The Process of Theoretical and Political Change in the
International Communist Movement.

by

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DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

I declare that this sub-thesis is the result of my own original work and that all sources used have been acknowledged.

P.M.J. DOGAN
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CC = Central Committee
CPC = Communist Party of China
CPSU = Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CC, CPC = Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CC, CPSU = Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Cominform = Communist Information Bureau
Comintern = Communist International
ECCI = Executive Committee of the Communist International
PLA = People's Liberation Army
PRC = People's Republic of China
USSR = Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
US = United States of America
INTRODUCTION

Theory and Politics in Marxism-Leninism.
Politics is the creature of conflict. It is the mechanism by which conflict about public policy is resolved. It is about decision and choice, it operates through competition and compromise based on the relative priority of different interests. Thus, the essence of political decision lies in the process by which interests are apportioned a relative worth and priority.

Conflict may arise between interests which are broadly sympathetic, as well as between those which are antithetical, because all political interests derive from different social goals and political values. It is these goals and values - political doctrines - which determine the priority attached to a political interest by any particular group. They establish the criteria which define political benefit and political disadvantage. Thus, politics may be described as a mechanism of choice, competitive in form, but philosophical in substance. The science of politics explains the process of competition, the art of politics provides the reason for competition.

This sub-thesis is about the process of political change in the international Communist movement. It is based on the contention that Marxist-Leninist organizations are primarily motivated by philosophical interests, but that these interests are pursued through the process of power political competition. The history of world Communism can only be explained in terms of the dynamic relationship Marxism-Leninism creates between theoretical and political interests.
The structure of Marxist-Leninist philosophy provides the basis for Communist policy formation. It is prior to and determines the policy response to outside power political events. Nevertheless, the international political system and the internal politics of the Communist parties are effectively based on mechanical political competition. Thus, neither a purely doctrinal nor a purely political analysis can properly explain the history of the movement. The present task is to explain the structure by which doctrinal and political interests interact to produce action in Marxist-Leninist organizations.

The following study cannot document the vast history of the international movement. It will proceed by an examination of the major doctrinal, political and historical stages through which the movement has passed. This will consist of detailed doctrinal studies of Leninism and Stalinism; the politics of the Sino-Soviet dispute will provide a case study of the relationship between politics and doctrine; and, finally, each of these studies will be placed within the basic historical structure of Marxism-Leninism as a large international political movement.

It is apparent that the doctrinal bases of Leninism and Stalinism cannot be divorced from their historical and political background. Nor can the Sino-Soviet dispute be considered a purely political phenomenon. This would deny the basic contention of the sub-thesis. The restricted nature of
the proposed structure of analysis is dictated by the requirements of space. The categories of analysis are not absolute, they merely establish the emphasis of each section. Each chapter will consider the essential doctrinal and political structure of its subject era.

The basic doctrinal contention of the present work is that Marxist-Leninist philosophy contains theoretical interests of two distinct types.

The first relate to theoretical and ideological discipline. Leninist class analysis teaches that the proletariat is unable to develop a socialist consciousness under the conditions of capitalism. This supposed proletarian naivety leaves socialist ideology extremely vulnerable to subversion by reformist bourgeois ideology such as trade unionism. It is, therefore, important to maintain socialist consciousness through strict doctrinal discipline. This philosophical need is reinforced by the organizational requirement for absolute discipline within all revolutionary organizations.

Against this demand for doctrinal orthodoxy is the Leninist recognition that political action and historical change inevitably alter the basis of theoretical speculation. This process is central to Marxism-Leninism and dialectical materialism. It demands that objective conditions determine theoretical and ideological approach. These conditions constantly change over time and place. Thus, some process of
doctrinal development and diversification is essential to the attainment of Communism. The dilemma of Communist leadership is to distinguish between genuine theoretical development - based on new objective conditions - and revisionist attempts to subvert socialist consciousness.

The historical contention of the sub-thesis flows from this doctrinal structure of Marxism-Leninism. It will be argued that the history of world Communism can be divided into two separate eras distinguished by the ascendancy of the different Leninist values of discipline and diversity.

During the inter-war period world Communism was dominated by the Stalinist Comintern. The revisionism of Stalin made the survival of the Soviet state a pre-requisite for the final victory of socialism. It was a policy which emphasized the disciplinary impulse of Leninism to the exclusion of doctrinal diversity. The analysis will concentrate on demonstrating that Stalinism was indeed a revision of Leninism, but one which could nevertheless be justified as reasonable given the contemporary vulnerability of both the USSR and the international movement.

The next period began after the Second World War with the advent of independent Communist Parties materially able, and politically willing, to reject Soviet hegemony and to apply Marxist-Leninist doctrine creatively to their own objective conditions. But despite the latent doctrinal tensions
involved in Stalin's denial of local objective conditions, the prestige and power of the Soviet Union managed to maintain a form of international discipline until the outbreak of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

The dispute appears as a watershed which finally broke Soviet hegemony, enabling theoretical and ideological development along the lines predicted by Lenin. It had been Lenin's belief that the spread of revolution, by producing a collective of independent governing Communist parties, would lead to doctrinal diversification. While the expectation that several Communist governments would quickly come into being was proved wrong, he was ultimately proved right to the extent that unconditional Soviet doctrinal hegemony was destroyed by the advent of other governing parties. It should also be noted that while the Sino-Soviet dispute provided the catalyst for the collapse of Soviet hegemony, it had been under pressure since the split with Yugoslavia. Indeed, even the abortive Hungarian Revolution was itself evidence of the doctrinal diversity released by governing parties. In the event, the dispute fractured the mindless doctrinal centralism of the Stalinist era, and brought closer that Marxist-Leninist ideal eloquently described by Trotsky when he wrote that "The development of the political and ideological maturity of the communist parties has its own internal rhythm, based on their own experiences".

This sub-thesis is not a general history of international Communism. It is concerned with structures and specific causal processes which can be used to sustain a contention about the process of change in Marxist-Leninist organizations.

The first section will deal with the doctrines of Leninism and Stalinism. These chapters will concentrate on the process of doctrinal analysis in Marxist-Leninist political cultures. The first chapter will establish the imperatives of Leninist doctrine, the second will provide a case study of doctrinal change. The next section will consider the Sino-Soviet dispute as an example of the way doctrinal and political interests interact to produce Communist policy. These chapters will consider doctrinal issues in the context of political events rather than Marxist-Leninist legitimacy.

The final section will seek to demonstrate the historical validity of the overall argument suggested by each of these case studies. It will establish certain miscellaneous historical facts necessary to support the framework of the overall analysis.

The study of political philosophy involves the analysis of complex ideas and requires the use of specific terminology. It follows that the sense of any political analysis depends upon the early and explicit definition of these terms. It is, therefore, appropriate to provide explicit definitions of the major ideas to be considered throughout the analysis.
In the study of Communist politics philosophical terms such as doctrine, theory and ideology and are in common usage. These are not usually inter-changeable and should be accorded specific meanings. Yet philosophy itself cannot be uncontroversially defined in any single formula. It is used:

to cover a wide variety of intellectual undertakings all of which combine a high degree of generality with more or less exclusive reliance on reasoning rather than observation or experience to justify their claims.

Thus, at one level philosophy can be used as a broad collective term to describe this class of intellectual undertakings. In addition to this general use of the term philosophy, it is given other more specific meanings in the various traditions within the modern academic discipline of general philosophy. In ethics, the field of general philosophy most related to political analysis, "a philosophy" is deemed to be "a set or system of ultimate values". The term theory, by contrast, can be held to mean "a set of beliefs, consciously held and explicitly stated, that purports to set forth and elucidate a definitive but limited system of values". And ideology can be held to mean a set of attitudes conditioned by theory in each particular time and place.

According to this view, ideology is derivative of theory, it represents specific programmes of action designed to achieve theoretical goals.

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
These definitions will be used in this sub-thesis. In the first instance, philosophy will be used as a simple collective term. But it will also be used in the ethical sense of a set or system of ultimate relations when contrasted with the idea of theory as a definitive but limited system of values and ideology as a set of attitudes conditioned by theory in each particular time and place. In order to avoid confusion over the term philosophy, the word doctrine will be used as a collective term for the hierarchy of philosophical, theoretical and ideological relations in which philosophy will be taken as prior to theory and theory as prior to ideology. It should be emphasized at this point that the sub-thesis is primarily concerned with Marxism-Leninism as theory - a definitive but limited system of values - and that philosophy will usually be used as a collective term. It is, nevertheless, important to highlight these significant distinctions.

This sub-thesis is based on a distinction between philosophy and politics which is both arbitrary and problematic. It is, after all, concerned with political philosophies, political doctrines, political theories and political ideologies. The term political will be used in three ways throughout the

6. There has been much debate as to whether or not Marxism, with or without Leninism, is philosophy as such, certainly not all philosophical questions can be resolved by applying the Hegelian derived dialectic. Marx himself appears to waver on the question, the early Marx of the Grundrisse having apparently been more of a philosopher and the later Marx of Kapital more of an economist. The avowed objective of changing the world in a particular direction, rather than merely understanding it, introduces more "politics" than some philosophers might consider proper.
sub-thesis. First, it will be used in a general way to denote the governmental and social context of the ideas under consideration. Secondly, it will be used to denote the particular values of power politics - the politics of expediency wherein the interests which motivate behaviour are based on the acquisition and conservation of wealth, power or status by individuals, groups or nations, largely irrespective of other ethical or philosophical values. Finally, it will be used to describe the mechanism by which much political action takes place, what W.B. Gallie called "politicking...a whole congeries of social processes - of competitive claims, of mutual criticism and complaint, of bargaining, debating, converting, squaring and fixing." These definitions are not given as definitive, but are established merely to distinguish the process of real-world politics from the aims of Marxist-Leninist political activists. They should not be taken to mean that Marxism-Leninism is itself un-political or innocent to expediency, nor to limit politics to one competitive system of conflict resolution, nor to denigrate that mechanism as only or necessarily opportunistic.

The term objective conditions relates to Marxist social analysis. These conditions identify the historical imperatives and class relationships by which Marxists characterize different societies. Political interests arise concerning the interpretation of these conditions. The term dialectical materialism refers to the logical system utilized

by Marx, Engels and Lenin, which was ultimately derived from Hegel. It is premised on the notion that reality is characterized by change, inter-relationships, and contradictions, and that progress proceeds through the Triad of Thesis-Antithesis-Synthesis. It is the basis of Marxist-Leninist historical and social analysis.

The terms Marxist-Leninist, Leninist, Bolshevik and Communist, will be taken to mean that tradition of political philosophy conceived by Karl Marx, developed by Friedrich Engels, and finally modified by V.I. Lenin. The changing nature and definition of Communist theory and ideology is, of course, the basic subject of the sub-thesis. At this point, it is only necessary to note that Marxism-Leninism will be taken to mean that tradition of political philosophy and political organization approved by Lenin. It is Lenin's imprimatur which will be taken as the yard-stick for establishing the Marxist-Leninist validity of any political idea.

Those organizations which declare nominal allegiance to the philosophy and practice of Marxism-Leninism are variously referred to as Marxist-Leninist, Bolshevik, Communist and fraternal organizations, agencies, bodies or parties. They are collectively referred to as the international Communist movement, world Communism, international Communism or the Communist and Workers' Parties. The factious realignments which took place among these organizations after the Second World War are dealt with as they arise and the above collective nomenclature is retained throughout the analysis.
PART ONE

THE THEORY OF MARXIST-LENINIST ACTION
CHAPTER I

The Philosophical Structure of Marxism-Leninism.
The Philosophical Structure of Marxism-Leninism.

Unlike many political organizations, Marxist-Leninist agencies claim to be inspired by a comprehensive set of theoretical ideas. Indeed, Lenin unequivocally stated that theory should play a causal role in the formulation of Communist policy:

Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement... the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory. 1

This concern with theory is only natural in a movement whose sole purpose is to establish a political system based on a particular theoretical interpretation of human history. Thus, international Communism is not simply concerned with the attainment of political power, but with the transformation of the international political system into a better, theoretically conceived, Communist society. In order, therefore, to understand the history of the Communist movement it is essential to understand the internal logic of the political theory by which it is inspired.

The theoretical basis of Marxism-Leninism lies in the social and economic theories of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and the political and organizational theories of Lenin. The internal logic of Marxism-Leninism - the ultimate guide to understanding Communist action - can be traced directly to these theoretical roots. This chapter will consider the nature and historical significance of the relationship between theory and action in Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

2. The unity of theory and practice is an associated Marxist concept which is considered below, see: pp. 20-23, 82-84.
The importance of political theory as a guide to Marxist-Leninist action is a consistent theme in all Communist literature. And the present challenge is not to prove this accepted phenomenon, but to identify how this theory serves to direct Marxist-Leninist thought and policy processes.

The single most important consequence of the primacy of theory in Marxist-Leninist politics is the demand it apparently creates for theoretical and ideological orthodoxy. Indeed, this issue has dominated the history of the international Communist movement. As early as 1902, Lenin called for unity of Party doctrine, adding:

'unimportant' error may lead to most deplorable consequences, and only short-sighted people can consider factional disputes and a strict differentiation between shades of opinion inopportune or superfluous. The fate of the Russian Social-Democracy for very many years to come may depend on the strength of one or the other 'shade'. 3

In the first instance, theoretical and ideological diversity tends to have a deleterious impact on Party discipline. It invites doctrinal conflict and encourages factionalism which greatly reduces the operational effectiveness of any revolutionary organization.

But, while the authoritarian approach adumbrated by Lenin in 1902 may well have made a revolutionary organization more effective, its perpetuation into the practices of governing parties and the readiness with which it could be exploited for power-political purposes were to have appalling results.

4. See, Chapter II, pp. 32-46, below.
The problem is that the primacy of theory within Marxism-Leninism, whatever its ideal justification, tends to create a demand for conformity. Thus, it will be argued throughout this sub-thesis that authoritarianism is intrinsic to Marxism-Leninism, and not merely a temporary power-political necessity converted into a permanence by Stalin.

In this context, it is important to appreciate that Marxism-Leninism is a variant of Marxism, itself a tradition of 5 of thought open to interpretation. In his paper "Our Revolution", Lenin highlighted his particular interpretation of Marxism. He attacked "all our petty-bourgeois democrats and...heroes of the Second International...":

They call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic. They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have even absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statements that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility is demanded. 6

The respective approaches of Lenin and these "impossibly pedantic" Marxists to the impact of historical inevitability and the laws of socio-economic development on the course of socialist revolution illuminates Lenin's "flexible" approach to Marxism. In the first instance, Lenin argued that:

while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development. 7

7. Ibid., p. 478.
The Marxist opposition to Lenin simply argued that "The development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible." The Leninist tradition, by contrast, accepts the possibility of using revolution to aid the creation of socialism.

If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite "level of culture" is, for it differs in every West-European country), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?

This emphasis on human agency is an innovation which separates Marxism-Leninism from the Marxist tradition, and places the party and its leadership at the core of Leninist strategy. Thus, the notion of historical inevitability becomes neutered in Leninist teleology. It was accepted by Lenin as fundamental to Marxist thought, but yet plays no role in Leninist revolutionary policy. It may confirm the rectitude of the revolutionary movement, but it offers no guide to action because it says nothing about specific situations or the time-scale of the ultimate "historically inevitable" victory, and very little about how it will be achieved. It can be taken to encourage voluntarism - "giving history a push" - or inertia - "time is on our side". It gives no guidance about the relative weights to be attached to allegedly universal laws on the one hand, and the facts of a specific situation on the other, or to the roles of individuals versus those of impersonal social forces. In an

8. Ibid.
avowedly atheistic system of belief it plays the same
teleological role as faith does in religion.

Nevertheless, by implicitly reinforcing the role of the party
leadership, this Leninist interpretation of historical
inevitability does act to reinforce the demand for doctrinal
orthodoxy, thereby further strengthening the authoritarian
tendencies within Marxism-Leninism.

The differences between Marxism and Marxism-Leninism are also
profoundly evident in Lenin's interpretation of Marxist class
struggle. This interpretation contends that the exigencies of
class struggle deprive the proletariat of the intellectual
resources necessary to develop socialist consciousness. On
this matter, Lenin quotes extensively from the early work of
Karl Kautsky:

Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the
basis of profound scientific knowledge... The vehicle of
science is not the proletariat, but the *bourgeois
intelligentsia*... Thus, socialist consciousness is
something introduced into the proletarian class struggle
from without and not something that arose within it
spontaneously. 10

The full implications of this situation are only revealed by
the meaning of the term socialist consciousness. Both Lenin
and Kautsky described it as an awareness and reasoned
disapproval of the social, political and, above all, economic
system of capitalism. Socialist consciousness implies an
understanding of the class struggle in modern society and the
role of the state as an organized political force. 11

requires commitment to the destruction of capitalism, and the abolition of "the social system that compels the propertyless to sell themselves to the rich".

Thus, the bourgeoisie must provide the intellectual means for its own destruction and the proletariat is unable to conceive the means of its own liberation. This philosophical deprivation of the proletariat makes socialism extremely vulnerable to bourgeois influence. Without an indigenous socialist consciousness, the proletariat is unaware that its future prosperity depends on the destruction of capitalism. Socialism is not secured by any innate class consciousness. It is, therefore, susceptible to reformist bourgeois ideology, such as trade unionism, which serves to entrench existing class structures. It is, of course, uncontroversial to assert that this analysis of the class struggle is entirely different to that propounded by Karl Marx.

This situation means that, from the Leninist position, the political spectrum is polarized. Socialism is vulnerable to bourgeois ideology because its class beneficiaries are intellectually deprived - it has no class guardian. The unique and vulnerable nature of socialist consciousness means that the slightest deviation from basic socialist doctrine destroys the only possible socialist influence in society. Thus, the only important political distinction is that between socialist and non-socialist. By diverting the revolutionary

12. Ibid.
13. See, Cohen, op.cit.
movement from the precarious path of socialism, deviation actively aids bourgeois control.

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves in the process of their movement, the only choice is - either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a "third" ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology). Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree, means to strengthen bourgeois ideology. 14

This philosophical situation is fundamental to the nature of Marxism-Leninism. From it flows the whole framework of Communist phenomenology. It is immediately important for providing the philosophical basis for the Communist movement's emphasis upon theoretical and ideological uniformity. But it also provides the basis for vanguard ideology, and the associated principles of Party discipline and the dictatorship of the Party. Indeed, it is only against this theoretical framework that much of Lenin's work becomes truly meaningful:

Repudiation of the Party principle and of Party discipline...is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat in the interests of the bourgeoisie... 15

Thus, fundamental characteristics of Marxist philosophy apparently require that Marxism-Leninism demand absolute theoretical orthodoxy. But revolutionary theory is only part of the revolutionary process - it must be applied to the objective conditions of the host society. This brings us to the next stage in the internal logic of Marxism-Leninism: the interaction of political theory and political action.

In the Leninist conception, socialism is a scientific truth which, like the law of gravity or thermodynamics, is applied with different results in different situations, but remains constant as a set of objective principles. Indeed, the Marxist achievement was in:

putting socialism on a scientific basis and of demonstrating its necessity and inevitability from the point of view of the materialistic conception of history. 16

The work of Lenin is littered with references to the need to apply scientific socialist theory to the different objective conditions in different societies.

As long as national and state distinctions exist among people and countries...the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement...demands, not the elimination of variety or the suppression of national distinctions...but an application of the fundamental principles of communism. 17

But Marxist philosophy does not treat theory and action as separate philosophical categories: "The essence of dialectic is the living unity of understanding an actual situation while we are grappling with it". Indeed, Marx saw political, legal and moral theories as mere epiphenomena established and united by the imperatives of economic relations - the ultimate cause of historical change. Thus, unlike the laws of physics, Marxist political theory is not immune to environmental conditions. As Lenin himself agreed:

One cannot be a revolutionary Social-Democrat, without participating, in the measure of one's powers, in developing and applying...[revolutionary] theory. 20

But this would seem to contradict the very notion of theoretical and ideological orthodoxy. If "to turn aside from [socialist ideology] in the slightest degree, means to strengthen bourgeois ideology", then surely the application and subsequent development of revolutionary theory necessarily constitutes revisionism. Is Lenin correct to demand theoretical orthodoxy, or to demand theoretical application?

This dilemma turns on the dynamism of the relationship between political theory and political action. If political theory is inevitably altered by the process of application, then theoretical orthodoxy is not only inappropriate to Marxism-Leninism, but has no meaning in terms of Marxist philosophy. This issue is important because it has dominated the history of international Communism. In a movement which seeks to act only on the basis of established doctrine, this is a matter of the greatest operational, as well as philosophical importance.

It is a truism of political philosophy that all political actions influence the political environment. It is also true that rational political action is based on an assessment of the political environment. Thus, past political actions influence future political decisions.

Further, political action requires that a choice be made between the often antithetical requirements of long-term goals and short-term political survival. These conditions of political behaviour mean that all political organizations are forced to compromise in the face of divergent interests. Lenin recognized this situation when he stated:

The conclusion is clear: to reject compromises 'on principle', to reject the permissibility of compromise in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to consider seriously. 21

But political compromise, like all political action, acts upon and alters the nature of the political environment. When political action is motivated by a particular theoretical interpretation of the political environment, this situation must call forth a constant reassessment of theoretical perceptions. In his analysis of change in Marxist-Leninist states, Peter Mayer summarized this process:

Two antithetical modes of procedure were created by the rift between long-range goals and the exigencies of day-to-day decision-making, splitting the very foundations of the political structure. Thus, the political decision-making process acted upon the theoretical formulations and prescriptions on which the society was purportedly structured. When the leaders deemed the time propitious to implement earlier theories, intervening and contrary actions had made attainment of the original desiderata impossible. In any event, the implementation of previous policies was instrumental in effecting change in their total political environment. 22

The ultimate result of the dynamic relationship between theory and action in Marxist-Leninist political culture is that "no 'thesis' can ever be the same after its effects and causes have been studied, described and analysed". It

23. Ibid.
follows that the application of Marxist-Leninist political theory to different societies can be expected to result in distinct political cultures which may or may not be similar or accord with any single, 'orthodox' notion of Marxism-Leninism.

It is obvious that the demand for absolute theoretical and ideological orthodoxy cannot be reconciled with the imperatives of Marxist, or general, political philosophy. But Lenin does not demand absolute orthodoxy, nor does all political action cause fundamental change to political theory. The process of theoretical development outlined by Mayer does not necessarily contradict Lenin's stated position on theoretical and ideological discipline.

In The State and Revolution, Lenin argued that while the fundamental aim of Communism was not negotiable, neither was it dogmatically pre-determined.

On the basis of what data can the question of the future development of future Communism be raised?

On the basis of the fact that it has its origin in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism has given birth. There is no trace of an attempt on Marx's part to conjure up a Utopia, to make idle guesses about what cannot be known. Marx treats the question of communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development of, say, a new biological species, once he knew that such and such was its origin, and such and such the direction in which it was changing. 24

This is why Lenin endorsed Marx's comment that "Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action". The nature of the

25. Lenin, Left-wing Communism, op.cit., p. 54.
Communist polity was never fully elucidated by Marx, Engels or Lenin. It could not be, because its nature was dependent on future dialectical development.

The demand for theoretical and ideological discipline was not intended to secure a stagnant doctrine. This would defy the very essence of the dialectic. Lenin repeatedly stated that, through the process of democratic centralism, the Party must continually update and monitor tactical and ideological programmes to ensure their relevance to the prevailing objective conditions of society. The important point was that the Party must strictly follow the theory and ideology dictated by the existing objective conditions, but as Mayer demonstrates, these were likely to change over time and place. And Lenin accepted the problems created by the process of constant theoretical assessment:

It is, in fact, one of the functions of a party organisation and of party leaders worthy of the name, to acquire, through the prolonged, persistent, variegated and comprehensive efforts of all thinking representatives of a given class, the knowledge, experience and - in addition to knowledge and experience - the political flair necessary for the speedy and correct solution of complex political problems. 27

The apparent contradiction between uniformity and development is largely a matter of degree and emphasis between these two distinct trends in Marxist-Leninist thought. On the one hand, Leninist class theory is deemed to demonstrate the vulnerability of socialist consciousness, i.e. Lenin’s disbelief in the ability of the masses, left to

27. Lenin, Left-wing Communism, op.cit., p. 52.
themselves, to make the "right" choice between socialist and bourgeois ideology. This creates a strong impulse toward theoretical and ideological uniformity. On the other hand, Lenin attacks dogmatism and refers to "the necessity [for Communists] to display the utmost flexibility in their tactics" when dealing with different objective conditions. Indeed, Lenin accepted that the "application of the fundamental principles of Communism...will...modify these principles in certain particulars".

These two trends are not inherently contradictory, but the consistency of their relationship does rely on an agreed interpretation of objective conditions. This clears the way for conflict within the international Communist movement. The line between justifiable compromise and philosophical compromise is interpretative. When do political events constitute changed objective conditions such as to justify fundamental theoretical development. Or more simply, what is the demarkation between tactical flexibility and strategic compromise.

Ultimately, these decisions must be made by the political leadership; by power politics. It is the ever present tension, rather than contradiction, between these two fundamental doctrinal requirements of Marxism-Leninism around which the history of the international movement has revolved. Indeed, the essence of the Sino-Soviet dispute was whether the

28. Ibid., p. 84.
29. Ibid., p. 75.
advent of nuclear weaponry constituted a change to objective conditions such as to require a fundamental change of theoretical perceptions.

The potential for conflict created by this dual set of doctrinal interests was never resolved by Lenin. He never provided criteria for calculating the theoretical impact of new objective conditions. Many sinister motives have been ascribed to this failure. But Lenin himself stated that it

30. Borkenau has called Lenin a theoretical philistine, only interested in revolution and his own doctrinal hegemony. "He has often been accused of opportunism, and rightly so...he utterly disregarded the main items of his own Marxist creed when expediency demanded...he was an incarnation of the Russian revolutionary movement...he must achieve victory...by 'the revolution'...Lenin did not care in the least for the established theories; he remoulded for the purpose what had been the accepted teachings of international Marxism ...overthrowing one day what he had established the day before." Franz Borkenau. *World Communism: A History of the Communist International*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962) pp. 47-48. These criticisms concern Lenin's Marxist legitimacy, his consistency and psychological motivation. First, Borkenau implies the existence of some Holy Marxist Writ against which Lenin offended. But surely this is a matter of interpretation, and a standpoint from which any innovator can be censured. In his paper "Our Revolution", op.cit., Lenin attacked so-called "impossibly pedantic" Marxists, and defended his innovations with Marx's "statements that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility is demanded" (Karl Marx. *The Civil War in France*. Cited Ibid.) As the question of consistency depends on the validity of this claim, it is also a matter of interpretation. Finally, Borkenau's comments on Lenin's psychological motivation may be valid: the vitriolic and personal attacks he made on theoretical opponents and his refusal to agree to disagree certainly support the notion that he equated orthodoxy with his own opinions. But, while Lenin's psychological motivation does concern the source of Leninism, this paper is primarily concerned with the historical consequences of Lenin's ideas. It is not possible within the confines of this sub-thesis to address these psychological issues. They are noted as an important aspect of Lenin's historical impact, but as ancillary to the role Marxist-Leninist doctrines play in the international Communist movement. This paper is not about the Marxist legitimacy of Leninism, nor the bona fides of its creator.
was simply not possible to provide a critical framework for resolving this problem:

Every proletarian...sees the difference between a compromise enforced by objective conditions...and, on the other hand, a compromise by traitors who try to ascribe to objective causes their self-interest...Of course, in politics, where it is sometimes a matter of extremely complex relations - national and international - between classes and parties, very many cases will arise that will be much more difficult than the question of a legitimate "compromise" in a strike...It would be absurd to formulate a recipe or general rule ("No compromises!") to suit all cases. One must use one's own brains and be able to find one's bearings in each particular instance. 31

This paper is concerned with the historical consequences of Lenin's theoretical and organizational ideas. Thus, only the fact of Lenin's failure to provide criteria for evaluating objective conditions is relevant, not his reasons. The point is that in an international movement, whose constituent members are faced with different objective conditions, the question of international theoretical and ideological discipline becomes a major political problem.

The sophistication of Marxist-Leninist philosophy allows an international strategy based on a multiplicity of doctrinal approaches - validated by different objective conditions. In other words, one Party's socialist ideology is another Party's revisionism. Thus, international discipline involves ensuring that each component is 'correct' given its peculiar objective conditions. But as the interpretation of objective conditions is a discretionary, political task the disciplinary process calls for extraordinary political and

ideological finesse. This is the basic dilemma of international communism - it is merely an operational, political problem, but it has unleashed enormous conflict and dispute within the international Communist movement. It can now be seen that Marxist-Leninist philosophy gives rise to two distinct types of theoretical interests. And that the process of Marxist-Leninist politics largely concerns the reconciliation of these interests.

First is the impulse to theoretical and ideological orthodoxy, uniformity and discipline. This stems from the vulnerability of socialist ideology in the capitalist system resulting from the class inability of the proletariat to develop socialist consciousness. It is reinforced by the organizational requirement for absolute discipline within the proletarian vanguard.

In contrast to this concern for doctrinal integrity, Marxist philosophy and dialectical materialism teach that theoretical development is a natural consequence of political action and historical change. These processes of dialectical progress ultimately lead to Communism - the highest form of economic and cultural life. The task of all Communist Parties is to distinguish between genuine theoretical development, based on dialectical change of objective conditions, and revisionist attempts to subvert socialist ideology with bourgeois ideology.
In short, the essence of politics in the international Communist movement concerns the interpretation of objective conditions over time and place. The key to explaining the history of the movement lies in the balance between theoretical orthodoxy and theoretical diversity - both are implicit to Marxism-Leninism, but not even Lenin attempted to provide any guide to judging the correct relationship between the two at any given time or under any given circumstance. This is the theoretical background to the process of cohesion and conflict in international communism.
CHAPTER II

Stalinist Discipline in International Communism.
Stalinist Discipline in International Communism.

The essence of Marxist-Leninist politics lies in the interpretation of objective conditions. This provides the basis for establishing an ideological balance between the short-term need for discipline and the long-term requirement for doctrinal application. This philosophical structure is crucial to explaining the history of world Communism since the death of Lenin.

Indeed, the basic historical contention of this sub-thesis is that world Communism has passed through two distinct eras distinguished by the ascendancy of the different Marxist-Leninist doctrinal values of discipline and diversity. The current chapter will consider how the Stalinist interpretation of objective conditions led to the institution of absolute international discipline. The following two chapters will consider the process by which doctrinal diversity later developed within the international Communist movement.

The present concern is with the inter-war period when world Communism was dominated by the Stalinist Comintern. It was a period when both the Soviet Union and the international movement were vulnerable. These perilous conditions aided the rise of the revisionist doctrine of "Socialism in one country", which was used as the justification for strict international theoretical and ideological discipline.

2. See, pp. 38-41, below, for full definition and analysis of Stalinist revisionism.
The Stalinist hegemony over international communism is generally held to date from the Sixth Comintern Congress of July 1928. But as this was the climax of a long and complex doctrinal struggle between Stalin, Trotsky and others, it is necessary to return to the earliest days of the Comintern to identify its Leninist foundations. This period saw great triumphs and even greater defeats for the world movement. The initial promise of revolutionary situations in Prussia, Hungary, Bavaria and Bulgaria all ended in defeat. The Bolshevik state itself suffered invasion and civil war.

The Comintern considered the post-war European political situation to be inherently revolutionary, and attributed these failures to bad tactics, and worse local leadership. This situation greatly increased the prestige of the one successful, Bolshevik, revolution. Indeed, Lenin became convinced that only the Bolshevik revolutionary model could succeed under contemporaneous European conditions.

Again the interests of discipline and diversity are apparent in Leninist thought. On the one hand, Lenin demanded that "all Communists in all countries" display "the utmost flexibility in their tactics". On the other, the Twenty-One Conditions for affiliation to the Comintern

5. ibid., pp. 171-179.
7. ibid., p. 84.
required "iron discipline" and "unconditional support" of Comintern policy, the periodical "cleansing" of party membership and acceptance of "democratic centralism" as the guiding principle of Comintern decision-making. In other words, Lenin allowed the fraternal parties tactical flexibility, but only within a highly disciplined and co-ordinated international strategy.

The important point is that Lenin's Comintern policy was merely a contingency plan relating to the specific problems of the contemporary movement. Indeed, Lenin was unequivocal on this point:

_In this period of acute civil war, the Communist parties can perform their duties only if they are organised in a most centralised manner, are marked by an iron discipline bordering on military discipline, and have strong and authoritative party centres invested with wide powers and enjoying the unanimous confidence of the membership._

It is not, in fact, possible to identify exactly what sort of long-term policy Lenin envisaged for the Comintern. But, it is apparent that he regarded the Twenty-One Conditions as extraordinary measures for extraordinary conditions. This is a crucial element in the Leninist Comintern. The problem is that the early Comintern sanctioned interventionist and centralist policies very similar to those practiced under Stalin. Thus, the task is to show that Lenin saw the Comintern as an instrument of world revolution, not of Soviet

9. Ibid. Italics added.
foreign policy. It is this vital difference in motivation which distinguishes the Leninist from the Stalinist Comintern and establishes their different revolutionary goals.

During the early years of the Comintern a number of decisions were taken which had very adverse consequences for the fraternal Communist parties. The Second Comintern Congress of 1920, in which Lenin played a key role, determined to foster world revolution on the Bolshevik model - pre-emptive vanguard revolution, without coalition. This involved splitting labour and socialist movements throughout Europe. The sincerity of Lenin's motivation will be considered shortly, it is immediately important to examine his role in the Comintern's disruption of the socialist movement within Europe.

The most famous example of Comintern mismanagement concerned the abortive "March Action" of the German Communist Party, an armed uprising launched on 28 March 1921. The extent of Lenin's personal involvement in the putsch is not known, but that of the Comintern is established beyond any shadow of a doubt. It cost the German party more than half its membership. Likewise, Comintern manoeuvring split the French Socialist Party in December 1920, the Italian Socialist Party in January 1921, and the French labour movement in July 1921. The extent of Lenin's involvement in the process of splitting the European labour movement is most apparent in

10. This policy was not applied to either the British Labour Movement, nor to the non-European parties which were ordered into coalition with bourgeois nationalism.
the case of the Italian Socialist Party. He even went so far as to condemn Serrati's toleration of reformism within the Italian party in a footnote to 'Left-wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder. Indeed, Lenin was joint signatory to a letter from the Comintern's Executive Committee to this party insisting on the expulsion of its right-wing members.

The question to be addressed is why did Lenin, the sometime advocate of independence within the fraternal parties, approve of these various measures taken against the inclination of local party leaders? The key lies in his continuous emphasis upon the success of the world revolution, and the belief his experience of the Russian revolution had given him in the methods of his own Bolshevik revolution. A case of "Do as I say, not because your success will ensure my own fragile success, but because I know my method works". His comments made in "The Terms of Admission to the Communist International" and later during the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in 1922 are relevant. In the first instance, he demanded that all parties wishing to join the Comintern must "selflessly" help "any Soviet republic in its struggle against counter-revolutionary forces." This implied a fundamental equality between revolutions; it certainly granted no particular pre-eminence to the Russian revolution per se, only to the methods of Bolshevism. Even Borkenau said that:

11. Lenin, Left-wing Communism, op.cit., p. 49.
13. Lenin, Terms of Admission, op.cit.
Lenin saw things exclusively from the Russian point of view, to be sure, but not so much from the point of view of the interests of the Russian state - he was sometimes ready seriously to impair those interests for the sake of the international revolution - as from the view of the absolute value of the Russian experience. 14

This view is strongly supported by Lenin’s comments at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern. In open session, he denounced the party organizational structure approved at the previous Congress for being "almost thoroughly Russian; that is to say, everything is taken from Russian conditions." He went on to state that "I have the impression that we made a big mistake with this resolution...we have not yet discovered the form in which to present our Russian experience to the foreigners." Thus, while the Leninist Comintern over-ruled local Communist parties with disastrous results, it did so from the belief that only the Bolshevik model of revolution could bring forth the desired world revolution.

This then was the Leninist policy landscape over which Stalin gained control between Lenin’s death in 1924 and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern. It is important to demonstrate that Stalin introduced new non-Leninist policies into the Comintern. For, if doctrinal diversity is an inherent philosophical characteristic of Marxism-Leninism, then the absolute doctrinal discipline imposed by Stalin must be a repudiation of true Leninism. This is a pre-requisite for

16. Ibid.
17. Possony, op.cit.
establishing that the post-Stalinist development of doctrinal diversity was a return to basic Leninist principles, and not a revision of Marxism-Leninism.

The problem is that Stalin actually imposed a regime operationally similar to that established by Lenin. It involved the strictest discipline, democratic centralism and periodical purges. But whereas Lenin justified these same procedures for a limited and extraordinary period, Stalin effectively established them as permanent Comintern policy. They were justified first by the objective conditions of an isolated "socialism in one country" and later by "the two armed camps" of the Cold War: each was alleged to create a need for absolute doctrinal and operational discipline. But it was the primacy of Soviet national interest which really distinguished Stalin's policies from those of Lenin.

In the inter-War period of "Socialism in one country", Stalin argued that:

> The final victory of Socialism is the full guarantee against attempts at intervention, and...restoration, for any serious attempt at restoration can be made only with...the support of international capital. Therefore, the support of our revolution by workers of all countries, and still more, the victory of the workers in at least several countries, is a necessary condition for fully guaranteeing the first victorious country against attempts at intervention and restoration, a necessary condition for the final victory of Socialism. 19

This was the doctrinal justification for Soviet control and absolute discipline in the international movement under the conditions of Soviet isolation. The survival of the Soviet state was now viewed as the primary condition for the final victory of socialism. Thus, victory in other revolutions was important merely as a guarantee of the Soviet state. The interests of the Soviet Union had become prior to those of foreign revolution.

After the Second World War, Stalin used the Cold War to justify strict control and discipline:

The struggle of the two camps determines now the fate of the whole world, the fate of mankind. This struggle emerges more and more as the chief moving force of the development of our age toward Communism. Here lies the basic content of the political struggle of our time. 20

The 'third line' or 'third force' concocted by the right-wing socialists is in fact nothing other than a cover for the policy of defense of capitalism and fight against Communism. 21

At the present time [1948], the sole and decisive criterion of proletarian revolutionary internationalism is: for or against the U.S.S.R., the fatherland of the international proletariat. ... Only he is a genuine internationalist who carries his sympathy, respect, recognition to the point of practical and maximum aid, support and defense of the U.S.S.R. by every means and in various forms. 22

Again, objective conditions are interpreted to demand absolute international discipline. This paper is not concerned with the motives, psychological or political,

22. Ibid., p. 173.
Stalin may or may not have had for contriving these doctrinal justifications. The salient point is that, even at face value, they represent a different set of political values to those of Lenin. The basis of Marxism-Leninism lies in the application of political theory to the objective conditions of specific societies. It does not preclude, and to a certain extent envisages, the creation of different forms of Communism, and the permanent suppression of doctrinal diversity is a direct repudiation of this process.

The only defining, doctrinal truth in Marxist-Leninist philosophy is that Communism "has its origin in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism 23 has given birth." The strategic goal of Communism is historically inevitable, but all tactical doctrines are merely programmatic and ideological. Yet Stalin made the Soviet revolution a pre-requisite for socialist victory: "guaranteeing the first victorious country against attempts at ...restoration, [is] a necessary condition for the final 24 victory of Socialism". This repudiated the historical inevitability of socialist victory and reduced socialism to a crude political force reliant on a single nation-state. Further, by suppressing all but the Soviet variety of socialism, Stalin effectively pre-determined the nature of Communism - he defined the whole in terms of a single part.

23. Lenin, State and Revolution, op.cit.
These Stalinist doctrines are only historically important because they gave rise to political action. It is, therefore, crucial to show how these doctrines influenced the international movement. Like all Communist policy, Stalinism possessed theoretical and political dimensions, but it was alone in degrading these separate dimensions into a mutually supportive network of incentives and threats.

In general, the philosophical structure of Marxism-Leninism influences the Communist movement through a common notion of political legitimacy.

Ever since Lenin launched the Bolshevik movement in 1903, legitimacy has been of the greatest importance to communism. Lenin made every effort to trace his intellectual genealogy back to Marx and Engels...to conceal the Russian origins of many of his theories and practices. After Lenin had seized power in Russia and Bolshevism was broadened into a world revolutionary movement, the need for legitimacy became greater than ever before: the Third International would never have become a powerful force if Lenin had not succeeded in presenting himself as the continuator of Marx and if the Comintern had not been accepted as the direct descendant of the First International. 26

It was these imperatives of Marxist-Leninist political legitimacy which enabled Stalin to market his revisionism as unexceptional Marxist-Leninist policy and to impose it upon the entire Communist world.

The ability of Stalin to compel loyalty to his Comintern policies through purges, financial subventions, even

25. The operational relationship between theory and politics in Leninism will be analysed with the Sino-Soviet dispute.
assassinations, is well established and will be considered below. Yet despite this capacity to coerce both the Soviet and other Communist parties, Stalin nevertheless sought to present himself as a theorist of Marxism-Leninism, as "the Lenin of our day", and his actions as consistent with Marxism-Leninism. However cynical he was about this, the fact that he did so testifies to the importance attached to the "philosophical infrastructure". It must also be appreciated that the fraternal Parties were not arms of the Soviet government, and their policies could not always be dictated by Soviet fiat. The CPSU, particularly before the Second World War, possessed enormous coercive influence over much of the international movement. Nevertheless, the acceptance of Stalinist policies also depended on their credibility in terms of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. The committed Marxist-Leninists in the Communist Party of Canada, or New Zealand, for example, could hardly be induced or intimidated into revisionist policies.

In order to gain international acceptance, Stalinist policy needed at least some basis in Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

27. See analysis on pp. 43-44, below.
28. Before 1945 the CPSU was the only ruling party, communism was illegal in most central and east European countries, and in many of the colonies of the imperial powers. The leadership of these parties tended to live in exile in Moscow. They were physically dependent upon the Comintern, and in no position to challenge Stalin's revisionism. After 1945 a number of them became ruling parties, with varying degrees of continued dependence on Stalin's goodwill, but with generally greater, though still, except in the Yugoslav case, extremely limited, capacity to differ; and Stalin created the crime of "national Communism" to prevent the spread of the Yugoslav model.
It has been shown that Stalinist discipline was based on a revisionist interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. The original Leninist philosophy, nevertheless, included a strong impulse to discipline. Thus, Stalin was able to utilize the plethora of Leninist exhortations to party discipline, organizational discipline, and the sceptre of bourgeois revisionism to legitimize his policy of absolute discipline. The onus was on others to demonstrate that Stalin had taken Lenin out of context. As his prestige and power grew this became an increasingly difficult political task. Therefore, Stalin could at least claim that his policies were doctrinally valid.

It is in this way that the philosophical structure of Marxism-Leninism is so important to the history of the international movement. The impulse to discipline was a legitimate and essential aspect of Marxism-Leninism, accepted by Marxist-Leninists everywhere. And it was this legitimacy which enabled Stalin to give his revisionist, excessive centralism the appearance of legitimacy.

In addition to these doctrinal supports, Stalinism was secured by specific power political interests. The fraternal parties had three practical reasons for accepting Comintern discipline. In the first instance, they were heavily dependent on financial, technical and educational support from the Soviet Union. Secondly, Stalin successfully

29. See, earlier comparison of Leninism and Stalinism at pp. 33-37, above.
infiltrated and intimidated the leadership of many fraternal parties. He violently purged foreign Communist leaders who sought to defy Soviet discipline. Finally, the early isolation of the Soviet Union and the later tension of the Cold War left the non-governing parties extremely vulnerable and exposed, in largely hostile domestic environments. This gave Stalinist doctrine a pragmatic relevance and an intuitive kind of validity.

It is probable that each party affiliated to the Comintern was influenced by a combination of some or all of these reasons. The relevant facts are that no fraternal party did openly defy the Comintern, and no party was able to develop official doctrine in open competition with the orthodox line. Indeed, many parties paid an enormous price to follow Comintern policy. The apparent doctrinal sense of Stalinism was reinforced by the overt and covert, friendly and unfriendly, political force of the Stalinist apparatus.

33. The Chinese sometimes ignored Stalin, but they publically followed the Comintern line. See, Chapter IV, pp. 69-71.
34. Maoism is, of course, quite distinct from Stalinism and represents archetypical adaption of Marxism-Leninism to local conditions. It will be seen below, pp. 69-70, that the Chinese merely ignored these differences until the dispute. The later reconciliation with Stalinism was one of form, relating to the rhetoric of the anti-Khrushchev campaign which condemned him as anti-Stalinist.
But, from a philosophical viewpoint, it is not fundamentally important whether Stalin intimidated or convinced the world movement. The important issue is that the doctrinal diversity inherent to Marxism-Leninism was suppressed during Stalin's regime, not for tactical, but for strategic reasons.

But the process by which Stalin controlled world Communism contained the seed of its own destruction. This discipline was based jointly on a doctrinal revision which degraded the importance of the fraternal parties, and a series of political interests with no doctrinal justification. By Stalin's death adherence to international discipline was largely based on the interests of competitive power politics rather than doctrinal legitimacy. The increasing, post-war doctrinal redundancy of Stalinist discipline, meant that control was increasingly achieved by extortion of one form or another. The fraternal parties were doctrinally ripe for rebellion, and only powerful political interests tied them to Soviet doctrinal authority.

It was the potential political and, relative, material capacity of China to replace the Soviet Union as a support for the fraternal parties which ultimately enabled them to reject Soviet hegemony. The final decline of Stalinist discipline is the subject of later chapters, but it was this post-war situation which provided the context for aspirations towards diversity in several European Communist parties after the death of Stalin, Soviet toleration of some such aspirations and suppression of others, and ultimately for the Sino-Soviet
dispute. Thus, the Sino-Soviet dispute appears as a catalyst, rather than a cause of the later renaissance in Communist thought.

It can now be seen that the Stalinist interpretation of objective conditions, before and after the Second World War, led to an extreme emphasis on the Marxist-Leninist requirement for theoretical and ideological discipline. This interpretation was based on the doctrinally weak contention that the victory of socialism required the survival of the Soviet revolution. This may well have represented a valid pragmatic assessment of contemporary politics. But it involved repudiation of the basic Marxist-Leninist contention that socialist victory is historically inevitable.
PART TWO

THE POLITICS OF MARXIST-LENINIST ACTION
CHAPTER III

The ideology of the Sino-Soviet dispute.
The Ideology of the Sino-Soviet Dispute.

The central task of the Communist and Workers' Parties is to establish ideological programmes appropriate to the objective conditions of the societies in which they operate. This process is "a matter of extremely complex relations - national and international - between classes and parties". It involves "compromise enforced by objective conditions". It is interpretative and inherently competitive, it produces different ideological and political interests, with no "recipe or general rule...to suit all cases". Nevertheless, it is the basic political mechanism of international Leninism: the practical basis of all Communist action. It is this process of doctrinal interpretation and political compromise which explains the rationale for particular policy decisions in Marxist-Leninist organizations.

The first section of this paper concentrated on the process of doctrinal analysis in Marxist-Leninist political culture, and incidentally established the historical imperatives of the Stalinist era. The current section will concentrate on the political history of the Sino-Soviet dispute, while confirming the doctrinal imperatives of Marxism-Leninism.

The basic contention of this section is that Communist operational policy usually results from more or less equal competition between ideological and political interests. The reason for this lies in the relationship between ideology and theory. Ideology has been defined as derivative of theory -

2. Ibid., p.52.
as a set of attitudes conditioned by theory in each particular time and place which represents specific programmes of action designed to achieve theoretical goals. It can, therefore, be used with discretion and flexibility - as Lenin himself advised. Ideological interests can be sacrificed to secure other short-term advantages which serve the greater interests of Communist construction. But ultimately a point is reached at which further compromise of ideological interest ceases to advance the overall theoretical aims of the organization. It is at this point that pragmatic, power political interests fail as a basis for decision-making and the pre-eminence of Marxist-Leninist philosophy becomes apparent.

The Sino-Soviet dispute provides a unique account of the inter-action between ideological and political interests in Marxist-Leninist organizations. It has been extremely well documented, and this allows for a reasonably secure assessment of the protagonists' various ideological and political interests. This chapter will consider the ideological dimension of the dispute, the next will address the historical and political process by which the latent doctrinal differences between the two parties became an open conflict.

The ideological dispute really stems from the different revolutionary experiences of each Party, which nurtured quite distinct approaches to what might best be called the limits of

3. This definition of ideology is based on that provided by Mayer, op.cit., see Introduction, p. 8, above.
ideology. The basic sociological methodology of Marxism-Leninism is historical materialism which:

While not including within itself the entire totality of human knowledge,...studies the real world from the point of view of elucidating linkages and regularities common to all actuality, and therefore constitutes the worldview and methodological basis of the natural and social sciences. 5

It provides the "scientific-philosophical view of the world", the intellectual framework, or method, by which objective conditions such as modes of production and class are identified and analysed in order to calculate ideological programmes appropriate to contemporary society. It is proclaimed by both the CPSU and the CPC. But, unlike the Bolsheviks, the early Maoists placed an extraordinary emphasis on the palliative quality of ideology itself. The Maoist notions of "right consciousness" and "permanent revolution" embraced the idea that "almost anything is possible to a revolutionary party armed with the right consciousness". Indeed, Mao Tse-tung even questioned the historical consequence of objective conditions: "Why is it that what the Western bourgeoisie could achieve, the Eastern proletariat cannot achieve also?"

4. The term "sociological methodology" is here used in the same sense as terms such as "historical" or "scientific" methodology, that is, as a methodology employed for the purpose of a particular discipline. Thus, "sociological" methodology means a methodology employed for the purposes of sociological analysis.

6. Ibid.


The current work is concerned with the result of this Maoist notion, rather than its particular cause. Nevertheless, the peculiar role of ideology in Maoism greatly influenced the Chinese position in the ideological dispute. It is, therefore, necessary to examine this matter in some detail.

The power of Maoist ideology is based on the idea of permanent revolution, which is derived from the enormous capacity of revolution to produce social change:

I stand for the theory of permanent revolution. Do not mistake this for Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. In making revolution one must strike while the iron is hot - one revolution must follow another, the revolution must continually advance. 9

This continual revolution, and the powerful forces for change implicit to such a social condition, enables the strictures of objective conditions to be overcome and the most extraordinary changes to be implemented:

We cannot follow the old paths of technical development of every other country in the world, and crawl step by step behind the others. We must smash conventions... Haven't we basically overthrown seemingly powerful imperialism, feudalism and capitalism within our country? From a poor and blank start haven't we through fifteen years of endeavour reached an appreciable level of development in all aspects of socialist revolution and socialist construction? Haven't we also exploded an atomic bomb? 10

It is the possession of "right consciousness", the correct ideology and the will to "smash conventions" which makes for success in the Maoist concept of revolution:

It is possible to catch up with Britain in fifteen years. We must summon up our strength and swim vigorously upstream....[but]...Our strength must be aroused and not dissipated. 11

If the revolution could be made perpetual and the Party determined and ideologically correct, the vast sociological power of revolution could impose otherwise impossible ideological programmes. This is a consistent theme in the history of the Chinese revolution. The rapid pace of collectivization, the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution all find a common rationale in the power of ideology as an independent historical and political force. The peculiarity of this Chinese approach is best summarized by the following Soviet comment:

The theory and practice of the "leap into communism" ran counter to the objective realities in China and the rest of the world, to science, the experience of the socialist countries and the international communist movement. It was clear that these voluntaristic objectives were unattainable, that it was impossible to leap over... stages in socialist construction, that slogans could not substitute for technology and that subjective factors could not be omnipotent either in the field of material production or in the field of social relations. 12

Thus, this dimension of Maoist thought separates it from mainstream Marxism-Leninism. It, also, provides the ultimate explanation for the ideological dispute. Indeed, the polemic of the dispute only makes sense in the context of this diverse intellectual approach. Thus, the really fundamental doctrinal difference between the two Parties concerned the role and significance of objective conditions on the calculation and conduct of ideological programmes.

The specific ideological positions of the two parties are neatly summarized in the following statements. The first represents the position of the Soviet Union as stated by Khrushchev at the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in 1956.

When we say that the socialist system will win in the competition between the two systems - the capitalist and the socialist systems - this by no means signifies that its victory will be achieved through armed interference by the socialist countries in the internal affairs of the capitalist countries...We have always held and continue to hold that the establishment of a new social system in this or that country is the internal affair of the peoples of the country concerned. 13

The Chinese position may be identified in the following quotations from the 1960 polemic "Long Live Leninism":

It is a great, new epoch that we are facing, and its main characteristic is that the forces of socialism have surpassed those of imperialism, that the forces of the awakening people of the world have surpassed those of reaction. 14

So long as capitalist imperialism exists in the world, the sources and possibility of war will remain. 15

The emancipation of the proletariat can only be arrived at by the road of revolution, and certainly not by the road of reformism. 16

Thus, the polemic of the ideological dispute can be seen to have centred on three distinct, but inter-related, issues: the nature of the revolutionary epoch, the inevitability of violence in the revolutionary struggle and the appropriate form of national liberation. These points of departure do not stem from Leninism or Stalinism, but from the Maoist denigration of class structure and objective conditions.

15. Ibid., p. 83.
16. Ibid.
The nature of the contemporary epoch provides the theoretical orientation for Marxist strategic planning. The term epoch refers to the stages of the historical process leading to Communism. The options range from feudalism through capitalism and socialism to communism, societies can progress toward or regress from the ideal of Communism. The nature of each epoch is established by its class structure:

We cannot know how fast and how successfully certain historical movements of the given epoch will develop. But we can and do know which class occupies a central position in this or that epoch and determines its main content, the main direction of its development, the main characteristics of the historical situation. 17

The Soviet Union saw the contemporary epoch as one in which socialism would triumph over capitalism through gradual competition, whereas the Chinese stated that the socialist system had already "surpassed" imperialism as "the fundamental factor in international politics". 18

The Soviet position was based on the idea that historical epoch is determined by class relationships. This stemmed from the Marxist-Leninist view that economic relations dominate social phenomena through the mechanism of class structure and that the potential range of social policy is limited by class structures and the objective economic conditions upon which they rest. While Lenin attacked "pedantic Marxists", and used revolutionary situations to establish the "pre-requisites" for socialism, he accepted "the general laws of

18a. See analysis of "Our Revolution" at pp. 16-17, above.
history". He was historically interventionist, seeking to alter the nature of hostile economic relations, but he did not ignore economic conditions or try to "leap" historical epochs.

The Soviet Union accepted that the victory of the proletariat was "the main characteristic of the historical situation", but saw this as an historical process which was both incomplete and internationally insecure. Thus, they stated that while "the world socialist system is becoming the decisive factor in the development of society", yet "the danger of a new world war still persists". Socialist victory in the competition with capitalism was undoubted, but the time and cost of that victory was unknown and unknowable.

The Chinese position was essentially reductionist. It merged the long-term prospects of the proletariat with immediate capability. They claimed that "The socialist world system has obviously gained the upper hand in its struggle with the capitalist world system". This might be true in terms of the "tendency of the historical process", but it hardly provided a rational basis for meeting the nuclear capability of the United States, or explaining the continued dynamism of capitalist society. It is a position which only makes sense in the context of Maoist phenomenology and the belief that the strength of the socialist idea is sufficient for the immediate completion of the already secure victory of the proletariat.

20. Ibid., p. 187.
In order to fully appreciate the significance of these different interpretations of the revolutionary epoch, it is necessary to consider the question of revolutionary violence, which played a central role in the whole ideological dispute.

The Soviet Union held that nuclear weapons threatened humanity itself and that in the fires of nuclear war: "those who light it will be the first to get burned". This required that the competition between socialism and capitalism be non-violent.

Working out its policy in conformity with the new conditions, the world communist movement could not fail to take account quite seriously also such an important factor as the radical qualitative change in the military-technical means of waging war resulting from the emergence and stock-piling of thermonuclear weapons possessing unprecedented destructive force.

The Chinese did not consider that nuclear technology could destroy humanity. In the context of socialist supremacy, they felt the military prowess of the socialist system should be used immediately to meet and finally defeat imperialist aggression.

if the U.S. or other imperialists...should dare to fly in the face of the will of all humanity by launching a war using atomic and nuclear weapons, the result will be the very speedy destruction of these monsters encircled by the peoples of the world, and the result will certainly not be the annihilation of mankind.

The Chinese held that "We Marxists must not base proletarian policy merely on certain passing events or minute political changes, but on the overall contradictions and class struggle of a whole historical epoch." And they felt that:

25. Ibid., p. 89.
none of the new techniques like atomic energy, rocketry and so on has changed, as alleged by the modern revisionists, the basic characteristics of the epoch ... Contemporary technological progress cannot save the capitalist-imperialist system from its doom but only ring a new death knell. 26

The basic question at issue was whether nuclear weapons altered the nature of the historical epoch. The Soviet position was derived from a rational consideration of the fundamental changes in military technology. They came to the interpretative conclusion that violent conflict should be avoided, as it could result in the destruction of humanity.

But the Chinese never assessed the qualitative capacities of nuclear technology in any ideological polemic. Nor did they debate their impact upon the nature of the historical epoch. Instead, they merely asserted the Maoist ideal that "the most abundant source of strength in war lay in the masses, and that a people's army organized by awakened and united masses of people would be invincible throughout the world." Thus, their position on violence effectively ignored the issue of nuclear technology. They classified nuclear war as a "passing event or minute political change", not from a rational assessment of its destructive capacity, but from a Maoist belief that: "An awakened people will always find new ways to counteract a reactionary superiority in arms and win victory".

This unconcern with the ideological implications of objective conditions was repeated in the Chinese position on forms of

26. Ibid., p. 94.
27. Ibid., p. 93.
28. Ibid.
national liberation. This issue involved the overall programme of the international movement in non-Communist countries. It concerned the relative merits of tactical parliamentarism, reformism and collaborationism versus active violent revolutionary struggle. It was, of course, partly derivative of the Parties' general policies on violence in the era of nuclear technology and the capacity of national liberation movements to provoke systemic violence. This derivative aspect of the liberation dispute does not require further analysis.

The debate on national liberation is more immediately important for the insight it provides into the protagonists' different perceptions of the Marxist-Leninist vanguard. It was a debate about the process of historical development in colonial society, which acted as a test case for the validity of the Maoist model of revolution.

The specific ideological rationale of each Party dated from those adopted by Lenin and M.N. Roy during the debate on bourgeois nationalism which took place at the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920.

The Chinese argued, like Roy, that the bourgeoisie in colonial territories were essentially reactionary in outlook.

relatively advanced colonial areas such as India, the bourgeoisie was neither economically nor culturally distinct from the imperialist social order:

therefore, the nationalist movement was ideologically reactionary in the sense that its triumph would not mean a bourgeois democratic revolution. 30

The colonial bourgeoisie could not be expected to perform a progressive historical role. From this premise, Roy went on to pre-empt the Maoist revolutionary model:

the foremost objective was to set up Asian Communist parties which would organize the peasants and workers and lead them on to Communist revolutions. 31

The People's Daily echoed this early Asian communist approach when it attacked Nehru for espousing non-alignment:

a mere facade behind which he is actually carrying out a policy of opposing the national revolutionary movements of various countries, opposing socialism and serving imperialism. 32

The position of the Soviet Union was based on the Leninist contention that bourgeois nationalism was a progressive historical force in societies virtually devoid of proletarian groups. The process of economic, thence social and political, development was enhanced by the progress from colony to independent nation. Lenin stated that "The Communist International must enter into a temporary alliance with bourgeois democracy in the colonial and backward countries". 33

Under Khrushchev emphasis was placed on alliance with bourgeois nationalism or "national democracy". This alliance included general non-interference in colonial politics through the principle of ideological diversity. Thus:

The CPSU has always hailed and will continue to hail the revolutionary working class and the working people of any country who, headed by their communist vanguard, make skilful use of the revolutionary situation to inflict a crushing blow against the class enemy and to establish a new social system. 34

[But]...a revolution cannot be artificially instigated if conditions for it are not yet ripe. 35

This position was consistent with the Leninist texts, although it tended to down play the ideological consequences of Lenin's imprecations against neo-imperialism:

the deception systematically practiced by the imperialist powers, which, under the guise of politically independent states, set up states that are wholly dependent upon them economically, financially and militarily. 36

It is not possible to provide a full account of Soviet and Chinese attitudes to the various national liberation movements. The present task is to distinguish those policy differences which highlighted each party's approach to diversity within international Communism. It is apparent that the Soviet policy left more room for diversity than the Chinese, because it did not prescribe the nature of post-liberation society.

These attitudes directly mirror the Lenin-Roy debate at the Second Comintern Congress of July 1920 on the merits of two-stage versus one-stage revolution. It is a debate which

35. Ibid.
36. Lenin, Draft Theses, op.cit.
has been an important cause of dissent within the world Communist movement, and a factor in the Sino-Soviet dispute. The Soviet Union's adherence to the "two-stage" doctrine led it to support nationalist leaders - like Nasser, Nehru, Sukarno and Castro - some of whom acted strongly against their local Communists. The Chinese, however, adopted the "one-stage" doctrine which took a pessimistic view of the national bourgeoisie in the Third World. This led to a policy of actively supporting revolutionary struggles between Communist coalitions of peasants and workers against the nationalist bourgeoisie. The Soviet Union viewed bourgeois nationalism as progressive, supported it with aid and against imperialist attack. This justified a policy of non-intervention in the revolutionary conditions of the Third World.

The fundamental problem was that colonial and post-colonial societies did not possess groups which could be equated with the Marxist proletariat. The Soviet position was directly supported by Lenin's view that:

> the more backward the country, the stronger is the hold of small-scale agricultural production, patriarchalism and isolation, which inevitably lend...strength and tenacity to the deepest of petty-bourgeois prejudices. 37

These societies did not possess the class structures able to produce and sustain a socialist revolution. Unless they were fortunate enough to be part of the Soviet Union, revolution was not possible until "the entire foundation of the backward countries' economic life has radically changed".

37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
The Chinese position, by contrast, effectively rejected this Leninist interpretation of colonial and post-colonial society. It was based on the Maoist notion of a peasant led revolution. Indeed, Maoists considered the doctrine of peasant revolution to be the ultimate extension of the Leninist idea that a disciplined, ideological vanguard could establish socialism through revolution. But, whereas the Leninist vanguard sought to alleviate the worst consequences of objective conditions, the Maoist vanguard sought to override them completely. The Chinese position on the revolutionary epoch and the use of violence in the revolutionary struggle, stemmed from the basic Maoist idea that discipline and ideological purity can overcome objective conditions.

Thus, in the polemical exchanges between the Soviet and Chinese leadership, the latter made no attempt to analyse the objective conditions operating in Third World states in any detail. And utterances by Chinese leaders did nothing to suggest a close consideration of conditions in the real Third World. On the contrary, Mao's theory of the "Intermediate Zone", first put forward in 1949, had come by 1964 to lump together not only the whole of the Third World but also most developed countries into one grouping which when added to the socialist countries allegedly made ninety per cent of the world's population opposed to US imperialism. Similarly, his

"Reading Notes on the Soviet Union's Political Economics" (variously dated between 1960 and 1962) not only argued naively that revolution is easier in backward than in advanced countries because the bourgeoisie is weaker, but argued at a high level of generalization, with hardly any mention of specific Third World countries. In June 1964, Chou En-lai had to cut short a tour of Africa after injudiciously stating in Tanzania that "At present, a strong revolutionary storm can be sensed in Africa and Asia; the time is near."; and in 1965, Lin Piao defined "the principle contradiction in the contemporary global situation" as that between "US imperialism" and "the revolutionary peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America". All these statements serve to illustrate the undifferentiated approach of the Chinese leadership to the Third World, which took no account of the widely differing objective conditions in individual Third World countries.

The essence of the ideological dispute may be found in the following section of the "Long Live Leninism" article:

The modern revisionists, proceeding from their absurd arguments on the current world situation and from their absurd argument that the Marxist-Leninist theory of class analysis and class struggle is obsolete, attempt to


tightly overthrow the fundamental theories of Marxism-Leninism on a series of questions like violence, war, peaceful coexistence. 45

The point is that "questions like violence, war, peaceful coexistence" are questions about objective conditions. It is legitimate to debate the significance of objective conditions, the reality of particular conditions and their impact upon ideology. But the Chinese assessed the impact of objective conditions not in terms of their social, military, political or even economic validity, but in terms of their ideological legitimacy. The debate for the Chinese was about "dogma", "legitimacy", "rectitude", not about the appropriateness of Maoist political and military ideology.

The revolutionary struggle convinced Mao Tse-tung that class structure, socio-economic development - objective conditions - could not prevent successful socialist endeavour in Asian peasant society. The very reality of the Chinese revolution seemed to disprove the contention that objective conditions could dictate the limits of ideological action.

Thus, objective conditions were assessed in terms of ideology, but ideology was never reassessed on the basis of objective conditions. The Chinese viewed their revolution as the best expression of the Leninist principle of vanguard revolution, and colonial revolution as the natural heir of the Chinese revolution. Thus, to deny the validity of immediate colonial revolution, as did the CPSU, was to challenge the doctrinal legitimacy of the Chinese revolutionary experience.

45. Long Live Leninism, op.cit., p.94.
The ideological differences between the Soviet Union and China developed out of the revolutionary experience of each Party. The process of ideological diversification represented by these differences has already been seen to have created particular power political interests. The approach to revolutionary epoch, to violence, to national liberation were not abstract doctrinal or philosophic niceties. They established distinctive guidelines to operational policy. They provided the rationale for the Communist regime, not only for its foreign and defence policy, but for its very philosophical legitimacy. These were matters of the greatest political importance.

The ideological positions of the protagonists only provided the basis for conflict, the outbreak of conflict was a political process. It is now appropriate to consider the process by which these fundamental ideological interests were ordered and compromised before and during the dispute. The following chapter will consider the rise and fall of ideological compromise in the Sino-Soviet relationship. And, thus, explain the process by which Marxist-Leninist philosophy comes ultimately to dominate Communist action.
CHAPTER IV

The Politics of the Sino-Soviet Dispute.
The Politics of the Sino-Soviet Dispute.

The present task is to explain the process by which the latent doctrinal differences between the CPSU and the CPC developed into outright conflict.

This chapter will contend that the early political relationship between the two Communist states was predicated on Chinese preparedness to subjugate their ideological beliefs to those of the CPSU in order to obtain economic and military aid from the Soviet Union. It will further contend that the progressive failure of successive Soviet regimes to support Chinese foreign policy objectives led to an increasingly strong assertion of the Chinese ideological position. The proposal will be made that this process of ideological assertion served as the basic precipitant of the Sino-Soviet dispute.

In the preceding chapter the ideological priorities of the CPSU and the CPC were considered as part of a larger study of the process by which ideological and political interests are ordered in Marxist-Leninist organizations. This chapter is concerned to complete that study by investigating the limits of compromise and the mechanism of priority in Communist politics. It will proceed by examining the political process which led the CPC to endorse, and then reject, certain ideological positions of the CPSU which were contrary to Maoist theoretical and ideological tradition.
By the time of Stalin's death, the CPSU had long enjoyed the mantle of doctrinal leadership in the international Communist movement. Indeed, even Mao Tse-tung proclaimed Soviet leadership at the Moscow Conference of 1957. Nevertheless, early Sino-Soviet diplomacy was based on the rather ambivalent relationship which had existed between the two parties prior to the Chinese Revolution.

The seeds of this ambivalence date from the Second Comintern Congress of 1920 and the debate between Lenin and Roy on the appropriateness of proletarian leadership in colonial revolution. The debate was inconclusive, but Lenin had been inclined to encourage bourgeois nationalism in the colonial situation. In the event, Stalin applied this approach to China and consistently championed the Kuomintang as representatives of the next appropriate - bourgeois - stage in the scientific development of Chinese political society.

This policy led to the ill-fated Comintern decision to assimilate the CPC into the Kuomintang. The subsequent massacre of 1927 left a deep impression on the Chinese party and paved the way for Mao's rise to power. Even in 1960 the Chinese remembered the incident with bitterness:

3. For analysis of the role played by this issue in the developing ideological dispute see, Chapter III, above, pp. 58-65.
Chen Tu-hsiu's opportunism as shown over the policy towards the Communist Party's united front with the Kuomintang was a departure from the principles and stand which a Communist Party should uphold. He advocated that the Communist Party should in principle be reduced to the level of the Kuomintang. The result was defeat for the revolution. 5

Indeed, the whole thrust of the Maoist peasant revolution was contrary to the orthodox Marxist-Leninist formulation of proletarian led revolution. The Maoist strategy was only reluctantly endorsed by Stalin and the Comintern in 1937, and even then Stalin maintained little expectation of a Communist victory.

Despite Chinese support for the Comintern and the "vanguard" role of the CPSU, the CPC was extremely wary of the Soviet leadership after 1927. Mao persistently ignored Soviet advice. In February 1948, Stalin is reported to have told Tito that after the Second World War he had invited the CPC leadership to Moscow for talks on the situation in China.

"We told them bluntly that we considered the development of the uprising in China had no prospect and that the Chinese comrades should seek a modus vivendi with Chiang" yet the Chinese comrades, "went back to China and acted quite otherwise". 8

This contrasts with the close diplomatic relationship between 1949 and 1956 which resulted from a special congruence of doctrinal and political interests. The titanic prestige of Stalin, together with the conditions of the Cold War, and Chinese preparedness to ignore Soviet advice, explains the

7. 1960 Moscow Statement, op.cit., p. 204.
PRC's public acquiescence with international doctrinal discipline. But more immediately important were the material and strategic benefits of close alliance with the Soviet Union.

During this period the Chinese were obliged to enter into a situation of ideological "flexibility" in order to secure the greater goals of the Chinese Revolution. The PRC was dangerously isolated after the revolutionary victory of 1949. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1950 provided China with the economic and military resources it needed to undertake the industrialization necessary for military security. China and the Soviet Union, also, shared a common strategic interest in preventing the demise of the Communist regime in North Korea.

It is not proposed to concentrate on Sino-Soviet relations during the Stalinist era. But it is important to note that even before 1957 Chinese geopolitical interests were served more by the hope than the reality of Soviet support. Under Stalin and Khrushchev economic and technological aid was provided to the PRC. But, Stalin kept the Korean conflict at arms length in order to avoid direct confrontation with the US. The very "crime" for which Khrushchev was later condemned by the Chinese. Further, the PRC was required to finance military equipment supplied by Stalin during the Korean War. Thus, the Chinese

had good reason to doubt the reliability of the USSR long before Khrushchev, but Stalin's prestige and the pressing needs of the Chinese in the early period of the PRC were apparently sufficient to forestall the breakdown in relations which occurred under Stalin's heirs.

Thus, the bonds between these Communist giants were forged despite, rather than because of, their historical relationship and, as has already been shown, their different revolutionary struggles. The Sino-Soviet relationship, after the death of Stalin, was well summarized by Edward Crankshaw:

A powerful group of veterans, for forty years masters of their own fate, for fifteen years masters of their own country, which they conquered by their own unaided efforts, are not in the best of times going to look kindly on a group of Russian parvenus, who took no part in any revolution, who were the creatures of Stalin, or those creatures' creatures. They are certainly not going to take any orders from them. 12

The foreign policy of the PRC has long been dominated by three major issues: independence, modernity and revolution. Between 1957 and 1962, the primary purpose of the regime was the successful completion, protection and extension of the Maoist revolution. This required political and economic independence, which in turn demanded complete national sovereignty, military capability, industrial and technological modernity. This policy agenda defined the geopolitical priorities of the regime and established the foreign policy

objectives which dominated the Sino-Soviet dispute. The specific concerns of the Chinese were the liberation of Taiwan; consolidation of Tibet; economic, military and technological development; and nuclear capability. They, also, had associated interests in the acceptance of the PRC as a leading Communist power and of Maoism as the model for colonial and post-colonial revolution.

The issues involved in the process of compromise were those considered in detail in Chapter III above: peaceful co-existence, violent revolutionary struggle and the role of bourgeois nationalism in post-colonial societies. It is not proposed to undertake a global analysis of the Byzantine and contradictory ideological compromises which occurred at the inter-Party conferences held at Moscow in 1957 and 1960. Such an account would require a separate study, but would not properly reflect the nature of the ideological confrontation.

The fundamental doctrinal difference between the two Parties related to the ideological significance of objective conditions. This situation existed under Stalin, but did not give rise to any major operational differences between the two states. The PRC, while pursuing the distinctive ideology of Maoism, publicly endorsed the Stalinist line and received limited material and diplomatic support from the Soviet Union. This situation was altered when Khrushchev clarified the ideological policy of the CPSU in line with the objective

14. For analysis of the ideological politics of the various Moscow Conferences, see: Griffith, op.cit.
conditions of the post-war era. The Khrushchev dispensation did not create the differences between Soviet and Maoist ideology, but its operational policies increasingly and more directly challenged those of China and, thus, gave the ideological differences a major operational significance.

The process of compromise was more exactly a process of increasing Chinese inclination to expose the differences between the two Parties. The compromises made on the conference floor were minimal and subsequent communiques merely statements of solidarity open to interpretation sufficient to support the ideological stance of each Party. The real compromise was Chinese preparedness to accept the charade of doctrinal unity. But this rested on the satisfaction of certain Chinese geopolitical interests. Thus, an item by item account of the ideological intrigues is of no real benefit. The current study is best served by an analysis of the progressive degeneration of the Sino-Soviet ideological relationship as manifested in substantive political relations between the USSR and the PRC from 1957 to 1962.

The liberation of Taiwan is the longest standing foreign policy concern of the PRC. And its impact on the Sino-Soviet relationship was remarkably consistent throughout the Khrushchev period. The situation in 1954-55 was that:

The discrepancy between China's conflict with the United States and Russia's hopes for detente grew larger as the United States and the USSR moved towards the summit. 15

A similar process could be observed during the 1958 crisis:

Mao could no longer defer to Khrushchev's wish for peaceful coexistence with the United States. The PRC was about to take further determined action to defend its interests, and the USSR could not be allowed to veto. 16

The Chinese and Soviet policies with respect to Taiwan were based on their different ideological approaches to nuclear war and the requirements of peaceful co-existence with the United States. The status of Taiwan reached crisis point twice before the public outbreak of the Sino-Soviet dispute. And, although neither incident was sufficient of itself to disrupt public solidarity, each contributed to the growing Chinese dissatisfaction with Soviet policy.

The Soviet position on the 1958 crisis was typical. On 30 June 1958, the PRC called for the United States to resume Ambassadorial Talks on the status of Taiwan, and commenced artillery bombardment of Quemoy on 23 August. The USSR pledged moral and logistic support to the PRC through Pravda articles on 31 August, 5 and 20 September, but:

in spite of these threats, neither the writer of the article nor the Soviets in subsequent declarations gave a definite pledge to China to come militarily to her assistance in the event of a ... conflagration. 17

The impasse was broken on 6 September when Chou En-lai announced that the PRC would accept an American offer to resume Ambassadorial Talks on 15 September. It ended on 6 October when China proclaimed a unilateral ceasefire. The pertinent fact is that Khrushchev did not inform Eisenhower

16. Ibid., p. 119.
17. Low, op.cit., p. 89.
of Soviet support for the Chinese position until 7 September, and did not offer a nuclear guarantee for the Chinese until 18 September — when a peaceful settlement was assured. Thus, the outcome of the Taiwan crisis may have been a diplomatic defeat for Peking, but it strengthened its desire for its own nuclear deterrent. Also, it must have raised many a doubt in the Chinese mind about the reliability of the Sino-Soviet military tie-up, and especially about its possible use in wresting concessions from the U.S.

This refusal of the USSR to sacrifice the publicly agreed ideological policies of the international movement — peaceful coexistence — in the interest of Chinese foreign policy was to become a major, recurring problem in Sino-Soviet relations.

The ideological issue of peaceful co-existence was combined with that of national liberation in the Soviet policy on the Sino-Indian border dispute in Tibet. The basic ideological attitudes of the CPSU and the CPC to bourgeois nationalism have already been considered: the CPSU supported, the CPC opposed, bourgeois nationalism such as was embodied in the Indian constitution. The ideological attitude of the Chinese was reinforced by the suspicion that India had supported "the reactionary clique of the Tibetan upper strata", during the Tibetan uprising in August 1959. This suspicion was fuelled by the Indian refusal to renegotiate the inherited colonial border — the McMahon Line.

20. "The Truth about how the Leaders of the CPSU have allied themselves with India against China", in Peoples Daily. 2 November 1963. Cited in Low, ibid., p. 99.
A series of border incidents took place between 1959 and 1962. On 25 and 26 August 1959, the People's Liberation Army occupied the frontier post of Longju, territory claimed by China. Not only did the Soviet Union fail to support the occupation, but on 9 September 1959 Tass Agency expressed regret over the incident and blamed Western interests for attempting to drive a wedge between the PRC and India. This amounted to a declaration of neutrality by the Soviet Union, which the PRC later described as a "tendentious communique" that "revealed our Sino-Soviet differences" to the world. The Soviet position of neutrality was confirmed after the Ladakh Incident of October 1959. The Soviets viewed Chinese belligerence as "torpedoing the relaxation of international tension", whereas the Chinese viewed Soviet neutrality as a betrayal of socialist solidarity. These respective positions were current up to and during the Sino-Indian War of 1962.

The different ideological perspectives of the CPSU and CPC influenced their overall geopolitical outlook. The issues of Taiwan, Tibet and India were important expressions of the two Parties' different world-views. But these issues were merely symptomatic of deeper tensions within the relationship.

23. This concerned an area - Aksai Chin - India claimed to administer but through which the Chinese had built a strategically important road, undetected by the Indian "administrators". Low, op.cit., p. 101.
Indeed, after the 1957 Conference the Sino-Soviet relationship was really based on irreconcilable ideological, political and strategic interests. The history of the geopolitical relationship between 1957 and 1962 is essentially a catalogue of specific events arising from the fundamental contradiction between Soviet and Chinese ideology and foreign policy.

In 1959 the USSR reneged on its agreement to supply the PRC with nuclear technology. In 1960 the USSR unilaterally ended all scientific and technical aid to China. The withdrawal devastated the Chinese economy, a situation exacerbated when returning technicians removed working blueprints and operating manuals. In 1961 Khrushchev launched a thinly veiled attack on CPC policies in his assault on Albania at the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU. In 1962 the USSR, which had supplied India with military technology throughout the long Sino-Indian border dispute, failed to support the PRC when that dispute erupted into open war. Ultimately, the Chinese were left without political compensation for the suppression of their full ideological programme at the 1957 and 1960 Conferences, something no Communist could endure without good reason.

By the end of 1962, when the USSR seemed to side with India during the Sino-Indian war, along with the USA and all its allies, there was no longer a good reason to keep the conflict muted and indirect.

28. CC of the CPSU. "Documents of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU". in *The Road to Communism*. (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, n.d.)
This was the process by which the Sino-Soviet relationship developed into open conflict. The objectives of Chinese foreign policy were all frustrated by Soviet refusal to support them with the military might of the socialist world. The Soviet policy threatened Chinese geopolitical interests in Taiwan and Tibet, and denied the PRC nuclear technology. The economic and industrial development of the PRC was disrupted by the withdrawal of Soviet technical aid. The status of the Maoist revolutionary model was itself compromised by the Soviet ideological position on peaceful co-existence and colonial liberation. The pretensions of the PRC to co-leadership of the socialist bloc - manifest in their intervention in the Polish and Hungarian crises of 1956 - were implicitly denigrated by the apparent contempt with which the CPSU treated the political and ideological interests and sensitivities of the PRC and the CPC.

But the fundamental issue related to the use of the military resources of the socialist bloc, which ultimately meant nuclear weaponry. The Chinese view of the epoch and of violence was predicated on the overwhelming military power of the socialist bloc. But this could only be utilized by the Soviet Union. The different approach of the two Parties to violence caused difficulty precisely because the epoch changing military might of socialism was based exclusively on Soviet nuclear technology. A basic cause of the dispute lay

31. For details of the link between the Soviet positions on peaceful co-existence and colonial liberation, and the legitimacy of the Maoist model of revolution, see Chapter III, above, pp. 58-65.
in the fact that the Chinese could not activate the technological process which would allow for socialist victory.

This doctrinal dependence on Soviet nuclear capability caused the CPC great frustration. And it was the failure of the USSR to deliver this promised technology which released the CPC from any political or ideological loyalty to the USSR. This was instrumental in the Chinese decision to reject Soviet ideological hegemony, to assert Maoist ideology and, in consequence, to split the international Communist movement.

The Chinese claim that Khrushchev promised to supply the PRC with nuclear technology on 15 October 1957, that an agreement confirming the arrangement was concluded on 18 October, and that a protocol was signed on 18 January 1958 establishing a five-year programme of scientific co-operation by which nuclear technology would be supplied.

It is indicative of the extent of the ideological distance between the two Parties that Khrushchev did not proceed to supply the Chinese with any such technology. Indeed, it is generally agreed that Khrushchev only promised the technology in order to secure Chinese acquiescence with the doctrine of peaceful co-existence at the 1957 Moscow Conference.

Mao's move at the Moscow Conference to flatter the Soviet ego was apparently made in exchange for what he considered all-important military and economic aid. 34

33. Low, op.cit., p. 83.
34. Ibid.
The problem was that if Khrushchev had supplied the Chinese with nuclear technology, he would have effectively denied the value of the Chinese concession to peaceful co-existence. The Chinese wanted nuclear weapons because the Soviet Union would not seriously risk their use, and the Soviet Union promised to supply these weapons so as to prevent China stating that this risk should be taken. This situation marked the limit of practical political compromise between the two ideological positions.

The violent struggle which allegedly took place at the 1957 Conference resulted in public solidarity, but did not reconcile the different ideological positions of the two Parties. The Soviet Union retained a foreign policy based on peaceful co-existence and sought to avoid international confrontation. The PRC, convinced of socialist capacity to survive even nuclear war, actively pursued confrontationist foreign policy objectives. Thus, the USSR and PRC came to propound foreign policies which were diametrically opposed.

The history of the Sino-Soviet dispute presents a case study in Communist decision-making. This study reveals that Soviet and Chinese policies were based on the calculated and flexible pursuit of ideological and power political interests. This policy flexibility was necessitated by the inherent conflict

between the ideological and political interests of the two states: a conflict derived from their different interpretations of objective conditions. It is, therefore, reasonable to contend that the dispute represented a rare public example of what Lenin called "compromise enforced by [disputed] objective conditions": the fundamental problem of a Leninist party.

The limits of doctrinal flexibility, the limits of compromise, are exposed in the ideology of Sino-Soviet relations after the 1957 Moscow Conference. It was a situation in which the PRC could only secure its political interest in obtaining nuclear technology, by compromising its ideological interest in nuclear belligerence. Obviously, such an ideological compromise would have removed the doctrinal basis for the original political interest in gaining nuclear technology.

This was a case in which the political benefit of ideological compromise was negated by the process of compromise. And it suggests that the practical limits of compromise between ideological and political interests are reached when the success of a political interest can only be achieved by a compromise which negates the benefit of its success.

To the extent that philosophy represents "a set or system of ultimate values" and that political interests are simply the immediate practical manifestation of the priorities and values which motivate political action, it is legitimate to claim

37. See definition of philosophy, Introduction, pp. 8-9, above.
that political interests are derived from philosophical values. It follows that political success is a matter of philosophical interpretation. It also follows that the political interests of Marxism-Leninism are ultimately defined by the benefit they bring to the promotion of Communist ideals. This was not only the directive of Lenin himself, it is also the only rationally meaningful purpose of Marxist-Leninist action, as specifically Marxist-Leninist action. Thus, while political interests are distinct from ideological interests as operational phenomena, they serve to promote identical philosophical interests. It is in this sense that theory and ideology are ultimately more important than power political interests in Marxist-Leninist politics. In terms of Marxist phenomenology, this is an example of the unity between theory and action.

Thus, although Lenin denied a "recipe or general rule" for the conduct of ideological compromise, it is possible to establish the limits of ideological compromise - the point at which compromise becomes philosophically invalid. This occurs when

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38. Lenin proclaimed the leading role of revolutionary theory in the formation of Bolshevik policy in What Is To Be Done? op.cit., see analysis in Chapter I, pp. 14-15, above.

39. This paper is concerned with Marxist-Leninist, rather than purely Marxist phenomenology, and although the relationship between Marxist and Leninist doctrine is close, they are not identical. In any case, the Marxist pedigree of Leninism is certainly beyond the scope of this sub-thesis. Nevertheless, Marx's doctrine of the unity of theory and practice does support the general observation that political interests derive from philosophical values, especially in the case of Marxist-Leninist politics. Detailed consideration of this doctrine may be found in Lewis, op.cit., and Bottomore, op.cit.
the success of a power political interest can only be achieved through the negation of the doctrinal principle from which that power political interest is itself derived. This is the essential dynamic of competition between doctrinal and political interests in Communist decision-making.
PART THREE

THE HISTORY OF MARXIST-LENINIST ACTION
CHAPTER V

The Structure of Change in International Communism.
The Structure of Change in International Communism.

It is now possible to make certain, tentative, propositions about the structure of theoretical and political change in international Communism. The preceding analyses suggest that Communist policy is shaped by competition between the different political and ideological interests which derive from the competing requirements of discipline and diversity inherent in Marxist-Leninist doctrine. This competition is resolved through the interpretation and application of objective conditions to the philosophical goals of Marxism-Leninism. Thus, the priority apportioned to any particular political, ideological or theoretical interest depends on the prevailing interpretation of objective conditions.

This chapter will consider whether such a critique of Communist policy formation constitutes a sustainable proposition about the general process of theoretical and political change in international Communism. It will then proceed to test this general proposition against the broader historical experience of international Communism.

The whole edifice of Marxist-Leninist phenomenology rests on a particular series of doctrinal categories. Without delving too deeply into semantics, it is important to distinguish clearly the three categories or levels of Marxist-Leninist doctrine. The only defining, philosophical proposition about Communism is belief in class conflict as the basis of all ethical systems, and a concomitant commitment to dialectical progress. Indeed, Lenin never defined the ultimate Communist
society, he merely asserted "that it has its origin in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism has given birth". The next level of doctrine concerns theoretical systems, such as Lenin's theory of Bolshevik revolution, which assist the social action from which Communism must develop. The ideological level of Marxist-Leninist doctrine relates to specific political and educational programmes designed to achieve theoretical goals.

Thus, while conflict between the needs of discipline and diversity, short-term political and long-term theoretical interests are all resolved in terms of the philosophical objectives of Communism - these objectives do not provide dogmatic guidance for policy formulation. The Marxist-Leninist policy-maker is in the intellectual position of the Protestant rather than the Catholic. The range of theoretical and ideological programmes consistent with the defining philosophy are extremely broad. Ultimately, the basis of revisionism can only be assessed within this highly interpretative and diverse political culture.

The absence of dogma and the pre-eminence of interpretation means that clear-cut statements about legitimacy are only relatively sustainable. This obviously reinforces the process of doctrinal diversification. But it also serves to justify the Stalinist concern with international discipline and

1. Lenin, State and Revolution, op.cit., p. 64.
solidarity. The enormous scope for diversity carries with it a corresponding danger of error. This would appear to suggest that the twin tendencies of discipline and diversity - identified in the above case studies - do, indeed, represent general characteristics of Marxist-Leninist phenomenology. This is *prima facie* evidence that the experience of the above case studies does provide the basis for a general statement about the process of theoretical and political change in the international Communist movement.

The basic historical contention of this sub-thesis is that international Communism has passed through two distinct eras distinguished by the ascendancy of the different theoretical values of discipline and diversity. This categorization depends on the degree to which the various Parties' objectives and imperatives are based on similar interpretations of objective conditions. In other words, when the various Parties agree on a common interpretation of objective conditions discipline can prevail without doctrinal controversy, but when they do not agree on these fundamental conditions doctrinal diversity is most likely to develop.

The history of international discipline under Stalin has already been considered in detail. Likewise, the decline of Sino-Soviet consensus on the interpretation of Communist priorities was considered *ab initio*. It is now appropriate

2. See Chapter II, above, pp. 31-46.
to consider the imperatives of Communist policy formulation after the Sino-Soviet dispute. The analysis will concentrate on events between 1963 and 1976.

The unity of world Communism was first broken in June 1948, when Stalin expelled Tito's League of Communists from the Cominform. But this was a "decision of the Soviet leadership to excommunicate, not a decision by the Yugoslav party to secede". It represented the exercise of Soviet authority over membership of the movement, rather than a challenge to the nature of the movement itself. It was the Sino-Soviet dispute which is generally accepted as the major turning point in the unity of the movement. After 1963 the movement polarized, split and then began to fragment:

Thus in 1977 the words "world communist movement" were bound to cover at least three political phenomena: the Soviet state and the communist parties outside Russia that proclaimed their devotion to Soviet policy; the Chinese state and the communist parties outside China that looked to the theory and practice of Mao Tse-tung as their model; and a miscellaneous collection of Trotskyist and other heretical groups professing themselves to be Marxist-Leninists. To these might possibly be added the Vietnamese state and groups outside Vietnam that took it as their model; and conceivably the same might be said of North Korea.

the common residue of ideology makes it possible to attempt a meaningful discussion of the activities of "communists" in world politics in the 1960s and 1970s; yet the notion that there was a single world communist movement in this period must be abandoned.

It is crucial to understand the exact nature of this new diversity. It is particularly important to note that it was

5. Ibid., p. 4.
6. Ibid., p. 6.
neither intrinsically anti-Soviet nor anti-discipline. The doctrine of theoretical diversity - preached more than practiced by Lenin - was unequivocally proclaimed as early as the 1957 Moscow Conference:

Marxism-Leninism calls for a creative application of the general principles of the socialist revolution and socialist construction depending on the concrete conditions of each country, and rejects mechanical imitation of the policies and tactics of the Communist Parties of other countries. Lenin repeatedly called attention to the necessity of correctly applying the basic principles of communism, in keeping with the specific features of the nation, of the national state concerned. Disregard of national peculiarities by the proletarian party inevitably leads to its divorce from reality, from the masses and is bound to prejudice the cause of socialism and conversely, exaggeration of the role of these peculiarities or departure, under the pretext of national peculiarities, from the universal Marxist-Leninist truth on the socialist revolution and socialist construction is just as harmful to the socialist cause. 7

This statement highlights the central dilemma of international Communism during and after the Sino-Soviet dispute. All parties accepted the need for national theoretical and ideological development, but they also accepted the danger of national peculiarities perverting the "universal Marxist-Leninist truth". Each party accepted principles which could serve both to justify and condemn actions such as the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Thus, the issues of discipline and diversity were not merely theoretical screens for Soviet geopolitical ambition. They provoked real questions of policy for all Marxist-Leninist parties.

It is as well to remember that Marxist-Leninist doctrine is extremely objectivist and unsentimental, inherently illiberal

7. 1957 Moscow Statement, op.cit., p. 52.
and remote from majority rule. It is based on the Leninist notion that the proletariat is incapable of realizing its own best interest. This doctrine is shared by all Marxist-Leninists, including the so-called Eurocommunists who seek to transform society by peaceful means. The reformism of the French and Italian Communist Parties must not be confused with liberal pluralism. These forms of Marxism-Leninism may use the institutions of bourgeois democracy, but they remain opposed to the class structure it serves. And while they reject the violent resolution of class conflict, they accept the existence of revisionism and the need to negate its influence. The suppression of revisionism is a necessary task of any Communist Party, dispute only exists as to the form of suppression - the Soviets use force, the Italians education.

The reaction of the West European Communist Parties to the invasion of Czechoslovakia is illustrative of this continuing tension between discipline and diversity. The Communist Parties of Luxembourg, West Germany and Portugal supported the invasion. The other legal Parties publicly deplored it, although Tannahill argues that this reaction stemmed largely from a need to contain the electoral impact of the invasion's unpopularity. It is pertinent that a large group in the French party remained loyal to the CPSU. The Italians deplored the action as unjustified, not unacceptable - only

9. Ibid., p. 93.
10. Ibid., p. 67.
11. Ibid., p. 72.
later did they adopt the stronger, more autonomist, notion that "Sovereignty is an inalienable right".

The international movement reacted to the invasion of Czechoslovakia with remarkable ambivalence; the solidarity of the Stalinist era was replaced with multifarious equivocation. But the Soviet invasion was not condemned as anathema to the theory or practice of Marxism-Leninism. The principle behind the invasion was established by the 1957 Moscow Conference. As will be seen below, when the invasion was debated at the 1969 Moscow Conference, the movement only questioned its violence and need, not the morality of crushing revisionism.

Inter-party relations were now political, rather than hierarchical. But the reaction to the invasion serves to highlight the continued prestige of the Soviet Union after the Sino-Soviet dispute. The Chinese were only supported by Albania and small factions. None of the major West European Communist parties supported the Chinese line. A fact which enabled them to extract greater autonomy for themselves in the international movement.

In exchange for general support of Soviet positions and condemnation of the Chinese, Moscow has been willing to accept a greater independence from the Western parties. At the same time, the Western European parties (the more independent ones, at least) are careful not to go too far in their support of Moscow's position. The last thing they want is a complete victory for the Soviets that would restore Russian hegemony in the international movement and thus threaten their independence.

The political and theoretical landscape of the international movement was now dominated by the competition between the political and theoretical interests of discipline and diversity - unity and independence.

The entire history of the international movement has been shaped by this tension between discipline and diversity. Indeed, it can be divided into the periods of Stalinist discipline and post-Stalinist diversity. But the analysis of the Czechoslovak invasion suggests that this duality also influences the policy options of the decentralized period of theoretical and political diversity after the Sino-Soviet dispute. The following analysis will consider this phenomenon through an examination of the major international Communist conferences which have taken place since the dispute.

The Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe which took place at Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, on 24, 25 and 26 April 1967 was the largest such meeting since the Moscow Conference of 1960. The theme of the Conference was European security, and its proceedings highlighted the tension within the movement between the concerns of discipline and unity, diversity and independence. This tension was immediately revealed in the refusal of certain parties even to attend the Conference. It was in response to this absenteeism that Walter Ulbricht identified the major issue, not only of the Conference, but of contemporary Communism:
Is it a restriction of the sovereignty and autonomy of a party if, as in the case of our conference, a free exchange of views takes place to solve common problems? The fundamental principle of 'Workers of the World Unite! proceeds from the premise that every party bears a responsibility to the entire communist movement.  

Indeed, the abiding question in international Communism over the next decade was the content and limits of the responsibility the "entire communist movement" had to uphold the movement's fundamental principles in the face of individual party sovereignty and autonomy.

The keynote address by Leonid Brezhnev outlined the connection between independence, security and unity. He praised the diversity of the fraternal parties in "striving to make more effective use of the inherent possibilities of socialism and acquire fuller mastery of the laws of development of the socialist economy". He then proceeded to assess the security situation, "European security is a key condition for averting a world nuclear conflict", and "Facts show that the present war threat from German imperialism is very real indeed." This led him to conclude that unity within the international movement was required in order to meet the contemporary threat from imperialism, "Communists are active supporters of the unity of action of all democratic and

16. Ibid., p. 1036.
17. Ibid., p. 1037.
peace-loving forces. But this can be achieved only if we ourselves set an example of unity in thought and action."  

It is pertinent to note that the Conference accepted the Soviet assessment of the contemporary security situation and the demand it created for unity and discipline within the international movement. They did so after Stalin, after the Sino-Soviet dispute, after Khrushchev and before the invasion of Czechoslovakia. This period represented a peak in the independence of the fraternal parties. This fact strongly suggests that the Conference Statement accurately reflected the unadulterated policy of the European Communist parties:

Each Communist Party, in the specific conditions in which it works, is responsible to the working class and the working people of its country, to the people in general. At the same time each party is aware of its international responsibility for safeguarding peace, for forming new international relations conforming to the needs of our time.

This sense of responsibility requires of us, the Communist parties of Europe, that we pool our efforts for the solution of these problems. The stronger the unity and solidarity of the Communist and Workers' parties in Europe and all over the world, the more effective our struggle. 19

Thus, the different interests of discipline and unity, diversity and independence were accepted as important policy issues, and they influenced the European parties' approach to the problem of security in 1967. These were theoretical imperatives which lost no significance in the wake of the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Indeed, the implications of the

18. Ibid., p. 1041.
Sino-Soviet dispute and the invasion of Czechoslovakia upon the nature of party autonomy and international obligations were the primary issues discussed at the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow from 5-17 June 1969. The debate centered on the appropriate policy balance between independence and unity.

The Italian and Rumanian parties led in the defence of party autonomy and national sovereignty. The Italian leader, Enrico Berlinguer, claimed that it was essential "to respect fully the principles of the equality and sovereignty of every people" because "internationalism cannot be counterposed against these principles". The Rumanian leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, stressed that "the principle of internationalism should not be invoked on any account to justify non-observance of the other principles, to justify interference of any kind in the internal affairs of a socialist country or fraternal Party". These positions were based on the principle of doctrinal diversification. Berlinguer emphasized his Party's rejection of "the thesis that a single model of socialist society suitable for all situations can exist", and Ceausescu stated that only the party militants of a particular country could know the facts of its socio-political life and how to

22. Berlinguer, op. cit.
act "in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism" in solving their problems.

This position was not based on nationalist concepts of sovereignty, but on the Leninist idea that Communism can only be achieved by applying theoretical systems and ideological programmes appropriate to the particular objective conditions of host societies. It was perfectly legitimate in terms of Marxist-Leninist doctrine. But so too was the position of the conservative parties, led by the CPSU, which denied the intrinsic importance of national frontiers and emphasized the importance of proletarian internationalism. These two positions were enshrined in the Final Statement of the 1969 Conference:

The participants in the Meeting are convinced that the effectiveness of each Communist Party’s policy depends on its successes in its own country, on the successes of other fraternal Parties and on the extent of their co-operation. Each Communist Party is responsible for its activity to its own working class and people and at the same time, to the international working class. The national and international responsibilities of each Communist and Workers’ Party are indivisible. Marxist-Leninists are both patriots and internationalists; they reject both national narrow-mindedness and the negation or underestimation of national interests, and the striving for hegemony. At the same time, the Communist Parties – the Parties of the working class and all working people – are the standardbearers of genuine national interests unlike the reactionaries, which betray these interests. The winning of power by the working class and its allies is the greatest contribution which a Communist Party fighting under capitalist conditions can make to the cause of socialism and proletarian internationalism. 24

23. Ceausescu, op.cit.
Nevertheless, the emphasis of the international movement was increasingly being placed on the values of independence and doctrinal diversity. This emerging "autonomist" tendency reached a high point at the last major international Communist conference, the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of Europe held in East Berlin on 29 and 30 June 1976. This emphasis was even accepted by Brezhnev: "Every Communist party is ... responsible for its actions first of all before the working people of its own country, whose interests it expresses and defends". But the interests of unity and discipline - now symbolized by the term 'proletarian internationalism' remained a fundamental factor in the Soviet outlook:

Our Party, being loyal to the great ideas of proletarian internationalism, has never separated the destinies of the Soviet Union from those of other countries of Europe and the rest of the world. 26

The autonomist leaders continued to emphasize the doctrinal benefits of independence and doctrinal development and diversity. But they acknowledged, albeit vaguely or even only implicitly, the legitimate theoretical interest in solidarity, unity and discipline. Tito endorsed the Marxist postulate that "class struggle is waged on a world-wide scale". Ceausescu stated that "between national duties and those pertaining to the international solidarity of the Communist

26. ibid.
parties there is complete dialectical unity", and whatever
the nature of that "complete dialectical unity" at least he
acknowledged the existence of international duties.

The French and Italian leaders, Berlinguer and Marchais,
adopted extreme autonomous positions. Indeed, Marchais stated
that "as far as we are concerned conferences such as this no
longer meet the requirements of our times". Yet they did not
reject that part of the unsigned "Final Document" which
stated:

The Communist and Workers' Parties of European countries
... will develop their internationalist, comradely and
voluntary cooperation and solidarity on the basis of the
great ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin, strictly adhering
to the principles of equality and sovereign independence
of each Party, non-interference in internal affairs, and
respect for their free choice of different roads in the
struggle for social change of a progressive nature and
for socialism. 30

Thus, the dual theoretical interests of discipline and
diversity can be seen to have caused continuous policy
differences throughout the post-dispute era. The various

28. Nicolae Ceausescu. "Address to the Conference of Communist
and Workers' Parties of Europe, East Berlin: 29-30 June
29. Georges Marchais. "Address to the Conference of Communist
and Workers' Parties of Europe, East Berlin: 29-30 June
30. "Final Document of the Conference of Communist and
Workers' Parties of Europe, East Berlin: 29-30 June 1976".
Cited in Yearbook 1977, Ibid., p. 577. It is worth noting
that the term "proletarian internationalism" - used by
Brezhnev in his address to the Conference - has now been
replaced by the words "internationalist, comradely and
voluntary cooperation and solidarity". This implied a
looser relationship than the Soviet formulation which had
been used to justify the invasion of Czechoslovakia. This
may be seen as further evidence of the move toward
independence and doctrinal diversity.
political and theoretical interests of the period stemmed from
the different emphasis particular parties placed on these
inherent doctrinal concerns.

The Eurocommunists and autonomists were concerned with policy
independence and non-intervention. These interests stemmed
from a particular interpretation of objective conditions which
placed a high premium on reformist, collaborationist, non-
vviolent and educational ideological programmes. These
programmes and the objective conditions upon which they were
based differed from those in other societies. These Parties,
therefore, benefited by an international policy which
emphasized diversity and independence.

The political and theoretical interests of the CPSU were
concerned with security problems relating to the systemic
struggle with the United States. They were concerned to
emphasize unity, solidarity and discipline within the
international movement, and not necessarily out of any
sinister neo-Stalinist ambitions. The objective conditions of
the Soviet Union really were dominated by the contest with the
United States - it is only reasonable that this should produce
political and theoretical interests different to those of the
Eurocommunist Parties.

The point is that all major policy documents produced by the
international Communist movement since 1957 assert the dual
theoretical interests of discipline and diversity. The
political debates during the 1957 and 1960 Moscow Conferences, the European Conferences at Karlovy Vary in 1967 and East Berlin in 1976, and the last major international conference at Moscow in 1969 were dominated by these dual interests. It has also been seen, throughout the sub-thesis, that the theoretical interests emphasized by Communist parties are derived from their particular interpretation of the theoretical and ideological impact of the objective conditions of the society in which they operate.

Thus, it may be stated that the process of theoretical and political change in the international Communist movement is the result of competition between the different theoretical and political interests which arise from the separate and competing requirements of discipline and diversity inherent in Marxist-Leninist doctrine. This competition is resolved - in so far as resolution means the adoption of a particular policy option - on the basis of political priorities established by the prevailing interpretation of objective conditions.

Change in the international Communist movement is constrained by (or conditioned by) the requirement to be presentable as consistent with the theoretical postulates of Marxism-Leninism. During periods when the interests of discipline are in the ascendency - when the objective conditions of a majority of Communist Parties dictate the pursuit of a unified and disciplined policy approach (or they interpret that

31. The 1960 Conference was not considered in this Chapter, as it explicitly confirmed the 1957 Moscow Declaration.
objective conditions dictate such a policy approach) - the international Communist movement operates as a single political organization. But when the interest in doctrinal application, development and diversity is ascendant the movement is likely to be extremely factious and decentralized. These positions are not inherently irreconcilable, they merely represent degrees of political and theoretical priority. The threat of bourgeois violence or revision - such as before and during the Second World War - constitutes objective conditions which call for international discipline. In the absence of such threat, Leninist doctrine can be experimented with and applied to the different objective conditions of various societies. This is, after all, the primary responsibility of the Leninist party - to discover the form of Communism appropriate to society.

The most important structural characteristic of Marxism-Leninism revealed by the foregoing analyses relates to the interpretative role of the Marxist-Leninist party. The entire structure of Marxist-Leninist action stems from the official interpretation of objective conditions. This primary decision of the party leadership establishes the substance of the organization's theoretical systems and ideological programmes. It dictates the orientation of doctrinal effort, whether towards discipline or development. This policy structure determines the theoretical, ideological and political priorities by which the political relations of the organization are actually conducted.
CONCLUSION

Theory, Politics and Change in the International Communist Movement.
The international Communist movement exists as an expression of Marxist-Leninist political philosophy. The theoretical and ideological imperatives of this philosophy establish the criteria for membership in the movement. They motivate, direct and control the political behaviour of the movement and its constituent members. It follows that the process of theoretical and political change within the international Communist movement is controlled by the philosophical imperatives of Marxism-Leninism. Thus, in order to explain the history of the international Communist movement it is essential to understand the structure of Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

The doctrines of Marxism-Leninism are dominated by the imperatives of Leninist class analysis and dialectical materialism. The most important characteristics of this philosophical framework is the simultaneous requirement it creates for doctrinal discipline and doctrinal development.

1. Acceptance of the Leninist variant of Marxism was a pre-condition for membership of the Comintern (see, Lenin, Left-wing Communism, op.cit., and Terms of Admission into the Communist International, op.cit.); and in disputes within the movement it it still standard practice for disputants to accuse each other of violating Marxist-Leninist norms. The Marxisms of Lukacs, Gramsci, Marcuse and the recent Eurocommunists, see S. Carrillo, Eurocommunism and the State, (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1977), argue either continuity with Marx and Lenin or the outdatedness of some postulates of one or the other, without attacking their general corpus of ideas. "Revisionists" such as Khrushchev argued that Lenin or Marx would have themselves come to different conclusions in different circumstances, and stress the dynamic rather than dogmatic nature of their thinking. It is still, therefore, axiomatic that "the international Communist movement" is an expression of Marxist-Leninist philosophy and the ethical values it prescribes, rather than of any conceivable alternative thereto.
Doctrinal discipline is required because socialist ideology is considered vulnerable due to the alleged inability of the proletariat to develop an indigenous socialist consciousness. This creates a strong impulse toward doctrinal uniformity. The impulse to doctrinal diversity stems from the dialectical need for theoretical and ideological programmes to reflect changing objective conditions. This creates a need for theoretical and ideological experiment. Thus, the imperatives of Leninist class analysis and dialectical materialism demand both discipline and diversity, unity and independence.

These doctrinal impulses are not inherently irreconcilable, as they serve different phenomenological purposes. The impulse to discipline relates to the integrity of doctrine, diversity relates to the relevance of doctrine. Nevertheless, these separate concerns may give rise to conflicting ideological and political interests unless they are balanced within an agreed interpretation of objective conditions.

This leads to the central political problem of the international Communist movement - the interpretation of objective conditions. The only immutable truth of Marxist-Leninist doctrine is that Communism will develop from the social forces generated by the repressive nature of capitalist class structure. This is the basic fact of Marxist class analysis and dialectical materialism, and all other doctrinal positions and policies are derivative of this single truth. The fundamental task of the Communist Party is to develop
theoretical and ideological programmes appropriate to the objective conditions of society. This involves distinguishing legitimate theoretical revisions, based on objective conditions, from revisions which constitute the assertion of bourgeois ideology. The revision of doctrine is a highly interpretative and constant task in dynamic societies.

Thus, the common philosophical objectives of the international movement do not ensure universally agreed theoretical and ideological programmes. Nor are the philosophical objectives of the international Communist movement universally accepted within the international political system. These conflicts subject the international movement to competitive political relations. First, disputes over theoretical and ideological programmes within the movement give rise to internal political competition - factionalism. Secondly, the philosophical objectives of the movement must be defended against the power political interests of non-Communists.

The mechanism of competitive power politics determines capacity to implement policy. It simply involves the comparison of resources and priority - commitment, strength. This establishes which policy interests can withstand the claims of other policy interests upon resources. The actual forum of competition may be intellectual debate, compromise and trade-off, military pressure or invasion. But, whereas competitive or power politics defines success only in terms

2. See definition of terms, Introduction, p. 10, above.
of policy triumph, the Marxist-Leninist defines success in terms of other ethical values. Thus, the power political interests of Communist states, and factions, tend to be the practical, policy manifestations of ideological, theoretical and philosophical interests.

These are the major factors in the historical analysis of the international Communist movement. They provide the necessary components for a general statement on the process of theoretical and political change in the international Communist movement.

The imperatives of Communist decision-making may be listed as follows. In the first instance, a theoretical and ideological strategy must be devised which will best facilitate the development of Communism. This process involves assessment of the objective conditions of the host society. It also involves an assessment of international conditions which is a major concern in establishing the relative weight given to the interests of discipline and diversity. This is an enormous interpretative and analytical task: it involves assessment of economic, social, cultural and ethnic conditions, not only in the host society, but in the world at large.

This is the point in the policy process at which theoretical and ideological interests may be compromised in order to secure or advance the overall objectives of Communism. The Communist Party may find it useful to suppress particular
aspects of a doctrinal programme in order to enter into political coalition, gain military hardware, or secure any number of material or political benefits. But the purpose of Marxist-Leninist policy remains attainment of Communism.

The philosophical integrity of political action is maintained by the priority structure established by the philosophical objectives of Communism. All action taken by Communist states or parties is conditioned by the need to be, or at the very least to appear to be, consistent with their stated philosophical objectives. Thus, the limits of compromise are reached when the doctrinal benefit of a political compromise is actually negated by the process of compromise.

The flexibility of this structure lies in the graduated status of doctrinal benefit. A power political compromise might negate an ideological benefit, but be justified by an associated theoretical benefit, or negate a theoretical benefit but be justified by an associated philosophical benefit. This process occurs at all levels of Communist decision-making from foreign policy to the interpretation of objective conditions. It ensures that flexibility and political compromise are ultimately controlled by the philosophical objectives of Marxism-Leninism.

3. Of course, the objectives which actually motivate political action are not always those claimed to have done so. The point to be made, however, is that a consistent Marxist-Leninist, acting as a Marxist-Leninist, must act on the basis of philosophical objectives.
The process of change in the international Communist movement is dominated by the structure of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. In the first instance, the actions which give rise to change are formulated on the basis of policy guidelines - doctrines - derived from the prevailing interpretation of objective conditions. The most significant policy consequence of this interpretation is the relative emphasis it apportions to the competing needs of doctrinal discipline and doctrinal diversity. This establishes the priority of specific ideological and theoretical interests and provides the policy-maker with a guide to the political, ideological and theoretical interests which may or may not be compromised in the process of political competition. It is this system of doctrinal priorities which determines the nature of actual decisions, and which regulates the process of decision at all levels of Marxist-Leninist policy formulation.
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