come at a time intentionally coordinated with aspects of the Cultural Revolution when Soviet revisionism was denounced.

of Chinese political weakness. To some extent, Soviet military activities may have represented "sabre ratling" to intimidate the Chinese, particularly after the Czechoslovakia invasion of 1968. The Chinese may have genuinely feared a Soviet surprise attack.

In late 1968, the Soviet leaders may have wanted to delay China's recovery from the Cultural Revolution, through these disputes, and forced China to pay extra attention to defense.²² In addition to political motives which may have been behind the border disputes, the growing fear of war also played a prominent role in this period. In other words, a conflict situation with a certain self-sustaining dynamic was at work. Once the border areas had become the scene of actual physical confrontations, insecurity may have demanded shows of forces on both sides, resulting in a dangerous escalation.

The difference, then, between the border clashes before and after 1966 was that in the first period, border clashes reflected border disputes; while in the second period, border clashes reflected much more. It seems fair to say that both sides exploited the disputes for various purposes. The clashes after 1966, however, were really related more closely to military moves of the hostile belligerents. The creation of a war scare along the border jeopardized the security of both sides and they both felt threatened.

22. Tai Sung An, op.cit., p. 98.

E. 1970 to the Present

To identify the distinctiveness of the period from 1966-1969, a brief description of the border scene after the Cultural Revolution is important. Border disputes did not end with the Cultural Revolution, although the Sino-Soviet border has been much quieter. Outbreaks of large scale border clashes have not been reported.

After the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese emphasis on the need of greater unity, of tighter communist discipline, and increasing production,²³ echoed the war preparation campaign,²⁴ which had begun in the autumn of 1969. In fact, explicit preparedness was reintensified in 1970 and 1971.²⁵ In 1972 and 1973, Mao declared the need to "Dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere" for possible war.²⁶ Air raid shelters and underground defense systems were constructed.²⁷ It was reported in 1973 the Chinese began to deploy their new 3500-mile missiles, capable of hitting Moscow.²⁸ Since 1974, however, there has been very little attention paid publicly to war preparations.

Abroad, the Chinese "Ping-Pong" diplomacy which heralded a new relationship with Washington appeared to be provocative

23. Peking Review, Oct. 3, 1969; Peoples Daily, Jan. 1, 1970.

24. Harold Hinton, op.cit., pp. 58-59; N.Y. Times, Nov. 21, 1969.

25. Ibid.

26. Michael Chinoy, "The Tunnels of Manchuria" Nation Vol. 217, Dec. 17, 1973, pp. 652-653.

27. Ibid.

28. U.S. News and World Reports, Aug. 23, 1973, pp. 32-33.

to the Soviet Union, who accused Peking of collusion with the United States.²⁹ China's entrance into the United Nations in late 1971 had helped to establish good relations between China and more than 70 states by 1972.

Western reports claim that the Soviets did not in any way relax. Border troops were kept on alert in 1974, and the 48 divisions and 1200 war planes deployed along the border were retained.³⁰ In 1975, the Soviet construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline of 2000 miles were considered as evidence of Moscow's intention to strengthen its position vis-a-vis China.

In the post Cultural Revolution period, both sides refused to disengage forces on the frontier. No fruitful negotiation has proved possible. Local nuclear deterrence may be preventing large scale war, while the build up of border defenses appeared to have effectively inhibited local clashes and armed incidents.

29. Peking had, as early as late 1969, proposed resumption of Sino-American ambassadorial talks. In July, 1971, President Nixon was invited to visit China. See Issues in U.S. Foreign Policy, no: 4, Department of Publication 8666, October, 1972, p. 31; and N.Y. Times July 22, Dec. 20, 1969; July 30, 1971, p. 7.

30. Harry Schwartz, "The Moscow-Peking-Washington Triangle", American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 414, July, 1974, pp. 41-50.

Conclusion

The coincidence of the Cultural Revolution with the most intense and dangerous phase of the border conflict strongly suggested a connection with the domestic Chinese political aspirations and the border events. In the next chapter, I will attempt to establish to what extent this obvious relationship is, or is not true.

Chapter V

The Impact of the Cultural Revolution upon the Border Disputes

In the previous chapters, we have discussed the military dimensions and the changing nature of the border disputes which have led us to a deeper analysis of the reasons for the aggravation of the border tensions, particularly during the period from 1966 to 1969, years that the Chinese Cultural Revolution was underway. As the modulation of the border disputes has clearly shown, it seems logical to raise the question of how the Cultural Revolution may explain the rising tensions on the borderland. In this chapter, we will be looking into specific and significant aspects of the Cultural Revolution period, such as the anti-Soviet campaign and the fanatic red guards movement, to attempt to establish to what extent these were related to the increasing number of border clashes which ultimately culminated in the Chenpao conflicts of March 1969.

A clear concept of the character and course of the Cultural Revolution is necessary before any satisfactory answers to the above question can be given. The author will discuss the Cultural Revolution in brief, its distinctive phases and aspects, and ask why this internal event may have exacerbated external disputes. In addition, the post Cultural Revolution period and the persistence of border tensions will also be discussed.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China was officially proclaimed in 1966 and lasted approximately

for three years. Many of the features of the Cultural Revolution such as its mass campaigns, army intervention, and ideological or political debates had historic parallels. Yet there's no doubt that the Cultural Revolution, taken as a whole, constituted a unique phenomenon in Chinese history. In many ways, it appears to have been a confrontation between the necessity of centralism for national planning and development, and Mao's theory of the necessity of mass participation in socialist revolution. It was described by Mao as a necessary struggle against revisionism and capitalism in China.¹

In the 1966 issue of Communist China, Chin Szu-kai described the Cultural Revolution as a power struggle with two factions fighting for supremacy.² SzeMa Cheng-feng agrees that the Cultural Revolution was a power struggle, representing Mao's come-back after several falls from power.³

The Cultural Revolution has also been described as a political crisis of generations, policy, and leadership in which the party apparatus was attacked and destroyed by the

1. Mao commented that "in the present stage of the great Cultural Revolution, the principal contradiction is... on the one hand the broad masses... and on the other hand, you, the handful of anti-party and anti-socialist representatives of the bourgeoisie." See Army Liberation Daily, June 6, 1966; also see Hung Ch'i, no: 8 1966, p. 10.

2. Chin Szu-kai, "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" Communist China, Vol. 2 1966, pp. 87-117; Thomas Robinson, Cultural Revolution in China, op.cit.

3. SzeMa Cheng-feng, Cultural Revolution, (Chinese edition, Hong Kong, 1972). 文革始末.

radical groups under Mao and Chiang Ch'ing.⁴ One of the official publications noted the necessity to

consolidate our might to attack the faction of the party leaders who followed the capitalist line; this is the main direction of our struggle.⁵

Indeed, the objective of the Cultural Revolution, as noted in a significant document, was to reorganize the party by

overthrowing those persons in authority taking the capitalist road, to criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois academic authorities and the ideology of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes.⁶

The Cultural Revolution may also have served to demonstrate Peking's discontent with the Soviet Union. Ishwer Ojha has argued that Mao launched the Cultural Revolution as an attack on a group of leaders ready to improve relations with the USSR.⁷ Some have also suggested that the Cultural Revolution was related to Sino-Soviet relations in terms of the American intervention into Vietnam and the Sino-Soviet disputes.⁸

4. Hung Ch'i, no:15 1966, pp. 14-16.

5. Hung Ch'i, no:12 Sept. 11, 1966.

6. Peoples Daily, August 13, 1966. (The 16 Points); see also Hung Ch'i, no:4, Oct. 14, 1968; Harry Harding, "Maoist Theories of Policy Making and Organization", Thomas Robinson, Cultural Revolution in China, op.cit., pp. 113-164.

7. Ishwer Ojha, Chinese Foreign Policy In An Age Of Transition, (Boston: Beacon Press 1967).

8. See for example Harold Hinton, An Introduction To Chinese Politics, (NY: Praeger 1973), p. 59, J.H. Brimmell, "The GPCR And Its Implication For China's Foreign Policy", Australian Outlook, Dec. 1967, pp. 315-331.

Anti-Soviet features of the Cultural Revolution included demonstrations and mass media attacks on the Soviet leadership and Soviet government policies. Byung-jeon Ahn has suggested that the timing of the Cultural Revolution seemed to be related to external politics, an example of "linkage politics".⁹ During the Vietnam War, which actually intensified on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, Chinese purges of pro-Soviet revisionists accompanied the rejection of Soviet proposals for joint action.

Certainly, the literature concerning the Cultural Revolution is prolific and we are not able to cover it all. But, at least, we are sure that the Cultural Revolution was not only an attempt to rectify the thinking of the entire nation, an attempt to transform backward relations of production by putting the Chinese nation on a course of ideological development fundamental to, and consistent with socialist construction and consolidation in China,¹⁰ but also a campaign, to certain extent, related to foreign policies. In identifying this possible link, I would like first to explore the major aspects and phases of the Cultural Revolution.

9. See Byung-jeon Ahn, China Politics and the Cultural Revolution, (University of Washington Press, 1976), pp. 185-186.

10. See for instances, Alan P.L. Liu, "Mass Campaign and Political Development in China", Current Scene, Vol. XI no: 8, 1973.

Prelude to the Cultural Revolution

The period preceding the authorization of the Cultural Revolution has significant implications for the succeeding periods. Internally, the Socialist Education Campaign¹¹ was launched in the early sixties to remold the ideological outlooks of cadres, people, officials, and to reorganize the party. It has been argued that opposition of the "moderates" led Mao to initiate the Cultural Revolution.¹² Mao claimed:

Some leading cadres have enforced a bourgeois dictatorship and struck down the surging movement of the GPCR....; viewed in connection with the rightist tendency of 1962 and the erroneous tendency of 1964 which was left in form and right in essence, shouldn't this prompt one to deep thought? 13

The Cultural Revolution gathered its momentum when a rectification campaign was launched in October of 1965. Several incidents have characterized this period. Wu Han's play "Hui Jui Dismissed From Offices" was the first target.¹⁴ The next move was to attack the "Three Families Village", which was a series of articles written by Wu Han, Teng To, and Liao Mo-sha. Then Mao, with the assistance of Lin Piao,

11. See the excellent accounts of the movement recorded in Richard Baum, Prelude to Revolution 1962-1966, (New York; Columbia University, 1975).

12. Ibid., the moderates were said to be violating Mao's directives. See Ssu Ch'ing, op.cit.

13. Study "Bombard the Headquarters" in SCMP 3997, cited in R. Baum, op.cit.

14. Byung-jeon Ahn, op. cit., pp. 68-74, 193-202; Ting Wang, "Wu Han and the incident of Hai Jui Dismissed From Offices" in Chung Kung, no: 4, Hong Kong, 1969; Hung Ch'i no: 9 May 17, 1969.

Chen Po-ta, Chiang Ch'ing and Kang Sang, purged the mayor of Peking, P'eng Chen, who was charged with "defending some anti-socialist and anti-Maoist elements."¹⁵

Up to this stage, the effect of these incidents on the "revisionist" elements represented by Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-ping seemed minimal. Work teams were sent out on their initiative to organize counter attacks against Mao's campaign. Obviously, Liu and Teng were fighting back, defending the party establishment.¹⁶ But in July 1966, Mao returned to Peking and enlisted the explosive red guard movement in his assault on Liu and Teng, encouraging the guards to "bombard the headquarters" because "to rebel is justified".

At this stage, an internal dispute between the interventionists and the non-interventionists on the topic of joint effort within the Soviet Union, may have given Mao the thought that he could help achieve external and internal goals by launching an attack on his enemies at home. As the Chinese refusal to act jointly with the USSR in Vietnam coincided with the attack on Wu Han and the purge of the PLA chief of staff, Lo Jui-ch'ing, it should be safe to assume that the Cultural Revolution was influenced by the escalation of the Vietnam War.¹⁷ Thus, the first phase

15. Richard Baum, op. cit., p.149.

16. Later they were charged with sending the work teams to the countryside to suppress the Cultural Revolution. They were charged with being left in form and right in essence. See Hung Ch'i, no: 5 April 1967, Decision of the Central Committee", Article VII.

17. A thorough description of the Vietnam War and its relation to the Sino-Soviet disputes is presented in the following chapter.

of the Cultural Revolution was characterized not only by internal confusion, but also by disputes over foreign policy which involved pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet elements in China.

Inauguration of the Cultural Revolution

This period extend from August to December of 1966, during which the campaign spread from Peking to the provinces. The purges of Liu-Teng and some prominent leaders, the fanatic red guards movement¹⁸ and the anti-foreign campaign which extended into the borderland, were characteristics of this stage.

As Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-ping were descending within the politburo, some other leaders also experienced purges. Lu Ting-yi, the party propaganda director was first purged. Attacks on the foreign minister, Chen Yi, followed in October. In November, the first secretary of Central Southern Bureau, Tao Chu, was also criticized. Then in December, Liu made his public confession that he was guilty of committing "conspiracy" with the work team incidents in June and July.

This series of incidents inspired by Mao and the Cultural Revolution Group eventually eliminated Mao's opponents.¹⁹ By the end of 1966, Mao was able to remove or curb most of his major antagonists.²⁰

18. For a description of the red guard movement, see G.Benton & Mcollitti, Party Army and Masses in China, (London: NLB, Altantic Highlands:Humanists Press, 1976), pp.104-119. Also see John Israel, "The Red Guards in Historical Perspective", China Quarterly, no:30, 1967, pp.1-33.

19. Byung-jeon Ahn, op.cit., pp.139-140, 204-228; also Current Scene, editorial, Vol.VI no:13, 1968, pp.1-15.

20. Mao's plan was so well planned that he was able to gain control of the army, publications, the mass media and public opinion.

Initially, it was the red guards who dominated the Cultural Revolution. As the work teams were recalled²¹ and the red guards were allowed to travel through the country to exchange experiences in 1966, their power enhanced.²² Poster campaigns, meetings, marches, huge demonstrations and riots were going on under the slogans of "destroying the four olds" and "anti-revisionism". Mao encouraged them to "rectify" the small groups of power holders who were "counter-revolutionary" or "pursuing the capitalist road" (understood as the moderates who resisted Mao's pre-eminence.) Despite the fact that disorder was encouraged when all schools were closed, the Red Guards' activities were limited. They were encouraged to "grasp revolution, but promote production at the same time." The red guards, however, were responsible for the anti-foreign campaign²³ which strained Peking's relations with many countries.

From August 1966 onward, anti-foreignism became popular especially among the Red Guard activists. Gradually, the Soviet Union became the major target. Red Guard violence was witnessed before the Soviet Embassy in Peking. All-day demonstrations were held to attack "Soviet revisionism," which was supported by the persistent official attack on the Soviets. On the border, large demonstrations with over a million participants took place in Manchuria, as well as in

21. Byung-jeon Ahn, op.cit., p. 222, also see story in Ming Pao Monthly, January 1976, Hong Kong.

22. As early as August 25, workers, peasants, and army were asked to support the red guards; eight rallies were held between August and November, see Peking Review Aug. 26, 1966.

23. The Great Power Struggle in China, Union Research Institute, (Hong Kong:URI, 1966), pp. 34-40.

places like Sinkiang and the Amur frontier, to demand the Soviet return of Chinese lost territories. This anti-Soviet campaign became more intense in the coming year.

The High Tide

The first six months of 1967 was the most intense period of the Cultural Revolution. The leftist decision to seize power encountered difficulties, as the moderates attempted to maintain their position, which eventually resulted in the intervention of the PLA. Red Guards and revolutionary rebels played a prominent role not only because of their involvement in the seizure of power, but also the factional strife between them. Anti-Soviet hysteria did not stop but aggravated during this period. Hence, a picture of internal chaos and eventually direct hostility emerges.

Mao's seizure of power in January 1967 has been called "the January Revolution".²⁴ A major victory occurred in January 1967 in Shanghai, where the revolutionary left succeeded in gaining power. This immediately posed a threat to party hierarchs elsewhere.²⁵ Prominent party leaders were charged with "economism" and resistance to the policies of the Cultural Revolution.²⁶ T'an Chen-lin was identified as the instigator of the "February Adverse Current", apparently a moderate group which fought the power seizure by the

24. See for example, Peking Review, no: 8 February 23, 1968.

25. Peking Review, no:4, January 20, 1967.

26. People Daily and Hung Ch'i joint editorial, January 11, 1967; also see the The Great Power Struggle, op. cit., pp. 74-81.

leftists.²⁷ He allegedly attacked the Cultural Revolution Group for wrongly branding old cadres as rightists, and spoke on behalf of Liu Shao-ch'i, expressing the fear of certain leading authorities who thought their positions were vulnerable.²⁸ In the meantime. Mao ordered that three-way alliances, made up of the revolutionary masses, the revolutionary leading cadres and the PLA be formed to seize effective power from local government and party bodies.²⁹ The fact that only a few revolutionary committees were apparently established after the order was given reflected the internal disorder which must have prevailed.

The attempt to use the PLA as an ally in persecution of the "revisionists" was, however, only partially successful. Despite Mao's support among the central military commanders, regional military chiefs were not all eager to aid local leftists oust established political leaders. Some even formed their own red guards units to contain the radicals, or acted to repress Mao's supporters.³⁰ Accordingly, a purge of sorts was launched within the PLA in May 1967.

During this period of internal disruption, anti-Soviet behavior persisted. In fact, the zenith of Peking's anti-Soviet

27. Ibid., p. 163, it has been reported that a counter-revolution coup was held in Tsinghai, but failed. See also pp. 133-134.

28. The Great Power Struggle, op.cit., pp. 164-165.

29. Peking Review, no: 12 March 17, 1967.

30. As most observers agreed, the PLA was in fact supporting the "rightists" and suppressing the left. This was because the regional commanders wanted to maintain their position. See Alan P. L. Liu, Political Culture and Group Conflict in Communist China, (Celio Books, England, 1975).

campaign was also reached in this stage. The Red Guards continued to denounce the Soviet Union as revisionists and provoked incidents on the borders as well as at the Chinese Embassy in Moscow and the Soviet Embassy in Peking.

Formation of the Revolutionary Committees July 1967 - Sept. 1968

The Cultural Revolution entered into a third stage when Mao officially instructed the PLA to intervene and restore order on July 3, a process of consolidation under Mao's titular leadership which may be dated from July 1967 to September 1968. This did not mean Mao and the radicals had won, for the army came into a direct confrontation with the Red guards and the revolutionary left. This eventually resulted in the Wu Han Incident in July. On July 20, Wang Li and Hsieh Fu-chih, who had been sent by the Central Cultural Revolution Group to investigate counter revolutionary activities in Wuhan, were kidnapped by Ch'en Tsai-tao, the army chief of staff of Wuhan.³¹ Thus, army dissatisfaction with revolutionary leftism was revealed.

In the several months that followed, the rivalries between the revolutionary left and the army continued. This appears mainly due to the leftist attacks on certain military leaders.³² In an obvious compromise, some ultra leftists like

31. The Great Power Struggle, op. cit., p. 131

32. The leftist action to launch an attack on the army was put forth by Chiang Ch'ing, under the slogan of "drag out the small handful of capitalist roaders in the army". The fact that the extreme leftists were purged and the PLA was given orders to halt all violence probably reflected the rising importance of the regional commanders in the face of growing internal chaos. See for example, Barry Burton, "The Cultural Revolution's ultra-leftist Conspiracy—The May 16 Group" Asian Survey, November 11, 1971.

Wang Li, Kuan Feng and Ch'i Peng yu,³³ core members of the May 16 corps³⁴ were purged, and a campaign to support the army was launched in January 1968. Although the PLA encountered some violent red guard responses, the establishment of the revolutionary committees in various provinces accelerated.³⁵ In September, violence subsided as the red guards were dispatched to the country-side. Revolutionary committees were set up in every province and normalcy gradually returned.

Therefore, this period was ended with the strengthening of the regional military leadership. The three-in-one combination soon lost its meaning, and the army's role enlarged. This is attested by the army domination of the civilian and the leftists in the new revolutionary committees.³⁶

From July 1967 to September 1968, the anti-Soviet movement was comparatively reduced and became more or less insignificant. Although there were some border disputes in 1967 and 1968, anti-Soviet activities of the red guards as well as official attacks in the mass media apparently reduced.³⁷

33. Ibid., p.1047.

34. Ibid.

35. Jurgen Domes, "The role of the military in the formation of the revolutionary committees of 1967-1968", China Quarterly, Oct-Dec., 1970; also see Ming Pao Monthly no:56, 1970, Hong Kong, pp.38-44.

36. Ibid. Also see Elias Joffe, "The Chinese Army in the Cultural Revolution: The Politics of Intervention", Current Scene, Vol.VIII no:18, 1970

37. See Liao Kuang-sheng, op.cit.

The Chinese press did respond with extreme concern to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968,³⁹ and apprehensive protests were raised about Soviet military activities near the border immediately afterwards.⁴⁰

Final Phase

The Cultural Revolution entered into its final stage in October 1968, a period dating from the declaration of victory in the Cultural Revolution,⁴¹ and the convening of the Twelfth Central Committee Plenum in October 1968, to the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969. Efforts to rebuild party rule and restore general normalcy began. Schools were reopened with the party's urge that youth pay attention to production instead of revolution. Discontent among the red guards was handled by eliminating their radical leaders from important positions and sending them to the villages for education. Nationwide preparations were also launched for the scheduled Ninth Party Congress, during which the Chinese leaders were drawing up a new constitution and consolidating a regular system of the new revolutionary

39. An attempt to analyze the effects of the Czech. invasion on the border disputes will be made in Chapter VI.

40. Peoples Daily, September 17, 1968.

41. Peking Review, September 6, 1968 recorded the Peoples Daily's editorial "Long Live all round victory of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution."

committees. Yet, it was under this seemingly peaceful situation that border incidents including armed clashes in January and February of 1969 flared up. The border tensions reached their summit when the Ussuri incidents occurred in March.

In what follows, I will attempt to examine the ways in which specific events and characteristics of the Cultural Revolution may account for the often very serious border disputes which accompanied it between 1966 and 1969.

The Cultural Revolution and the Border Disputes: Phase I

In the first phase of the Cultural Revolution, the red guards created some incidents along, and sometimes across the border.⁴² They also moved into Sinkiang and organized mass rallies demanding the Soviet return of China's loss territories.⁴³ From March 3 to March 13, 1966, as many as four hundred thousand people, including both army men and civilians took part in such demonstrations.⁴⁴ At home, the Red Guards demonstrated before the Soviet Embassy in Peking.⁴⁵ They also changed the name of the street where the Soviet Embassy was located from Revolution lane to Anti-Revisionist street, and the title of a Soviet-

42. Harold Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest, op.cit.

43. Ibid., pp.135, 170.

44. NCNA, March 13, 1966.

45. John Gittings, op.cit., p.272.

sponsored hospital to Anti-Revisionist Hospital.⁴⁶ Chinese leaders described the Soviets as an enemy and rejected Moscow's attacks on the Cultural Revolution. In October, 1966, the Chinese radio regularly broadcast anti-Soviet songs and propaganda slogans, orchestrating a nation-wide protest against the Kremlin. Additional troops were moved into the border areas in as apparent response to the tensions associated with Red Guard activities, but perhaps also for security reasons.⁴⁷

It has been shown that the Cultural Revolution was anti-Soviet in nature. Under the general rubric of an attack on revisionism, anti-Soviet behavior of the red guards probably aggravated the already deteriorating Sino-Soviet relations and thus may have been indirectly responsible for the worsened Sino-Soviet border disputes.⁴⁸

In a word, the prelude or the first phase of the Cultural Revolution involved significant anti-Soviet activities which were directly expressed on the borders. However, the Chinese military buildup which began on the border, did not have immediate effects there. The highly publicized border incidents and demonstrations of this period may be confidently

46. Communist China, (Hong Kong:URI, 1966), op.cit.

47. Refer to details in Chapter III. p.37. At this stage, there were no reports of serious civil disruptions or disorders which would account for these troop movements.

48. Tai-sung An had suggested a relationship between the Cultural Revolution and the border disputes. Liao Kuang-sheng, Byung-jeon Ahn and Iswher Ojha also shared this view, that both events were related in this phase.

attributed to the anti-Soviet character of the Cultural Revolution and its Red Guards.

The Cultural Revolution and the Border Disputes: Phase II

The high tide period of the Cultural Revolution brought some changes in the character and impact of the anti-Soviet campaign. At this stage, China reached a state of anarchy due first to the mounting conflicts between Mao's faction and the revisionists; and secondly, the Red Guard activities. The high level of domestic conflict and disorders were accompanied by rising border tensions.

Intensification of anti-Soviet sentiment was revealed in several incidents on the border and at home. At the height of the Cultural Revolution, demonstrations on the border against the Soviet Union led to small scale border fights.⁴⁹ Some Red Guard demonstrations even encouraged peasants to herd across the border.⁵⁰ Yet, the intensity and scale were smaller than demonstrations in 1966.⁵¹ However, the hatred of the Soviets was fiercely expressed.

The Soviet Embassy was besieged when Chinese students in Moscow were assaulted when they laid wreaths on Lenin's tomb.⁵² Continual demonstrations were then held for two weeks in front of the Soviet Embassy in Peking.⁵³ They

49. Harold Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest, op.cit.

50. Ibid.; also see Ch'i Sun, op.cit.

51. For example, huge demonstrations such as those along the frontier, involving thousands of persons were unseen in 1967.

52. Peking Review, February 3, 1967, pp.9-11. The Soviet leaders were accused of practising the 'most reactionary and savage fascist dictatorship'.

53. Ibid., February 1967, pp.21, 23-24.

demanded a Soviet apology for their "atrocities". The embassy staff were often interrogated, interrupted and even beaten up. Premier Chou En-lai also denounced Soviet violence. Finally, the Chinese government expelled two members of the embassy staff.

Abroad, Chinese students and citizens, when leaving Moscow, attempted to create conflicts and confusion by provoking new incidents in the Yaroslavl Railway station.⁵⁴ The Soviets claimed that there were over forty provocations instigated by the Chinese in 1967.⁵⁵ In March, the Chinese staff of the Soviet Embassy went on strike and demonstrated against the Soviet Union.⁵⁶

It has been claimed by the Soviets that Red Guards were responsible for organizing and inciting border conflicts along the Ussuri River, exploiting the long-standing fishing and navigation rights disputes.⁵⁷ Military operations on the borders reflected this hostility. More troops were sent by both governments to fortify the border at this initial stage.*

As the power seizure campaign was promulgated in January,

⁵⁴. A Chronology of the PRC 1949-1969, op.cit., p.302.

⁵⁵. Ibid.

⁵⁶. Peoples Daily, March 12, 1967, pp.1-4.

⁵⁷. CDSP, March 26, 1969, pp.1-10.

*. Mao said in February 1967 that the Cultural Revolution should not be carried out in the 13 military regions at the same time; troops stationed in the frontier (Tsinan, Nanking, Foochow, Canton) must maintain vigilance and preparedness against war. He stressed the necessity of cooperation between the militia and the army, air force, and navy along the Chinese border. See Chronology of the PRC, op.cit., see especially the record in Communist China (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1967), p.202.

1967, anti-Soviet hysteria also reached its zenith. The anti-Soviet campaign was most heated in this high tide period of the Cultural Revolution, when the Red Guards were most active and internal disorders were at a high level. There were armed conflicts on the border and the belligerents rushed to fortify their borders. What does this imply? In what way and why were the border tensions heightened during this extremely dangerous and chaotic period of the Cultural Revolution?

Without doubt, the Red Guards attacked Moscow fiercely, and helped bring Sino-Soviet relations to their lowest ebb. Although they were primarily youth mobilized by Mao and his faction for domestic political purposes, the spirit of nationalism and anti-foreignism had led them to arouse mass demonstrations, protests and riot against the Soviet Union.

In terms of polemics, China's attacks toward the Soviets multiplied in the first half of 1967.⁵⁹ Anti-Soviet demonstrations also increased in an extensive manner. Huge demonstrations were conducted on the Sino-Soviet frontier, and conflicts between Chinese citizens and Soviet border guards occurred frequently.⁶⁰ The Soviet Union was not only

58. Liao Kuang-sheng, op.cit.; also see Alan P.L.Liu, op.cit.

59. Ibid., p.606.

60. Harold Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest, op.cit.

denounced for having restored capitalism, but also for failure to lead the Communist bloc.⁶¹ A rectified 'anti-revisionist' China was in other words, naturally challenging the Soviet's right to lead the oppressed. The Army Liberation Daily asserted in 1967,

the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is having an incalculably profound and far reaching effect on the world of our time... Our country has become the base of the world revolution. Our party has become the standard bearer of the world revolution.⁶²

Besides painting China as the only 'righteous' leader of the world revolution, the Chinese also described Mao Tse-tung as the authentic successor of the course of Lenin while the Brezhnev/Kosygin clique were regarded as "renegades and scabs" in history.⁶³ This intensified attack on Soviet communists coincided with and complemented Mao's all-out effort to displace his "domestic moderates".

Domestic leaders who were accused of being "revisionists" were in fact charged with favoring Soviet approaches and policies or with being pro-Soviet.⁶⁴ The Chinese leaders attacked Soviet revisionism as the origin of revisionist tendencies in China. Undoubtedly, this was related to the

61. See for example, Robert Scalapino, "The Foreign Policy of the Cultural Revolution", Current Scene, Vol. VI no:13, August 1, 1968.

62. Army Liberation Daily, June 6, 1967.

63. "Hit back hard at the rabid provocations of the filthy Soviet revisionist swine" in Peking Review Feb 3, 1967.

64. Ishwer Ojha, op.cit., p.116.

attacks on Liu Shao-ch'i who was labelled the 'Chinese Khrushchev', guilty of having pursued harmfully unorthodox policies. These attacks on Liu recalled the purge of P'eng Teh-huai, who favored alliances with the Kremlin and had strongly opposed Mao in the Lushan Conference 1959. Liu and the Soviet government now were retrospectively implicated in that cabal:

P'eng's anti-party activities had not only China's Khrushchev as the behind the scene boss, they were also supported and encouraged by the Soviet Union's Khrushchev.⁶⁵

Mao and his associates therefore, had deliberately related the crisis of 'revisionism' at home, both directly and indirectly to the Soviet Union. This appears to be an important link between the Cultural Revolution and the aggravated Peking-Moscow rift which probably affected or facilitated border tensions.

The attitude of the Soviet leaders also confirms this link. In early 1967, the Soviet leaders employed extensive mass media to denounce China's anti-Soviet campaign. In fact, the Soviet press definitely conveyed the impression that as far as they were concerned, Mao and the Cultural Revolution were deliberately and centrally anti-Soviet.⁶⁶ Soviet comments complained about Mao's adventurist foreign

65. Peking Review, no:35, Aug. 25, 1967, p. 7.

66. Pravda, Feb., 16, 1967; CDSP, no:11, 1967, p.4.

policy ——— said to be a direct result of Mao's "military-bureaucratic" regime.⁶⁷

Soviet broadcasts also abused Mao's thought and jeered at the Cultural Revolution. According to Moscow, the Cultural Revolution had eroded the principle of Lenin, i.e. the principle of authority of the communist party apparatus.⁶⁸ It was also a movement to establish the dictatorship of Mao and his entourage by suppressing their opposition.⁶⁹ Further, Moscow attacked the "personality cult" of Mao, who was called a "petty bourgeoisie nationalist".⁷⁰

Without doubt, the Cultural Revolution, which was anti-Soviet, had threatened the Soviets. The Soviets reacted with great hostility to the emergence of a Maoist-military regime through which the Chinese radicals gained power under a stridently anti-Soviet and unpredictable leadership. The shift of control from the "moderates" to Mao obviously had some impact upon the Soviet leaders.

67. Moscow claimed Chinese foreign policy adventurism was directly related to the domestic policy, which was aimed at establishing a military bureaucratic regime. See for example Pravda March 8, 1966. The November 27 issue of Pravda also explicitly noted: "The entire policy of the CPC central committee is openly directed against the basic principle of Marxism-Leninism, against the CPSU and other communist parties." CDSP, Dec, no:11 1967.

68. O.B. Boristov & B.T. Koloskov, op. cit., pp. 278 - 290

69. CDSP, 21, no: 2 1969.

70. CDSP, 18, no: 2 1968.

In other words, the evidence indicates that the Cultural Revolution did seriously aggravate the Sino-Soviet disputes, in its second phase. To the extent that responsibility for border disputes may be assigned to Soviet anxieties (as expressed in preventive border fortifications or attempted military intimidation.), then the Cultural Revolution indirectly does account for intensification of the border disputes.

The Cultural Revolution and the Border Disputes: Phase III
Formation of the Revolutionary Committees (July 1967-Sept. 1968)

In this third phase of the Cultural Revolution, border disputes occurred primarily on the Sinkiang and Ussuri frontiers. On the Ussuri frontier, border conflicts between local Chinese citizens and Soviet border guards in December of 1967 and January as well as September of 1968 helped the frontier tensions to endure.⁷¹ The scale of anti-Soviet hysteria of this period was comparatively low, but does not imply that the tensions had gone. Both Peking and Moscow charged each other with espionage activities and violations on the Sino-Soviet frontier.⁷² Overall, however, anti-Soviet activities of the red guards as well as official attacks in the mass media apparently reduced.⁷³

71. Refer to Chapter III, pp.30-42.

72. For example, Chinese charged the Soviets with aircraft violations and the Soviets accused the Chinese citizens on border of arousing conflicts and incidents. See Peoples Daily, Sept. 17, 1968, CDSP, March 26, 1969, pp.1-10.

73. See Liao Kuang-sheng, op.cit., World Politics, Vol. 28, 1976.

This period also witnessed the rising importance of the military leaders in China. In the process of the formation of the revolutionary committees, the military leaders indeed became more and more influential. Troop movements also were seen in various areas. While these were partly related to restoration of internal order,⁷⁴ they primarily involved fortification on border areas.

According to Strategic Survey,⁷⁵ the Chinese border troops were all regular units, numbering about eighty divisions in 1969. Thus, the troops sent into the border in 1967 and 1968 were probably also regular army. Thus, this third phase of the Cultural Revolution was not accompanied by major border incidents, and tension on the frontiers was relatively reduced. In this sense the character of the border disputes followed the shift in the character of the Cultural Revolution as it lost its raucous anti-Soviet public character and entered into a period of serious political restructuring on a wide scale.

The Cultural Revolution and the Border Disputes: Phase IV

As the red guards and anti-Soviet campaign subsided in the last phase of the Cultural Revolution, direct ties between the Cultural Revolution and the border clashes from October 1968 to April 1969 must be explained differently. The radicals' success in eradicating the moderates or "pro-Soviet" leaders, the rise of the military and their attitude toward border tensions may indicate some links/connections

74. Regular garrison troops were used in some localities to restore order. This was especially serious in Inner Mongolia, where the regional boss, Ulanfu, was deposed in 1968. See June Dryer, op.cit. Current Scene, Nov 15, 1968, pp.1-13.

75, Strategic Survey, Institute of Strategic Studies, London 1969.

between the Cultural Revolution and the border clashes in this final phase.

As the Cultural Revolution approached its end, the fall of the moderate leaders was confirmed. Many of these leaders had been sympathetic or at least receptive to accommodation with the USSR. This may have given Moscow reason to react with hostility to the political changes in China. In late 1968, leaders including Lo Jui-ch'ing, Liu Shao-ch'i, and Teng Hsiao-ping, were purged and branded as revisionists favoring Soviet alliance or a Soviet line of policy.⁷⁶ Important figures in the economic sphere, including Li Fu-chun, Teng Cheu-lin, Ch'en Yun and Po Yi-po were either purged or decreased in power.⁷⁷

By the end of 1968, the radicals were also able to remove and replace a tremendous number of officials allegedly associated with moderate policies. (For instance, Chen Yi's coexistence policy was criticized, and many ambassadors purged.)⁷⁸ But the most startling effect of the Cultural Revolution was the political prominence of the PLA represented by Lin Piao and Huang Yung-sheng.

76. Communist China, op.cit., 1967, pp. 1 - 26, 1967, pp. 1 - 67.

77. Richard K. Diao, "The impact of the Cultural Revolution on economic elites", CQ no"42, 1970, pp.65-87.

78. Thomas Robinson, The Cultural Revolution in China, op.cit., pp. 313 - 366, Daniel Tretiak, op. cit., pp. 13 - 22.

Like Mao, Lin Piao had expressed strong anti-Soviet sentiment.⁷⁹ In October 1967, Lin publicly called attention to the necessity to prepare for war and defend the country. It was also alleged that Lin was on the border just before the clashes on Chenpao occurred.⁸⁰ Wide publicity was also given to the bellicose anti-Soviet speeches⁸¹ of Huang Yung-sheng, the Chief of Staff (after Yang Cheng-wu, who was purged during the Cultural Revolution).

Therefore, it may be that the Soviets were quite convinced that the Chinese were ready to act irrationally in an attempt to rectify territorial problems. The Soviets had good reason to consider this possibility. Certainly, the Cultural Revolution had deepened the mutually hostile perceptions of both China and Soviet Union on the borderlands and the enhanced military role in the radicalized Chinese leadership may have alarmed the Soviet leaders.

Moreover, it may have appeared to the Soviets that a politically handicapped China during the last phases of the Cultural Revolution offered tempting opportunities for the application of force. In other words, to prevent China's further claims and consolidate Soviet security and privileges, Moscow may have instigated the clashes of

79. Peoples Daily, Oct. 1, Nov. 6, 1967.

80. Edmund Clubb, China and Russia: The Great Game, (N.Y.: Columbia U. Press, 1971), p. 501

81. Thomas Robinson, op.cit., APSR, p.1192.

March, 1969.⁸² That is, these border clashes may have been initiated or provoked by Soviet hawks, who may have favored a pre-emptive strike on the nuclear installations of China.⁸³

It can be argued that the Chinese were really incapable of resistance and could not have afforded to initiate disputes on the border, assuming they were aware of their overall strategic inferiority. Yet, the internal disorders could have urged the Chinese leaders at this time to articulate external hostility to rally internal support. Moreover, Chinese attacks may have been advantageous for the military personnel who may have been interested in consolidating their position.⁸⁴ If the Chinese did initiate deliberately or provoke the border clashes of March, 1969, it is at least possible this was an admittedly risky choice which counted on Soviet reluctance to move beyond border violence. To the extent the style and character of the clashes may have been carefully limited, it seems possible to assume the Chinese did start these incidents. If so, then the Cultural Revolution can be indirectly causally linked to these clashes. Also, by doing this, the Chinese leaders may have achieved the purposes of deterring any Soviet invasion.

82. Tai-Sung An, op. cit. Sino-Soviet Territorial Disputes, p.98; Robert North, The Foreign Relations of China Standard U., 2nd edition, 1974, pp. 109 - 127.

83. General I. G. Zavyalov, "On Soviet Military Doctrine", op.cit. pp. 374 - 389; See also Pravda, Aug. 28 1969 or Sept. 24, 1969, CDSP, pp. 1 - 5.

84. See for example Huang Yung-sheng's speech in Albania December 1968, refer to Thomas Robinson, op.cit. APSR, p.1192; and Lin Piao's speech on "Army, the main component of the state" Peking Review, no:17 April 30, 1965.

Post Cultural Revolution Period

The continuation of the border disputes after the Cultural Revolution had called for war preparations on both sides. A phase of immediate war scare began in 1969 and later in 1970 and 1971. Although a period of comparative quiet ensued after the fall of Lin Piao in 1972, the tensions on the border persisted. The permanent character of the military buildup on the border, the failure of negotiations⁸⁴ and the persistence of border conflicts are indicators of enduring hostility between the Chinese and the Soviets. In view of these post-Cultural Revolution developments, it is doubtful that the Cultural Revolution can be considered totally responsible for the border disputes.

However, it is still legitimate to ask whether domestic Chinese politics after the Cultural Revolution were in any way responsible for border incidents, particularly the war scares of 1969 and 1970-1971. First, the persistence of the border conflicts after the end of the Cultural Revolution may have been closely related to the Chinese need to consolidate the country after a period of anarchy and turmoil.⁸⁵ The Chinese leaders may have deliberately employed the tensions of the border disputes to articulate external hostility so as to cement the factionalistic elements at home.⁸⁶

⁸⁴. Moscow made a sign of compromise in September, 1976 after the death of Mao by ceasing the polemics for five months. Negotiation on border disputes also failed in May, 1978.

⁸⁵. Byung-jeon Ahn, op.cit., pp. 238-269.

⁸⁶. Mao's speech April 28, 1969, Issues and Studies, Taipei (Taiwan) 1970, pp. 94-98.

Campaigns of war readiness were conducted on a wide scale from 1969-1971. No doubt this background was useful for the restoration of order and political discipline. Under the slogan of "Store the grains and Dig tunnels deep" , another extensive war preparation campaign took place in 1973.

At home, attention was called to the importance of maintaining unity and stability by rebuilding the party apparatus and correcting communist discipline.⁸⁷ At the 10th Party Congress in August 1973, party discipline was reaffirmed. In 1974, Mao urged unity between the army and the party. Teng Hsiao-ping was once again rehabilitated and elected vice chairman in 1975. He implemented the policy of Chou to speed up internal stability, so as to facilitate the development of a modernized China. It is at least conceivable that Peking maintained the border disputes to achieve national unity during this period of recovery.

Second, it is also possible that the radicals, who were not completely victorious in the Cultural Revolution, may have used the war scare to maintain their position. A review of the relations between the dominant military⁸⁸ and the leftists

87. See New York Times, June 14, Dec. 16, 1974; Hung Ch'i, no:4, 1974.

88. Jurgen Domes, "The Cultural Revolution and the Army", Asian Survey, Vol.VIII, Nov. 1968, pp.394-363; also see Issues And Studies, Taipei, Oct. 1969, pp.106-109; Ming Pao Monthly, no:56, 1970, Hong Kong, pp.38-44; and Eliss Joffe, "The Chinese Army in the Cultural Revolution: the Politics of Intervention", Current Scene, Vol.VIII, no:18, 1970.

in 1969-1971 may shed light on whether this is true or not. (The rising importance of the military dated back to their intervention into the Cultural Revolution in 1967) The 9th Party Congress witnessed army domination over the civilians. Out of the 29 regions, 20 revolutionary committees were headed by military officers. Forty-five per-cent of the central committee members were also military men. In 1970, the provinical committee elections left the military in charge in 60% of the positions compared to 16% in 1966.

But as the party began to take shape and be rebuilt by 1971, the strong political role of the military was threatened. In late 1969, veteran party cadres were recalled and emphasis was placed on the criticism of the PLA-dominated apparatus.⁸⁹ The fact that Lin Piao's role was under serious attack may have tempted him to maintain tensions by encouraging a war scare.⁹⁰ In late 1969, the "Criticize revisionism, rectify work style" campaign launched by Mao and probably the civilian led by Chou En-lai, appeared to be directed at the base of Lin's power apparatus. In March 1970, the new PRC draft constitution removed the post of state chairman and Chou became the head of the government. This reflected growing influence of the

89. See Peoples Daily, Nov. 5, 1969, Feb. 17, 1969.

90. Jorgen Domes, op.cit., p.186; See also Harold Hinton, Introduction to Chinese Politics, op.cit.

moderate leadership, who appear to have convinced Mao to get rid of Lin and his aides.⁹¹

After Lin finally fell, 34 military leaders (many of which Lin had appointed) were purged in 1972.⁹² In 1973, of the 174 active members of the provincial party secretaries, 50.6% came from the army compared to the 62% in August 1971. In 1974, some reshuffling of the military regions may have been related to completion of the elimination of Lin Piao and his closer associates.⁹³

One argument is that Mao, who was against Lin, couldn't be a supporter of the left; but Mao was more or less supporting the left in a way to balance the moderate power in the seventies. The fact that the leftists (notably Chiang Ch'ing) were not removed until 1976 suggests that they had little contact with Lin. Thus, it does not seem likely that the leftists aroused border tensions to maintain themselves. Apart from a speech by Wang Hung-wen in 1973,⁹⁴ which declared a need to prepare the people to resist any aggression from either imperialists or social-imperialists (meaning the Soviets), the leftists did not appear interested in elevating border

91. It is still a controversial topic whether Mao had sided with Chou or not. But this obscurity does not prevent a safe assumption that Mao was personally against Lin, and wanted to rebuild the party leadership and maintain unity in view of the Soviet threat. See Issues and Studies, op.cit.

92. Jurgen Domes, op.cit., pp.140-143, 146, 149.

93. Philip Bridgham, "The Fall of Lin Piao", China Quarterly, 1974; also see the N.Y. Times, Oct 12, 1972.

94. Jurgen Domes, op.cit., p.186.

conflict for their benefit. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that the radicals, as opposed to Lin, did not arouse border tensions deliberately to maintain themselves. But it should be noticed that both moderates and the leftists had participated in calling attention to the need for war preparedness.⁹⁵

As Mao died and the radicals were eradicated in 1976, the border disputes appear to have become a symbolic issue of occasional use to both sides. The disputed territories issue was left unresolved. Each side maintained formidable defenses on the border and hostile recriminations have regularly been exchanged.

By 1976, the Soviets were reported to have as many as 67 divisions and 15,000 tanks on the Chinese border.⁹⁶ Mig 23 and Mig 25 jet fighters, ss4 IRBM's and ss9 ICBM missiles were said to be deployed in Siberia, central Asia and various spots along the frontier.⁹⁷ After visits to the border area in March and April 1978 by Brezhnev and the Soviet defense minister D.F.Ustinov, negotiations were held but without any solid result. Instead, border skirmishes occurred in May which again deepened the border tensions.⁹⁸

95. There was another argument which stated that Lin and the radicals were strongly opposing a detente with the United States. This may have led to their fatal ending. It was obvious that Chou had the consent of Mao in practising a rapprochement with Washington. The reverse seemed not possible.

96. Byung-jeon Ahn, op.cit., p.247.

97. Leo Y.Liu, "The Chinese People Liberation Army", Current History, Sept. 1978, p.57.

98. See for example, Peking Review, May 19, 1978, p.3.

Summary

After studying the complicated Cultural Revolution, its distinctive phases were demonstrated. Throughout the Cultural Revolution, the general anti-Soviet atmosphere was overwhelming. The Cultural Revolution however, was to some extent only a mass campaign with diffuse functions for internal purposes. This can be seen for example, during the period from July 1967 to September 1968. Thus, any direct or causal relationships between the Cultural Revolution and the border disputes were not uniform. In other words, the Cultural Revolution exacerbated the border disputes to a greater extent only in certain periods in certain ways.

In studying some specific early incidents, the conclusion is that these specific incidents were directly related to the extremely hostile situation and the clashes on the border. The Red Guards were prominent in late 1966, and became extremely important in early 1967 in terms of their anti-Soviet activities. However, the red guard activity obviously subsided after June 1967. Military intervention had swung the pendulum to the "right" again.

The troop movements on both sides coincided with the high tide of the Cultural Revolution. That border clashes and incidents occurred frequently at this time was certainly not a coincidence. Military intervention to form the revolutionary committees had no immediate apparent reflection in external politics, despite the mass media and protest campaign against Moscow.

The border clashes in March 1969 appear to have been the result of the deteriorating Sino-Soviet relationship and their mutually hostile perceptions. Security and political reasons also accounted for the disputes. However, it also appears plausible that the Chinese military may have found a serious border conflict politically useful, an enterprise in which leftist radicals, even moderates, may have concurred.

Overall, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Cultural Revolution, a successful domestic political struggle by anti-Soviet and structurally radical groupings, was responsible for the intensified border tensions at certain stages. In the following, the discussion of other factors which contributed to Sino-Soviet hostility globally, regionally, politically or economically will give us a clearer concept of how the border disputes were aggravated between 1966 and 1969.

Chapter VI

International Events and the Sino-Soviet Border Disputes

In this chapter, the author will investigate global power politics in general as related to the deteriorating Sino-Soviet relations and in particular, as related to the aggravation of the border disputes in the period from 1966 to 1969.

In analyzing the influence of global power politics on the border disputes, one fruitful approach is to examine certain key international events in which Moscow and Peking were involved. It is of considerable importance to ask whether the Chinese may have deliberately provoked Soviet hostility in the international arena, and vice versa. By studying the Vietnam War, the improving Sino-American relationship, the Czechoslovakian invasion, the security problem of the USSR, and Sino-Soviet rivalry in various areas, I anticipate coming closer to a satisfactory understanding of the ways in which these factors help to explain the intensification of the border disputes in this specific period.

A. General Sino-Soviet Rivalry in International Arena

In one sense the border disputes between China and the USSR are only one aspect of a long standing and serious global rivalry.

1. Communist China, op.cit., 1966, p.195; 1968, pp.144-146, 242-244, and the 1967 and 1969 issues; see also Harold Hinton, The Bear At the Gate, op.cit., pp.20-27; Jerome Alan Cohen(ed.), The Dynamics of Chinese Foreign Relations, (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1970)

The relationship between the CPC and the CPSU has been strained since 1960 because of specific conflicts of interest, differences over ideology and foreign policies, and rivalries and resentments associated with their status in the communist camp.² Perceptions of mutual hostility were well entrenched by the time of the Cultural Revolution began and institutionalized in vitriolic and ritualistic polemics.

The Sino-Soviet rift was further strained during 1966, the year when China refused to attend the 23rd CPSU congress. In 1966, China condemned Soviet-United States "collusion" and refused to join in the Vietnam War.³ China also refused to transport Soviet aid to Hanoi. China attacked Soviet leaders for "betraying" the Arabs in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. In 1968, China denounced the Treaty of Non-Proliferation which to China was a means to check China's nuclear development.⁴ Further, Peking accused the Soviets of imperialism for their armed intervention in Czechoslovakia in August, 1968. In this context, the Cultural Revolution was only one of many events which enhanced the Sino-Soviet schism.

2. China had made certain boundary agreements with certain Asian countries, while USSR was ignored. See for example, John Gittings, op.cit., pp.86-87, 150-152, 195. Also refer to Chapter II for details.

3. Donald Zagoria, Vietnam Triangle, (N.Y.:Pegasus, 1967), pp.87-91. Also see Confessions concerning the line of Soviet-U.S. collaboration pursued by the new leaders of the CPSU, (Peking, Foreign Language Press, Feb. 11, 1966).

4. Communist China, op.cit., 1968; also see Morton Halperin, China and Nuclear Proliferation, (Chicago:Univ. of Chicago, Centre for Policy Studies, 1966).

Major Sino-Soviet rivalry in the third world is an important aspect of their relationship. In fact these areas were often the site of conflicts between Moscow and Peking.⁵

China had long perceived the Afro-Asian area as their best source of potential allies. From 1966 onward, probably due to Peking's failure in Asia and the Safari in 1964 and 1965⁶, a new foreign policy approach was inaugurated in the late sixties. China attempted to convince the Afro-Asian countries that the Soviets were not really revolutionary, but were imperialists interested in dominating the weak for their own benefit. Peking did in fact use the border disputes to portray China as an innocent victim of a belligerent Soviet Union. The Chinese press regularly accused the Soviets of suppressing revolutionary struggles and collaborating with the reactionaries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and even the United States.⁷ In doing this, Peking aimed to rally the support of some of the Afro-Asian states.

This policy of encouraging Afro-Asian solidarity, while nothing new, was reflected in the continuation of Chinese aid to African countries such as Tanzania.⁸ Yet, in Asia, China's

5. See George Tu, "China's Competitive Diplomacy in Africa", in Jerome A. Cohen, op.cit.; Daniel Tretiak, "Changes in China's Attention to South East Asia 1967-1969", Current Scene, Vol.VIII no:21, Nov. 1, 1969.

6. Safari refers to Chou's tour of Africa. China's failure there was marked by the lack of support during the Afro-Asian conference in 1965. See also W.A.C. Adie, "China's Foreign Policy: The Third World", The World Today, March 1968; "Chou En-lai on Safari", China Quarterly, no:18, April/June, 1964.

7. Daniel Tretiak, op.cit.

8. George Tu, op.cit., Peoples Daily, June 22, 1967.

relations with other states and the Asian communist parties became worse even as Soviet influence in Asia was increasing. In fact, the Soviets were firmly dominant in North Korea and Vietnam, and had close ties with India. In 1965, Chinese efforts to foment conflict between India and their ally and aid recipient Pakistan were apparently frustrated by Soviet mediation.⁹ In 1967 and 1968, Moscow established relations with Singapore and Malaysia, which may have been perceived as an encircling move by the Chinese leaders. As for Sino-Mongolian relations, they seriously deteriorated after the Mutual Defense Pact between the MPR and USSR was signed in January 1966.¹⁰ By 1967, there were anti-Mongolian demonstration in Peking as well as Red Guard attacks on the Mongolian Embassy in Peking.¹¹ Their relations became extremely tense when more Soviet troops, believed to be about 10 divisions in 1968, were stationed in Mongolia.

Although Sino-Japanese trade was growing in the sixties, Peking had bad relations with Japan, whose government was labeled "reactionary militarist" by the Chinese press in 1968.¹² While Japan accepted proposals for joint development projects in Soviet Siberia, unsettled territorial problems between

9. The Tashkent agreement between Pakistan and India was reached in January 1966 under Soviet mediation. See Anwar H. Syed, China and Pakistan: Diplomacy of an Entente Cordiale, (Boston: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1974), pp. 110-126.

10. The treaty promised sincere cooperation and ensured defence of each other. See Keesing Contemporary Archives, Vol. XV, London 1966, p. 21209.

11. Ibid., Vol. XVI, 1967-8, pp. 22277, 22168; see also Ishwer Ojha, op.cit., pp. 240-241.

12. Peoples Daily, Oct. 22, Dec. 20, 1968.

them and the Japan-U.S. security ties seemed to limit serious Soviet-Japanese cooperations.¹³ China, obviously enough, was afraid of a detente between Japan and Moscow while the Soviet-U.S. detente was already underway.

Some steps were taken to increase Chinese contacts with Western European states, in the 1960s, as a source of capital, equipment, and technological support.¹⁴ Normalization with France in 1964 and rising trade with Paris and West Germany were first steps.¹⁵ The Kremlin strongly criticized the arms trade between China and certain Western European states.¹⁶ Chinese-Western Europe relations became strained during the Cultural Revolution, but there was a slightly different scene in Eastern Europe, where China supported Polish self-assertion and attempted to improve its relations with Yugoslavia.¹⁷

Generally speaking, the Sino-Soviet rivalry was most serious in the Afro-Asian areas and of minor importance in Europe and Middle East. This general rivalry was affected by two very serious specific events: the Vietnam War and the Czechoslovakian Invasion.

13. W.W.Kulski, op.cit., p.143, Japan and Soviet Union disputes over the Soviet occupied Kurile Island. See also David Hitchcock, "Joint development of Siberia, decision making in Japanese Soviet relation", Asian Survey, March, 1971, pp.297-300.

14. Harold Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest, op.cit., pp.275-277.

15. J.P.Jain, A Study of Sino-British Relations 1949-1975, (London:Radiant Publisher, 1976), pp.40, 262.

16. W.W.Kulski, op.cit., pp.400-402, 404.

17. Harold Hinton, The Bear at the Gate, op.cit.

B. Vietnam War

The Vietnam War was a significant factor underlying the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations. The Vietnam War became intense at the same time that the Cultural Revolution in China occurred, and Sino-Soviet border conflicts became very seriously augmented. Did the Sino-Soviet differences over the war contribute in any way to heighten the tensions on their border?

We know that the debate between the pro- and anti-Soviet elements within China which was very heated in 1965 directly concerned policy for the Vietnam War. The stand taken by those in favor of joint action with the Soviets was represented by Lo Jui-ch'ing, who denounced the United States:

The historical experience of the anti-fascist war also teaches us that it is imperative to distinguish enemies from friends; make use of contradictions, win over the majority, unite with all that can be united and form the broadest united front against the main enemy.¹⁸

Lo not only urged a united front, but also noted explicitly that:

We pay high tribute to, and express our full confidence in, the great Soviet people and the great Soviet army...We are deeply confident that we will be united on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, and will fight shoulder to shoulder against our common enemy, the U.S....¹⁹

However, the same issue of the Peking Review contained an

18. Peking Review, May 14, 1965.

19. Ibid.

article which denounced the Soviets and urged a Chinese way of countering imperialism:

Khrushchev's successors are more cunning in their ways (by) colluding with the U.S. aggressor and plotting to sell out the basic interest of the people of Vietnam.²⁰

Through Lin Piao, the anti-Soviet faction accused the Kremlin of collusion with the United States, charged them with downgrading the people's war, and denounced them as revisionists.²¹ This strategic debate became severe when Mao's attack on the pro-Soviet elements began to gather momentum.²²

In late 1965, Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-ping came to support Lo and urged a limited Sino-Soviet rapprochement. They apparently favored an offensive war with Soviet support.²³ At this stage, the anti-interventionists were probably worried about the real intentions of the Soviets, already provoked by Peking's refusal of joint-intervention. The apparent bellicosity of the pro-Soviets also may have facilitated Mao's campaign to discredit them.

The reasons underlying China's refusal of joint-intervention were many and certainly could not be attributed only to anti-Soviet sentiment of the non-interventionists.²⁴

20. Ibid., pp. 15-20

21. Lin Piao, "Long Live the People's War", Peking Review, September 3, 1965, p. 9.

22. Liberation Army Daily, August 5, 1966, also see Donald Zagoria, op.cit., pp. 63-98.

23. Uri Ra'anan, "Peking's Foreign Policy Debate 1965-1966" in Ho Ping-ti and Tsou Tang, China In Crisis (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, Vol. 2, 1968). pp. 49, 54-71; Hung ch'i, Dec. 22, 1964; the hawks probably hoped to achieve Soviet technical support for China's industrialization.

24. See D. Zagoria and U. Ra'anan, op.cit.

In 1966, Chou En-lai took care to express publicly that China wouldn't intervene in Vietnam. Prudence would caution against any direct conflict with the U.S. A sense of vulnerability associated with the internal disruptions of the Cultural Revolution may have added impetus to this desire to avoid being drawn into Vietnam.

On the other hand, China may have wanted to tie the United States down in Vietnam in a protracted warfare against the Vietcong, who were supported by the Soviets. China also may have been reluctant to pay the cost of Sino-Soviet cooperation, which would have meant a Soviet air base and troop staging areas in the southern part of China.²⁶ China had been used by the Soviet Union once before in the Korean War, which resulted in a serious loss of life and energy. Thus many observers concluded that China preferred not to intervene, but hoped to prolong the war which Moscow and Washington were in fact fighting.²⁷

In other words, the Chinese refusal of joint-intervention, the polemics between Peking and Moscow, the internal debate within China (which led to the downfall of pro-Soviet leaders), and China's retreat from the Vietnam war, all helped to intensify Sino-Soviet antagonism during the Vietnam war.

25. Chou En-lai, "Four Point Statements on Chinese Policy toward the U.S." Peking Review, April 10, 1966, May 13, 1966.

26. Ishwer Ojha, op.cit., p. 108.

27. Kulski, op.cit., p. 396.

In the larger context of Sino-Soviet hostility in general, but specifically over prosecution of the Vietnam war, the border disputes which occurred between 1966-1969, but particularly between 1966-1968, appear as a secondary manifestation of international political rivalries. Given the highly conflicted nature of their overall relationship, occasional armed clashes or incidents on their long mutual border seem logical, even predictable.

C. Sino-American Relations 1966-1969

By the end of the Cultural Revolution, the complicated global possibilities of a tripolar balance were beginning to affect foreign policy calculations of all the major powers. Did China's moves toward normalization of its relations with the United States affect its relationship with the Soviet Union during the years of the Cultural Revolution 1966-1969?

Clearly, Sino-American rapprochement was a long way off at that time. Yet, a consideration of international political factors which may have affected Sino-Soviet relations, including their border disputes, must include a review of developments in Chinese-American relations.

Although Chinese-American relations had been quite hostile in the 1950s, there were some signs by 1966 that this could change. Domestic critics of United States policy had been urging a relaxation of American attitudes (particularly, an end of the trade embargo) under the general

slogan of "containment but not isolation".²⁸

It has been argued in many places that tacit agreement which accompanied America's prosecution of the limited war in Vietnam helped to promote the idea of closer Chinese-American cooperation as a restraint on the Soviets.²⁹

Dean Rusk had implied before a Congressional committee in March 1966, that relations with China could be restored if the Chinese government were willing.³⁰ In June, President Johnson publicly described reconciliation with China as a necessity.³¹ In July, he said: "the desirability of increased unofficial contacts with communist China has already been accepted."³² Official steps were taken and some ground-breaking

28. A Doak Barnett spelled out firstly the idea of Containment but not isolation. He suggested that this policy must influence the Soviets to a certain extent. See China Vietnam and the U.S., "Highlights of the hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee" Public Affairs press, Washington D.C. 1966; also see Congressional Quarterly, op.cit., p. 49.

29. Chronology of the PRC, op.cit. recorded the interview of René Dabernat (foreign editor of Paris-March) who said the Chinese had informed the U.S. through Paris in the Spring of 1966 that it would not enter into the Vietnam War if the U.S. refrained from invading China or North Vietnam and from bombing the Red River Dikes, and Johnson agreed. Also see W. E. Griffith, op.cit., p. 2.

30. Roderick MacFarquhar, op.cit., p. 223; Dean Rusk statement before the Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 16, 1966.

31. Congressional Quarterly, op.cit., Johnson mentioned that reconciliation with China was necessary, June 12, 1966.

32. Ibid., p. 14, see also China Vietnam and the U.S., op.cit. pp. 29-30.

trade agreements were signed in December 1966.³³ The Chinese press in 1966 followed suit by distinguishing between the United States, described as "only an enemy", whereas the Russians were described as "traitors" who could "never be forgiven".³⁴ In 1967, Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi said that it was dangerous to have bad relations with the U.S. while the relations with the Soviet Union were bad.³⁵ In 1968, China apparently proposed an agreement to the U.S. on peaceful coexistence coupled with an agreement on withdrawal from the Taiwan Strait.³⁶ It is also reported that the Chinese requested bilateral talks with the Americans in October 1968.³⁷ Bilateral talks were postponed, possibly due to the reluctance of Chinese radicals, who preferred a harder line toward Washington.

However, signs that the U.S. wished to improve relations with China were increasing.³⁸ In 1969, measures were passed to ease travel and trade restrictions, followed by permission for the unlimited entry of Chinese products and the cessation of the two regular destroyer patrols in the Taiwan Strait.³⁹ The reduction of forces in Asia was first witnessed in Taiwan.⁴⁰

33. Ibid. p. 131.

34. W. W. Kulski, op.cit., pp. 392-393.

35. Ibid.

36. Apalin, op.cit., p. 14.

37. Ibid.

38. See Chronology of the Peoples Republic of China on the year of 1969.

39. Congressional Quarterly, op.cit., pp. 19-22.

40. Chronology of the PRC, op.cit., pp. 306, 313.

Soviet reactions to these developments were sharply critical. The Soviet press attacked the proposed China-U.S. talks as a hypocritical cover for planned "collaboration" on an anti-Soviet basis.⁴¹ China was therefore accused of adopting a "self-contradictory" attitude regarding the problem of the struggle against imperialism.⁴² China's refusal to cooperate more extensively in Soviet support of the Vietnamese war effort obviously contributed to Soviet suspicions of these signs of closer Chinese-American relations. Yet China's interest in Soviet-American conflict was both logical and natural, and her own position as a Soviet adversary suggested the wisdom of exploring offsetting ties with the U.S. during this period.⁴³

As a development which was part of the overall pattern of Sino-Soviet hostility, but was also related to the Sino-Soviet falling out over the Vietnam War, the signs of a potential Sino-American rapprochement should be considered in an overall investigation of the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1966-1969. While it is not possible to establish direct connections between these events, they all contributed to the maintenance of an increasingly hostile relationship between the two communist neighbors within which the border disputes appear predictable, logical and functional irrespective of domestic, political events in China.

⁴¹. Literaturnaya Gazeta, Dec. 11, 1968, p. 9, also see CDSF, Vol. XX, no:50, 1968.

⁴². W. W. Kulski, op.cit., p. 393.

⁴³. Jurgen Dedring, "Recent Advances in Peace and Conflict Research", Sage Library of Social Research, no:27, 1976, see especially chapter 3, 4, and 5.

Another incident which may similarly be related to the intensified Sino-Soviet hostility of this period—and the border disputes which accompanied it—is the Czechoslovakian invasion of 1968. A number of factors suggested that this event, and Chinese reactions to it, may have influenced

the very serious Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969 on the Ussuri.

C. The Czechoslovakian Invasion

The August, 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviets was regarded as an action to maintain the Soviet leadership and sovereignty over the communist bloc.⁴⁴ The Brezhnev Doctrine provided the ideological underpinning of the invasion.⁴⁵ This implied that it was the international duty of every communist state to safeguard the interest of the socialist commonwealth. When socialism was threatened internally, the other communist states have the right to intervene even by force. As to the Czech case, the Soviets were obviously worried by the implications of Dubcek's rejection of the Soviet model and the Warsaw Pact.⁴⁶ The invasion was aimed at stopping the erosion of Soviet

⁴⁴. Ishwer Ojha, op.cit., pp. 210-258; see also Ivan Suitak, The Czechoslovak Experiment 1968-1969, (Columbia Univ. Press, N.Y. 1971); R. A. Remington, Winter in Prague (Boston: M.I.T. Press, 1970).

⁴⁵. For the record of the detailed description of the Brezhnev Doctrine, see CDSP Vol. XX, no:2, 1968, p. 9.

⁴⁶. Dubcek was seeking normalization with the FGR, attempting to create a democratic model of socialism, and criticized overbearing Soviet influence in the Warsaw Treaty Organization. See Ivan Suitak, Ishwer Ojha, and R. A. Remington, op.cit.

authority in Eastern Europe. Pravda noted:

Developments in Czechoslovakia have shown that rightist anti-socialist elements are taking advantage of this legitimate desire for correcting mistakes and short-comings to discredit the CCP's activity by seeking to undermine the foundations of socialist statehood and liquidate the socialist system in the CSR.⁴⁷

To the Russians, the Czechoslovakia invasion was a legitimate act of force to consolidate her sovereignty in Europe, and also a check to the attempt of the West to erode the socialist bloc. The Soviet move, however, was obviously also a reaction to the Czech's challenge of Moscow's supermacy.

As the CPSU had long charged that China, like Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, had departed from the principles of Marxist-Leninism, did the Soviets also intend the invasion of Prague as a warning to the Chinese, who were definitely more obnoxious than the Czechs? It was quite clear that the Brezhnev Doctrine could logically be applied to China, too. The Soviet use of force to restore a more subservient leadership group in a rebellious client state was hardly analogous to the Chinese situation. However, this use of force occurred at a time when large numbers of Soviet troops were stationed⁴⁸ on the border of another socialist state which, in Soviet description, had abandoned socialism.

⁴⁷. Pravda, editorial, July 19, 1968, also see CDSP, Vol. XX no:2, 1968.

⁴⁸. It should be noted that the Soviets had increased border fortifications in this stage. Soviet divisions had been, as Chinese leaders reported, transferred from Eastern Europe to Far East. Indeed, border tensions had become more severe in late 1968. For examples, see John Gittings, Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 447.

The Czechoslovakian invasion obviously alarmed the Chinese. Premier Chou En-lai and the army chief of staff, Huang Yung-sheng, charged the Soviets with increasing their military buildup on the border. Fears were expressed in the Chinese press that the Czech invasion was not a single incident.⁴⁹ Immediately, official attacks against the Soviets began. Chou En-lai and foreign minister Chen Yi publicly criticized the Soviet invasion as "social imperialism".⁵⁰ Huang Yung-sheng, the army chief of staff, in a speech to the Albanians, in October, expressed fears about possible dangers for China from the Sino-Soviet frontiers.⁵¹ Popular media took up the slogan of preparation for war.

These Chinese responses to the Czech invasion were extremely hostile. The incident was used to discredit the Soviets as "socialist imperialists". Alleged Soviet atrocities were denounced in strong language in the press and over the airwaves. The Soviets were also accused of threatening the security and independence of Albania in particular, and the Balkan people in general, by massing troops in Bulgaria.⁵² The Chinese effort to portray the Soviets as great power chauvinists, was in sharp contrast

49. Peoples Daily, Aug. 24, 1968, p. 1; Sept. 3, 1968, p. 1; and Oct. 5, 1968, p. 3.

50. Jacques Guillermez, The CPC in Power 1949-1976, (Denver: Westview Press, 1976), p. 558. Chou's speech was given in the Rumanian Embassy in Aug. 23; Chen Yi's speech was given in the Korean Embassy.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., NCNA, September, 29, 1968. China also promised Rumania support in case of Soviet attack.

to the relative lull in public anti-Soviet polemics in early 1968.⁵³ It is true that by this time the Chinese had close to a million troops of their own on the Sino-Soviet border, and it is difficult to be sure whether Soviet military action there was regarded as a real threat. Under the circumstances, it was logical for the Chinese to capitalize on the opportunities the Czech. invasion presented for criticizing the USSR. The domestic political value of an external military threat may also account for some of the Chinese attention to Czechoslovakia.

How did this matter of Czechoslovakia which provoked an intensification of anti-Soviet polemics in China affect the border disputes? Other than an additional irritant in an already hostile relationship, did this act of force by the Soviet Union contribute to border tensions with China?

A consideration of the events which followed the Czech invasion of August 1968 raises two distinct possibilities: (1) that Soviet hawks responsible for the Czech decision, may have also urged a demonstration of force against the Chinese, or (2) that the Chinese may have been encouraged by it to initiate the Ussuri clashes of 1969.

In early 1969, the Soviet shift of concentration from Europe to the Sino-Soviet frontier was noted. Despite

53. See Jacques Guillermaz, op.cit., Although there were minor border incidents, actual accusations of each other's ambition, and Soviet continual attacks on China's refusal to organize joint action, the Sino-Soviet tension was comparatively low than the other period.

Czechoslovakia, the Soviets attempted to smooth over other incidents of unrest in other parts of eastern Europe. For instance, East Germany harassed traffic on the western access route to the city of Berlin and by doing so, threatened to embroil Moscow in a showdown with the United States while the presidential election in West Germany was approaching.⁵⁴ Instead of concurring in this harassment, Moscow warned the East Germans to restrain their trouble making activities around Berlin. This warning was made a few days before the Ussuri incidents occurred on the Sino-Soviet frontier.⁵⁵ It was highly probable that the Soviets backed off from potential European conflict in order to concentrate upon the dangerous Sino-Soviet situation.

Inside the USSR, the debate between the Soviet leaders and the military leaders or the hawks on the issue of a preventive war against China reflected to a certain extent the tensions on the border and Sino-Soviet antagonisms.⁵⁶ Military leaders also raised the question of the proper degree of military independence of civilian rule. It may be that the Soviet military or certain segments of it prevailed upon the party leaders to apply the Brezhnev doctrine to China. The party leaders, for their part may

54. Ishwer Ojha, op.cit., pp. 210-259.

55. Ibid.

56. Thomas Robinson, op.cit., American Political Science Review, Vol. 66, no: 6, Dec., 1972. See also Pravda, Nov. 1, 2, 1968, KVS, no:19, Oct. 1968, pp. 61-7; KVS, no:24, Dec., 1968; and KVS, no:2, Jan. 1969, p. 14, in Thomas Robinson. This will be discussed in detail in the following section.

have been agitated by the Chinese heresy of praising Mao and considering him as a successor of Lenin in China during this period.⁵⁷ The Soviets may have intervened to punish the extreme leftists which Moscow regarded as heretics and a threat to the Soviet leadership of the socialist camp. Thus, the Soviet leaders may have yielded to a decision to become involved in a limited war on the Sino-Soviet border, which would also deter further Chinese efforts to intensify the border disputes.

In late 1968, the general anti-Soviet attitude in China was deteriorating. But Chinese leaders may have initiated the border incidents, particularly the Ussuri clashes, for the purpose of consolidation, and to embarrass the Soviets while they were distracted. The military, under Lin Piao, now dominant, may have wanted to check increasing Soviet troops on border. It is at least possible that Lin Piao may have initiated a military action on the border to consolidate or enhance his position in preparation for the coming 9th party congress.⁵⁸ In view of the fact that the leftists were striving to maintain their position, they may have consented to the idea of the military leader. Considering

57. At this stage, the Cultural Revolution was approaching an end. Mao was regarded as great leader and his thought was considered as a successful instrument to bring about success in the Cultural Revolution. See for example, Peking Review, Jan. 3, 1969.

58. As an assigned heir to Mao, Lin may have prepared for an opportunity to consolidate and enhance his position. The situation in early 1969 may have appeared to provide such a chance.

the rising importance of Lin Piao in 1968, a major border clash may have served to further enhance his position. He claimed in 1968 that it is important to

remain vigilant, assure success of Chairman Mao's greatest strategic plan, remain vigilant, enhance the preparedness against war, and defend the country, the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.⁵⁹

In fact, the anti-Soviet attitude of Lin Piao could only consolidate his power and influence. Although some even go so far as to argue Lin was present on the border during the clashes,⁶⁰ it is possible that the Chinese may have been interested in harrassing the Soviets while they were engaged in the Eastern Europe and Middle East (Arab-Israeli War),⁶¹ which rendered the Soviets vulnerable and less likely to retaliate on a large scale.

The Czechoslovakian invasion, therefore, was a serious matter which intensified the Sino-Soviet hostility and may in one of two ways been related to the Ussuri clashes of 1969. The 1969 clashes, however, were so serious as to raise larger questions about the strategic and security concerns of both sides.

Security Problems

So far, China's perception of the Soviet military buildup

59. Peoples Daily, Oct. 2, 1968; Lin was charged with being anti-Soviet in Soviet documents, see CDSP, Vol. XIX, no:40, pp. 22-23. Also see Peoples Daily Oct. 1, 1966, and Nov. 6, 1967, for Lin's anti-Soviet comments.

60. Edmund O. Clubb, China and Russia: The Great Game, (Columbia U. Press, 1971) P. 501; or Robert Guillain, Le Monde, March 5, 1969.

61. Thomas Robinson, op.cit. APSR, Vol. 66, no:6, p. 1198.

on the border, the Vietnam War and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia have been discussed as some aggravating factors in the Sino-Soviet disputes. In this section, the more general security problems of both countries will be reviewed for their contribution to the border disputes of 1966-1969.

It can be argued that during the late sixties, Chinese actions on the border were governed mainly by security anxieties and fear of war. China's fear was based on an aggressive image of Moscow and a perception of their own military vulnerability. In particular, the Chinese may have feared a Soviet air strike against their nuclear installations. Considering their inferior arms and weaponry, the internal turmoil of the Cultural Revolution may have prompted greater apprehension about such dangers. This could have prompted the Chinese moves on the border to deter any Soviet plan of intruding into Chinese territories. Presuming that the Czech. invasion was seen as a warning, China could also have intensified the border conflicts to denote their war readiness. That is, while a war was obviously too risky, China may have provoked some crises, hoping to maximize the leverage of a marginal position.⁶²

To focus the people's attention on a possible war, and the importance of production and war preparation, the Chinese

62. See for example Glenn Synder's discussion of a country's response in case of crisis situation in Jurgen Dedring, op.cit.

articulation of external hostility was always an useful means.⁶³ Border clashes could have helped in some ways with the campaign to reconstruct the party and maintain order in early 1969. Immediately after the clashes on Chenpao, large scale demonstrations involving 300,000 to 500,000 people occurred in a few large cities in China. This gave an impression that the demonstrations were planned beforehand. Further, the Chinese leaders took advantage of the imperialist image of the Soviets, with extensive media attention to these charges. (Many different countries and parties were against Soviet behavior on border)⁶⁴

Although the revolutionary committees were set up in late 1968, recovery to normalcy was still an urgent task. The moderate leaders may also have welcomed a move such as a "limited" border clash, which could help promote unity, sacrifice, and higher production. It seems highly probable that the border clashes were functional for Chinese domestic politics, in terms of internal recovery and reconstruction.

In what way may the border disputes have represented or reflected Soviet security policies? If Moscow ordered intrusions into Chinese territory, there appear to be two possibilities. First, the hardliners or hawks in the Soviet leadership who favored coercive policies may have perceived

63. Liao Kuang-sheng, op.cit.; see also Pravda May 3, 1969 or An Tai-sung, op.cit., Sino-Soviet Territorial Disputes, pp. 53-54, Soviet writer Konstanian charged Chinese leaders in particular, Lin Piao, as instigators of the Ussuri clashes.

64. See for example Peking Review, March 14, 21, 1969.

the period after the Cultural Revolution as the appropriate time to intimidate the Chinese on the border. Second, the Soviet leaders may have expected to achieve some specific policy goals through the military clashes in 1969.

In 1969, the Soviet hawks were getting impatient as regards to developments in China, in which the professional military was becoming more and more politically important. A debate took place inside the Soviet Union between the red army and the party leaders in 1968 over the independence of the military. The publicized discussions seem to suggest a preventive war had been seriously considered.⁶⁵ In the midst of these debates, the military had urged military training and high combat readiness frequently.⁶⁶ Chinese belligerence and plans to dominate Asia were also noted.⁶⁷ Throughout the month of October in 1968, the Sino-Soviet border problem was discussed, and aroused debates at home.⁶⁸ It thus seems highly likely that there must have been a certain group of

65. Thomas Robinson, op.cit., APSR, Vol.66, no:6, Dec. 1972, pp.1196-8. See also Roman Kolkowicz, The Soviet Military and the Communist Party, (N.J.:Princeton U.Press, 1967), p.161; CDSP, Vol.XIX no:43, pp.32-3; Vol.XX no:28, 1968, pp.11-16 and Pravda Nov.1 & 2, 1968 and KVS, Jan. 1969, p.14, as cited in Thomas Robinson.

66. In the 23rd Congress of the CPSU, the Soviet leaders decision was that "the party will henceforth in every way strengthen the defense potential of the Soviet Union, increase the power of the armed forces ...and maintain the level of military readiness of troops which will reliably guarantee the peaceful labor of the Soviet people." See Kinter & Scott, op.cit., pp.324, 336. The CDSP also recorded "significant new success have been achieved in raising the combat readiness of troops!" The strategic rocket troops were also ready. See CDSP Vol.XIX no:43, pp.32-3, 17. In 1967 Brezhnev and Podgorny were in Kiev to inspect troops taking part in exercises. See CDSP, Vol.XIX no:39, pp.27-8. Also see CDSP XIX 45; 27; 49, for combat readiness.

67. See CDSP, Vol.XIX no:29, pp.8-10, April 1967.

68. Thomas Robinson, op.cit., APSR, pp.1196-98. He noted that the military took a harder line in 1968. As early as 1966, the offensive doctrine was suggested and Zakharov had suggested a preventive war against China.

leaders who favored a preventive war against the Chinese. The date of these intensive debates coincided with the frequent border disputes in the late 1968 and early 1969. The militancy of the red army was to a certain degree heightened. In 1968, the Soviets had 8-10 divisions in Mongolia, and strong fortifications in various areas. They may have been induced to move by the Chinese, who appeared more and more provoking on the border. A few Western analysts have come to the conclusion that the Soviet Union was responsible for the Ussuri clashes.⁶⁹ H. R. Haldeman in his memoirs claims that the Soviets inquired about the possibility of U. S. collaboration in a preventive war against the Chinese in 1969, but were in any case determined to do this alone.⁷⁰

Soviet hawks may have decided to initiate border clashes because they were worried about Chinese belligerence.

69. For example, Leonard Schapiro suggested that the clashes on Ussuri were part of a pre-emptive strike on Sinkiang: Peter Burton came to a similar conclusion that the Soviet aimed to cripple China's nuclear installations. See Leonard Schapiro, "Communism in Collision", Studies of Comparative Communism, July/Oct., 1969, pp. 121-129; Peter Burton, "Background of the Territorial issues", Ibid., pp. 130-148 (note especially his record of prolific documents). Harold Hinton, who figured that a preventive war had been considered as early as 1966, suggested that the Soviets initiated the Ussuri clashes for political purposes, see The Bear at the Gate, by Harold Hinton, op.cit., p. 20-24. He also said that the Chinese fear of the Soviets was justified. Another analyst, An Tai-sung did not say whether the Soviets were responsible, but stated that the Soviets' reports of the clashes were contradictory. See An Tai-sung, Sino-Soviet Territorial Disputes, op.cit., p. 91-2.

70. Time, March 1969.

Russian analysts had often characterized the Chinese approach to military science as "pure adventurism".⁷¹ As a minimum, high-profile Soviet military posture on the Chinese border through deployment of increasing troops and missiles, helped produce higher border tensions.

As mentioned in Chapter III, Soviet fortifications and troops deployment increased tremendously from 1966 onward.⁷¹ In 1967, there were increased Soviet troops in Eastern part of China, as well as troops in Outer Mongolia to deter possible Chinese encroachment. New missile sites were installed with missiles capable of hitting China's nuclear installations, Manchuria and Peking.⁷³ It has been suggested that the Chinese leaders complained about the Soviet transfer of thirteen divisions from Eastern Europe to the Soviet Far East from 1966-1968.⁷⁴ These troops were obviously expected to deter any Chinese invasion. Apart from this, the continual Soviet buildup in the late sixties was an undeniable indication that Moscow was fully prepared for a war with the Chinese, should that be desirable or necessary.

Regardless of who initiated these clashes, this Soviet position of strength helped to maintain tensions while

71. Raymond Garthoff, "A Soviet Critique of China's Total Strategy", Reporter, Vol. 34, May 1966, pp. 48-49.

72. The Soviets had signed a new defence agreement with Mongolia. See also John Gittings, op.cit., Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 447.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

detering the Chinese. This view puts the Soviets essentially in control of the situation on the border. Certainly, by the end of 1968, at least, this must have been frustrating for the Chinese who reacted by moving more troops to the border. This cycle of stimuli and reactions aggravated the Sino-Soviet border tensions.

Is there evidence the Soviets started the 1969 clashes? According to Western reports, the red army was extremely well prepared in the March 1969 clashes on the Ussuri, in terms of force and strategy, a sign of possible premeditation.⁷⁵ Besides, the Soviets' retreat from Bonn, and the rapid military buildup on border all happened within a few months before the serious clashes which occurred on the Sino-Soviet borderlands in January, February and March of 1969.

The Soviet goal of achieving a position of control may have been related to her own frustration in leading the communist bloc, and in preventing the increasing Chinese international self-assertion. The possible motive for Soviet initiation of border clashes may have been to induce the Chinese to make concessions, so as to end the border disputes as a source of conflict.

At home, the party leaders may have welcomed a border clash for domestic purposes. Apparently, unity between the red army and the party leaders was a major goal of the

⁷⁵. See W. R. Kintner & H. F. Scott, op.cit., pp. 23-24, 33-34.

Soviet leaders.⁷⁶ The party leaders may also have conceived of distracting world attention from Eastern Europe to the Far East. As far as the Warsaw Pact was concerned, the Soviet Union may have exploited the case to rally them against China. It seems not a coincidence that the border disputes came just before the scheduled international communist conference.

As great internal cohesion will improve a country's bargaining position in foreign affairs, Soviet leaders may have wanted to overcome internal dissension so that more attention could be devoted to external affairs.⁷⁷ Economic difficulties and intellectual rebellion seemed to be pressing Soviet leaders in the late sixties. The Soviet leaders may also have been interested in invigorating a flagging economy, and stemming social apathy and ideological erosion.⁷⁸ Dissent at home had already created a great many problems that the leaders in Moscow may have wanted to ease by arousing clashes on the Sino-Soviet border.

76. Tai-Sung An, op.cit., Sino-Soviet Territorial Disputes, p. 97.

77. Ibid.

78. See R. Tokes ed. Dissent in the USSR (Baltimore: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1975); Z. Brzezinski, "Soviet Politics: Transformation or Degeneration", Problems of Communism, Vol. 15, no:1, Jan.-Feb., 1969, p. 10.

Summary

A survey of the overall character of Sino-Soviet relations, as well as a consideration of the impact of Vietnam and Czechoslovakia on that relationship, reveals many ways in which the dynamics of Sino-Soviet hostility can explain the intensification of the border disputes. The Cultural Revolution, as a phenomenon of domestic Chinese politics, may have had an effect on Chinese foreign policy, and on the images and perceptions of China by other states. Yet this chapter has shown that a persuasive case can be made for external and systemic sources of the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1966-1969.

Conclusion

The content of this concluding section will mainly consist of the findings of this thesis. In the first two chapters, I have examined the background and the military dimensions of the border disputes. The modulation of the conflicted border, particularly in the Cultural Revolution period, is the focus of chapter four. Then I proceeded first to investigate the causal relationship between the border disputes and the Cultural Revolution, and second, to inquire into the global political environment in which the intensified border tensions occurred.

After exploring the background to the border disputes in a more general manner, I came to the conclusion that the border disputes are due partly to economic and territorial problems, but further, to historical Sino-Soviet animosity and habitual Russian encroachments into Chinese territories. Unresolved border disputes have long served as a vehicle for mutual recriminations. The analysis left no doubt that the border tensions to some extent simply reflect the overall state of Sino-Soviet relations, expressive of national feeling and polemics. Both states may have attempted from time to time to maintain tensions on the border disputes in order to achieve policy goals functional to themselves.

Propaganda and polemics obviously often exaggerated, perhaps even inflamed these disputes. By the late sixties, mutual fortifications drew attention to the military aspects

as a dangerous and possibly independent dimension of a seemingly irreconcilable conflict.

In view of the manner in which the Cultural Revolution encouraged and unleashed anti-foreign, anti-revisionist as well as specifically anti-Soviet actions and attitudes, we can confidently conclude that the Cultural Revolution was at times directly and closely related to the rising tensions on the border. The strong radical orientation of the Cultural Revolution and its overt anti-Soviet aspects were of importance in creating a crisis situation on the long, sensitive border at certain points — particularly in the first and second phases of the Cultural Revolution. Hostile Soviet reactions to the Cultural Revolution confirmed and no doubt encouraged Chinese belligerence. This reflected the euphemistic relationship between the Cultural Revolution and the border disputes. The Cultural Revolution was also a power and policy struggle within the CPC. It represented an attempted eradication of the Chinese moderates by assault on the party machinery, which utilized support of the military. Defeat and removal of Chinese leaders who advocated cooperation with the USSR in Vietnam, together with the ascendance of military elements in Chinese political institutions, appear to be another way in which the Cultural Revolution may have contributed to border disputes — particularly the disputes of early 1969.

Yet a broader look at Sino-Soviet relations and global

politics reveals other factors which may be important in explaining the border disputes of 1966-1969. For instance, China and the Soviet Union were at odds in so many areas that the Cultural Revolution seems hardly necessary to explain border clashes which reflected extreme mutual hostility. Chinese refusal to cooperate in Soviet support for Vietnam was a very serious matter which was in some ways totally independent of the domestic crisis represented by the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, contacts between China and the United States may have worried Soviet leaders and added to anger and resentment. The ideas that the Soviets may have been directly responsible for provocative behavior on the border acquires plausibility.

When Czechoslovakia became the first victim of the Brezhnev Doctrine, the Chinese leaders voiced their apprehension that the invasion represented a dangerous precedent for them. Peking's suspicion of the Soviets' motives may have been accurate, if we can believe the widespread notion that hawks in Moscow supported coercive policies toward the Chinese. In other words, the border disputes can be related as well to Moscow's desire or plan to take advantage of the abnormalcy and chaotic situation resulting from the Cultural Revolution.

The war scare became part of Chinese politics as both the Chinese and the Soviets deployed more and more forces along the border. As this occurred, immediate security

needs of each other became more directly involved. As both nations emphatically spelled out the need for border defenses and increasingly physical conflicts took place, border tensions became extremely high. In this situation, perceptions of the adversary's motives and intentions became highly important. Moreover, the immediate situation along the border became a factor in itself, in which provocation, accidental confrontation, preemptive or preventive maneuvers could set off or escalate to a major clash.

It is also worth noting that border disputes can be seen as functional in some ways for both sides. For the Chinese, articulating hostility to the Soviets may have facilitated domestic consolidation. Moreover, the Chinese made good use of the border disputes in which the Soviets were portrayed as oppressive and dangerous socialist imperialists.

All these factors help to show that the Cultural Revolution, alone, is a partial but inadequate explanation of the border disputes. We must note also that the border disputes continued in the year after the Cultural Revolution with occasional serious clashes. We may conclude then, that in several direct and indirect ways, the Chinese Cultural Revolution did aggravate the border disputes. However, as an increasingly militarized border between two seemingly implacably hostile states, the Sino-Soviet frontier has been the site of major and minor confrontations for many reasons apart from the vicissitude of domestic Chinese politics between 1966-1969.

Actually, this interesting study of two phenomena occurring coincidentally has not been sufficiently expounded by many sinologists. Nevertheless, it seems worthwhile to study the Sino-Soviet relationship which has appeared so full of danger for the rest of the world. The Cultural Revolution and the border disputes are each of them, complex phenomena. Untangling possible causal relationships between this phase in China's domestic politics and these incidents of external international conflict has proved exceedingly difficult. Simple correlations and assertive claims about the influence of one event upon the other cannot be proved. At the very least, however, the complexities encountered have demonstrated the humility and caution with which any analyst must approach the explanatory exercise.

Table I

CHRONOLOGY OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION (1959-1969)

1959	Purges of P'eng Teh-huah, the Defense Minister; Liu Shao-ch'i succeeds Mao as chairman of the Republic
1960	Liu Shao-ch'i initiated new political and economic programs; Party placed emphasis on economic development, lessen ideological control
1961	Rectification Campaign; modification of Mao's Great Leap policy.
1962	Socialist Education Movement launched; Liu chaired 7000 cadres Conference to criticize Mao's policies.
1963	Learn from the PLA Campaign, 5 points directive of rectification; increasing rivalry between Mao and Liu.
1964	Big Four Clean Ups, continuation of the Socialist Education Movement.
1965	Purges of Wu Han, Teng T'o and anti-Mao intellectuals; Power struggles within the party intensified; growing PLA support of the Mao's faction.
1966	May 16 Circulars denounced capitalist roaders; August 5 Bombard the Headquarter rebellion is justified; August 11, 16 Points descision concerning the Cultural Revolution; March, purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing; red guards mobilized demonstrations and purges.
1967	January power seizure; Feburary failure of power seizure, collapse of local government in Shanghai; July, Wu-Han Incident and army intervention; formation of 7 revolutionary committees; September, Chou En-lai order revolutionaries to calm down.
1968	Accelerate establishment of the revolutionary committees; purges of ultra leftist and rehabilitation of old cadres.
1969	April 9, 9th Party Congress, ousted Liu Shao-ch'i formally; new constitution adopted, Lin Piao named as Mao's successor.

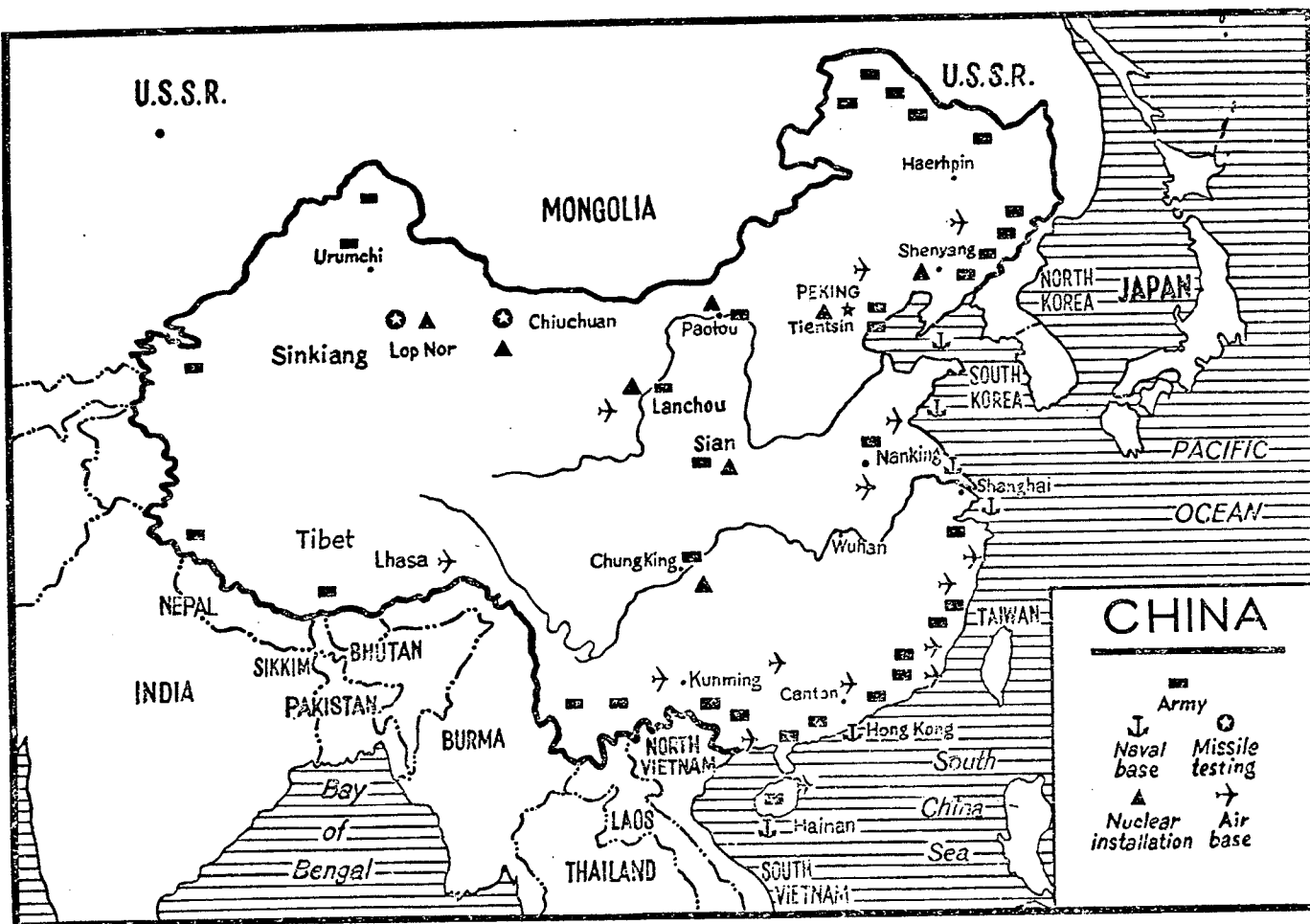
Table II

MASS CAMPAIGNS IN COMMUNIST CHINA (1930-1972)

1930	Rectification Campaign in China's Soviet Areas
1942	Rectification Campaign in Yen-an
1950	Land Reform, Suppression of Counter-Revolutionaries Campaign
1951	Three Antis, Five Antis, Nation. wide Thought Reform
1953-55	Socialist Transition Campaign, First Five Years Plan inaugurated, Purge of Kao Kang and Jao Hsiao-shak
1956	Hundred Flowers Campaign, free criticism
1957	Anti-Rightist Rectification Campaign
1958	Three Red Banners Campaign: The Great Leap Forward Hsiafang, and Commune.
1961	Rectification Campaign, especially in literary and cultural circles
1962	Socialist Education Movement, Four Withs, Four Clearances, and etc.
1964	Emulate from the PLA Campaign; New Rectification Campaign
1966	Cultural Revolution
1972	Criticize Lin Piao, Criticize Confucian Campaign

Table III Border Incidents And Sino-Soviet Relations (1959-1979)

	Border Incidents	Sino-Soviet Relations
1959	Border clashes in Sinkiang, Kirgiziya.	Soviet abrogated agreement to share nuclear arms
1960	China claimed border incidents started this year.	Soviet experts withdrawal, China published "Long Live Leninism".
1961	intrusion in Sinkiang	22nd Conference, Khrushchev attacked Albania of supporting China.
1962	60,000 muslims fled to Soviet side; strict surveillance on both sides.	China attacked Soviet capitulation and pro-Indian attitude in Sino-Indian border disputes.
1963	Soviet initiated clashes in Ili, Sinkiang.	China denounced Test Ban treaty; polemics led to open break; Sino-Soviet talk in Moscow; China sent 25 points letter to SU implied the withdrawal of Khrushchev.
1964	strict defensive character on both sides, minor conflicts on border.	Failure of border talks
1965	Soviet troops harassed Mogolian-Chinese border.	Chinese refusal to join tri-pritie meeting; 2nd Afro-Asian Conference postponed.
1966	Chinese red guards aroused border conflicts in Sinkiang.	China refused to attend 23rd Party Congress.
1967	January border incidents in Amur; December border clashes on Ussuri; rising border conflicts.	Demonstrations on both sides; China strongly against revisionism.
1968	January and September border incidents; China accused Soviet initiations.	China denounced non-proliferation treaty; proposed Warsaw talk with the United States
1969	Jan.-Feb. border clashes; March 2, 14, 15 incidents on Chenpao; April 16, 17, 25 clashes in Chuguchak; May 12, 14, 20, 24, 25, clashes on Amur and Sinkiang; June 10 clash on Yu Min, July 8, Pa-Ch'a, and Aug. 13, large scale clash in Yu-Min, Sinkiang.	Soviet proposed talk on March 26; China agreed to negotiate on May; September, Chou En-lai and Kosygin met for border settlement after Soviet sent ultimatum.
1970-1971	War preparations on Sino-Soviet frontier; higher tensions and threat of war.	
1978	China protests Soviet military intervention in district of Heilungkiang (May 11.)	



Chinese MILITARY REGIONS

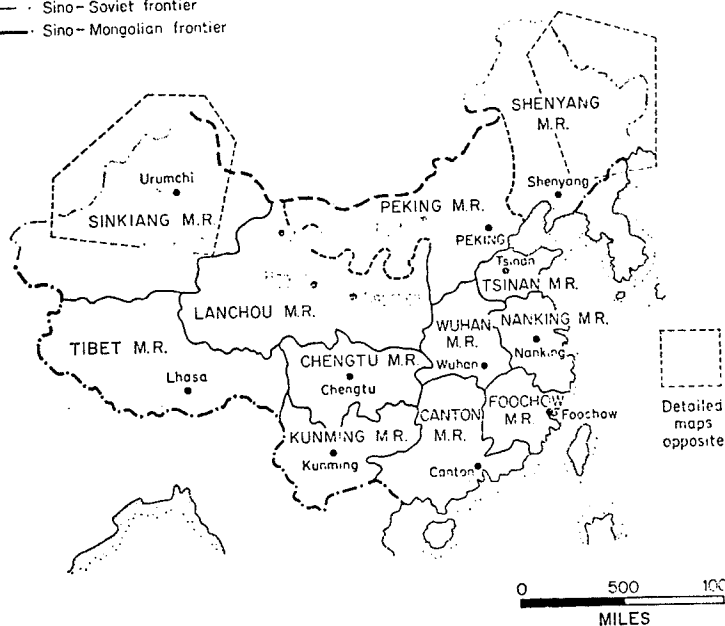
- Military Region (M.R.) boundary
- - - Probable M.R. boundary
- Nuclear or missile facility

Troop strengths (regular army):

Peking MR (Hebei, Shansi provinces; Inner Mongolia (part))	32 divisions
Shenyang MR (Liaoning, Kirin, Heilungkiang provinces; Inner Mongolia (part))	
Tsinan M.R. (Shantung province)	
Nanking MR (Kiangsu, Anhwei, Chekiang provinces)	28 divisions
Foochow MR (Kiangsi, Fukien provinces)	
Wuhan MR (Honan, Hupei provinces)	28 divisions
Canton MR (Hunan, Kwangtung, Kwangsi provinces; Hainan Island)	
Chengtu MR (Szechwan province)	12 divisions
Kunming MR (Yunnan, Kweichow provinces)	
Lanchow MR (Tsinghai, Kansu, Ninghsia, Shensi provinces)	11 divisions
Tibet MR	3 divisions
Sinkiang MR	4 divisions

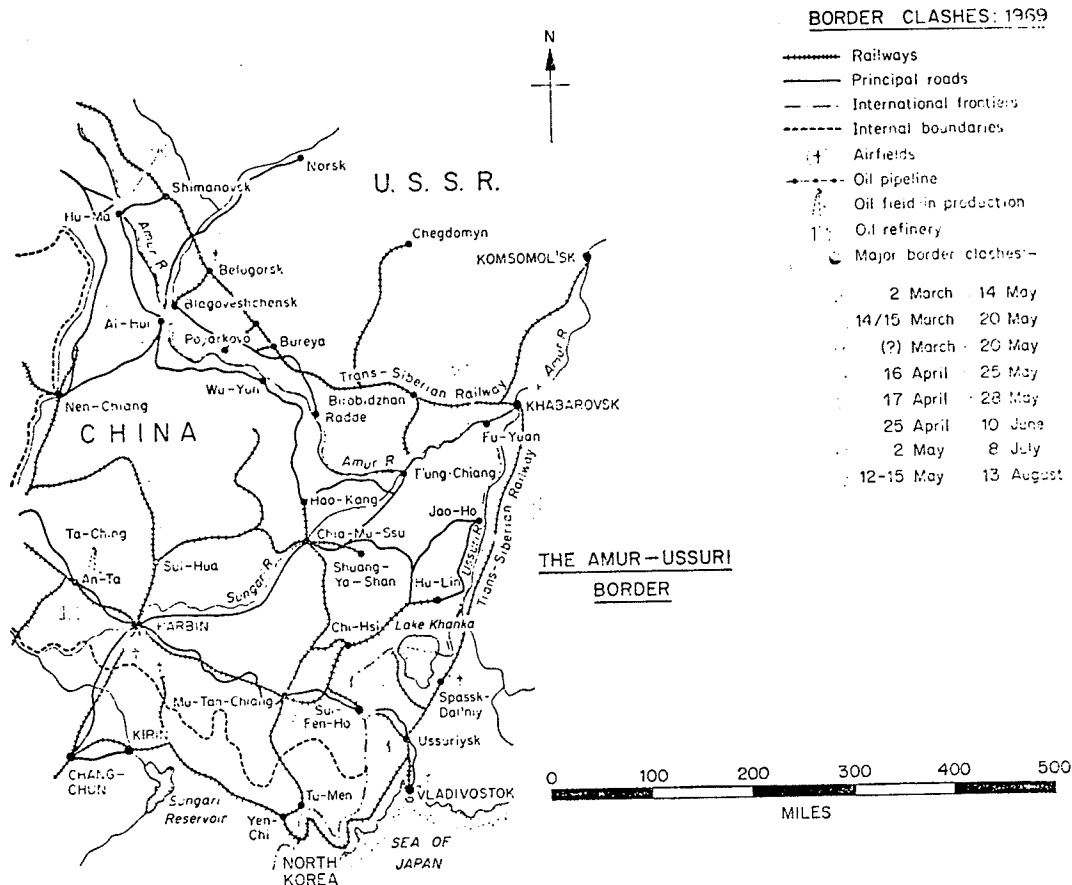
NUCLEAR and MISSILE FACILITIES

- - - Sino-Soviet frontier
- - - Sino-Mongolian frontier

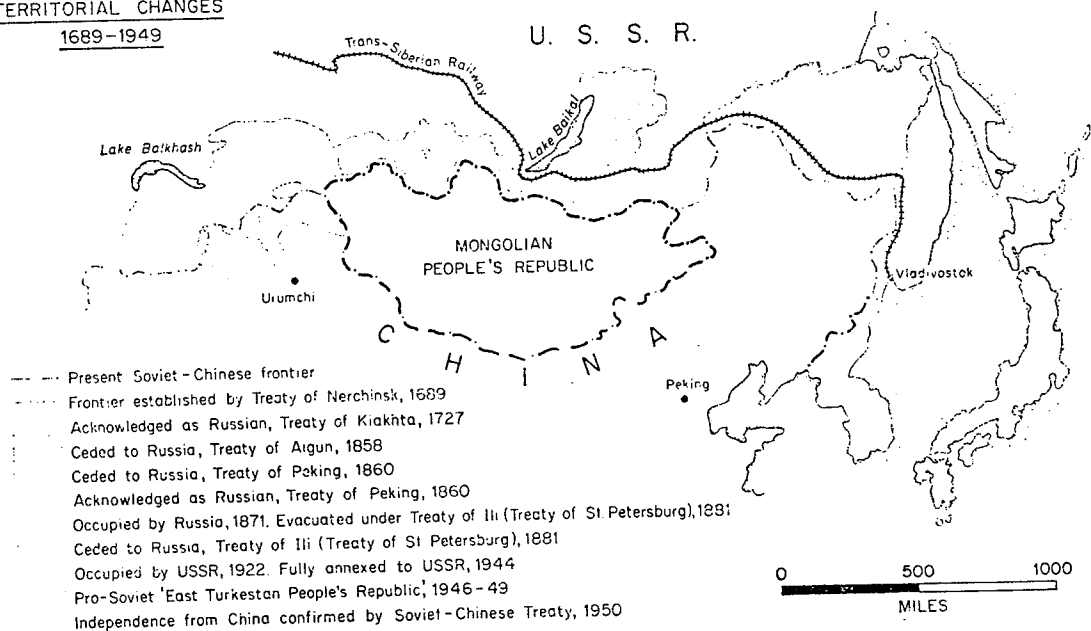


Nuclear and Missile Facilities

The installations at Lanchow, Haiyen and Paotou have been reported to be concerned with the production of fissile material, including uranium enrichment. Lop Nor is the principal testing site for atomic weapons. In addition to the facilities shown, there have been unconfirmed reports of installations connected with the atomic weapons and missile programmes at several other locations.



TERRITORIAL CHANGES
1689-1949



MAP III

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