Internationalism as a Tool of Chinese State Legitimization
Geneva, Bandung, and Hungary in Chinese Propaganda

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I, Bryce Kositz, affirm that all work and writing contained within this thesis, except for those sources duly noted, is my own. All translations from sources originally written in Chinese are my own. All sources contributing to my own work have been faithfully and fully acknowledged.

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Internationalism, in the Marxist sense, is seeing oneself not as a citizen of a single country, but rather of a global class, and supporting the struggles of that class. The beliefs of Chairman Mao Zedong and the other leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) did not always match this definition of internationalism, or each other's, but in spite of this they frequently used these themes in propaganda. The views of the Chinese leadership, various and contradictory as they may have been, aren't, however, the focus of this study, but a point of departure. The focus is on how they used the theme of internationalism in domestic propaganda to build legitimacy for their domestic policies and to create enthusiasm for the socialist cause.

It has been widely noted that throughout Chinese history, the foreign policy of the ruling regime has been intimately related with the legitimacy of the state. Concerning the imperial system of tributary relations, Albert Feuerwerker wrote that, “The spatial-ideological imagery of the Sino-centric and moralistic tribute system was a critical component of the legitimation of imperial rule within China...”¹ Even though neighboring nations didn't always obey the tribute system, the portrayal of foreign nations as compliant with the wishes of the Middle Kingdom was a powerful pillar of legitimacy for the imperial system. The failure to maintain the narrative of the tribute system was amongst the most important reasons for the fall of the Qing dynasty and the imperial system. As a consequence, the repudiation of the unequal treaties signed during the late Qing was the most important goal of the two inheritor states; the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China (PRC).² Once these goals had been accomplished, foreign policy continued to remain important to the legitimacy of domestic policy. The theme of internationalism formed the keystone of the relationship between foreign and domestic policy during the early years of the People’s Republic, since it called upon Chinese to reflect upon their experiences under imperialism and make sacrifices so that other nations would not suffer similarly.

This study will look at the Chinese press coverage of three events during the First Five Year Plan; the Geneva Conference on Korea and Indochina in 1954, the Asian-African Conference in 1955 hosted in Bandung, Indonesia, and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. The reason that these foreign events were chosen is because the Chinese spent many hours in deliberation about, in preparation for, and in the actual participation at the event. As such, one can safely assume that they knew exactly what happened in each of these events. When it came time to report these events in the state media then, there were no mistakes, only lies, or perhaps a less negative but less fun word, discrepancies. In addition, in the cases of Geneva and Bandung, there were further discrepancies between the messages which the Chinese delegations delivered to the audiences at the conference and the messages which the press gave to the domestic Chinese audience. Studying the discrepancies between what actually happened, China’s official position, as well as domestic Chinese propaganda gives us clues about what the leadership wanted their people to believe about these events. The image of China emerging from this propaganda is also tied to the promotion of domestic policies and socialist ideology.

Based on the research of other modern scholars and on primary sources, this thesis will present the consensus on these events in order to provide a point of reference from which the language of Chinese propaganda can be studied. The event, as well as the actions and announcements of the Chinese made in these foreign events, will be analyzed to establish the contrast between their foreign message and their domestic message. The propaganda, provided in magazines, newspapers, and other media, will then be analyzed for discrepancies and how these build legitimacy for the party and their policies. In conclusion, Hundred Flower editorials and sources will be briefly surveyed to see how effective the propaganda was at instilling its message of communist internationalism.

The discrepancies between the domestic and international languages used to present these events reveal that the theme of internationalism was used as a vector to create legitimacy for the leadership of the party and to build a new national identity for China. Proletarian internationalism was
never a goal; it was instead a useful tool in reestablishing a sense of China’s importance on the world stage, one that had been lacking since the decline of the Qing dynasty to imperialist advances.

Establishing power on the global stage and letting their people know of these successes, which were attributed to the party, formed one of the key supports of the regime. Moreover, the party used foreign policy to drum up support for domestic policies, telling the people that their work ethic had a direct impact on the future of the world communist movement, and on history itself. The CCP wanted to mobilize the people and get them to support the programs of national construction planned by the party, and internationalism was one of the tools the government employed to produce this result. The Party ran a propaganda campaign of internationalism not to make the Chinese people sympathetic to the global proletariat, but to instill values that would motivate them to work for China. The Party’s dual goals of establishing legitimacy and building a new national identity were thus mutually reinforcing; the national identity – as hardworking citizens – that the communists wanted to foster supported the goals of national construction and inspired trust in the message of the Communist Party’s leadership.

The word propaganda is generally used when describing materials published by the government, or occasionally other large political organizations such as political parties, that are meant to persuade the audience into believing in or following a certain message or idea. It is essentially an instructive practice that often exaggerates the message in order to achieve a greater impact at the forfeit of complete truthfulness. Houn defines propaganda as, “… the broad and rather impersonal appeal of a regime, chiefly by means of the mass media…” while Brady goes further to describe it as the attempt to affect people’s behavior via the teaching of values. What is clear is that in addition to its role in instruction, propaganda’s defining feature is that it is based on normative appeals rather than coercive measures or material incentives. Propaganda fosters a belief in certain morals and then further appeals

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to the reader to base their decisions and actions upon those values. This moral and normative appeal distinguishes propaganda from advertising since it offers no reward for the choice to follow the message presented. Propaganda’s goal is to insert a new moral value into the reader’s decision making process and change their eventual actions. Mao envisioned exactly such a system; “From Mao’s point of view, an ideal system would probably be a command economy in which normative appeals would be so effective that actors in the system would internalize, that is, adopt, the values and preference scales of the planners. Thus people would voluntarily commit themselves to go to places and undertake tasks desired by the top policy makers without demanding special rewards in return for performing them.”

This was the role of propaganda during the First Five Year Plan; to instruct so well that people would willingly mobilize around the goals of the Communist Party without the need for compensation.

In the context of China, propaganda appeared throughout the country in various mediums, from newspapers, magazines, and journals to movies and plays. These mediums do not intrinsically contain propaganda; therefore, to evaluate the difference, one must take into account the definition of propaganda posed above. If they compose of either or both key components, the instruction or the normative appeal, then they are considered propaganda. When assuming that there is an organized propaganda campaign meant to instill the desired virtues and obtain the desired actions that takes many years, then all material from the time can be incorporated into the study.

Historically, the communists had been working on developing their own propaganda techniques since before the Long March. Apter and Saich point out that “... the written word was published, broadcast, and published from on high by the printing press Mao’s followers carried on their backs during the Long March and installed in the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas, the highest point in Yan’an.”

From there they published many of Mao’s treatises to be studied throughout the Yan’an soviet, leaflets

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to distribute to enemy troops, and also newspapers. The main state propaganda organ of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), the Renmin Ribao (People’s Daily), found its start in Yan’an as the Jiefang Ribao (Liberation Daily). The instantly recognizable styles of the Cultural Revolution were many years away—in fact, most of the pictures resembled folk wood cuts rather than Communist realism—but the CCP did start learning how to indoctrinate their populace with propaganda long before the establishment of the PRC.

The era of the First Five Year Plan presented a new challenge for the propagandists, though, and it is yet another reason for the need to study these events more carefully. For the first time since 1927 China was not at war. The CCP had no domestic military enemy to fight, and the outstanding Taiwan issue did not pose a threat to the overall military security of the country. There were no more foreign invaders either, with both the Japanese Empire defeated and the Americans safely behind the 38th Parallel in Korea. Communist propagandists to this point had never experienced a peace-time environment within which to work. Understandably, war themes and simple polemic narratives of ‘us versus them’ predominated even after the end of the Korean War, with the theme of struggle against imperialism predominating throughout the socialist camp. But the Chinese propagandists’ movements away from these themes echo the leadership’s movement away from a belief in an imminent war against imperialists to a belief in peaceful, internationalist resistance against the system which produced imperialism. This period was a learning experience for China, and for its propaganda organs, which adapted slowly to the new conditions. Foremost amongst these adaptations were alterations in vocabulary to recognize the more peaceful atmosphere, dropping many martial virtues from the litany of characteristics that a Chinese should display in their identity, and putting a new emphasis on economic production. But just as interesting as the themes which changed were those messages which remained the same; unity, the leadership of the party, and a military inspired mindset that viewed problems as obstacles to be struggled against and overcome.
In China, the Geneva Conference marked the transition between the prior period of war and the following period of peace. It was the first time the CCP participated in an international conference, and also the first time their propagandists no longer needed to mobilize for war. And just as the agreements reached in Geneva were ultimately broken by the signatories, the narratives built in propaganda during the conference were not preserved by the Chinese. There was no narrative of internationalism in propaganda on the Geneva Conference, but the various, unrelated narratives built throughout Geneva had been rebuilt and strengthened into a single edifice of internationalism by the time of the Bandung Conference the following year. While the narratives constructed by propaganda on Geneva would serve merely as the foundation of the stronger narrative which emerged in Bandung, the conference was a learning experience and an attempt to build a new narrative of foreign relations that would support the regime.

The Geneva Conference

China in Geneva

The Geneva Conference was convened on April 26th and lasted until July 21st, 1954. It was divided into two separate conferences; one on the unification of Korea, and the other on restoring peace in Indochina, which focused mainly on the war between the Viet Minh and France, but it also dealt with Laos and Cambodia. It included permanent representation from the USA, France, Britain, the USSR, and China, as well as temporary representation from those parties directly involved in the topic at hand. Geneva was planned at the Berlin Conference, which was focused on the same questions in addition to several European problems which were more or less successfully resolved then. While the European problems were solved, the questions of Korea and Indochina went unresolved, and the parties agreed to meet again in Geneva with the added representation of China. Geneva ended up moderately more successful than its predecessor, Berlin, in that there were some general accords reached in Indochina, but these were never fully implemented by either side, and the Vietnam War began almost
immediately afterwards and lasted into the 70’s. No agreements were made on Korea, which remains the state of affairs to this day.

Geneva was the first major international event in which the PRC participated. While China had been involved in a number of one-on-one talks with other nations, as well as a limited number of multi-nation meetings between communist countries, they had no experience on the international stage. The CCP was equally new to the forum, since throughout the Yan’an period the future rulers of China had little contact with the outside world. The Korean War and the following armistice talks were China’s only visible contact with foreign powers outside of the communist bloc.

When China did arrive in Geneva, a concession secured by the USSR at the Berlin Conference, few knew what to expect of them. Assuming that they were just a Soviet satellite state and their leaders mouthpieces of Moscow, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles infamously refused to shake Premier Zhou Enlai’s hand. French, British, and other representatives were equally apprehensive but less sure about what Chinese participation would mean. The UK, for their part, had already come to some degree of understanding with the PRC because of their hold of Hong Kong, but could hardly be considered familiar with the regime.

Even though Geneva was China’s first venture into any sort of international conference, they were thoroughly prepared to achieve their goals, which were securing an international position, protecting their national interests, and expanding contacts. The main goal was establishing a position which, “…was based upon (1) China’s assertion of her proper role as that of a great Power (in effect the Great Asian Power) and as the legitimate spokesman for Asian aspirations for peace, national independence, and progress…” China claimed its position as a great power via their role as a leader of Asia, but they did not mean to lead Asia into communism, and rather into mutual cooperation to rid Asia of the legacies of colonialism. In one observer’s review of the conference, he wrote that,

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"[Beijing] seems to have attached great importance to the Geneva Conference, which was first and foremost the debut of the [People's Republic of China] at a multilateral ministers' meeting. By participating, China achieved prestige and tacit recognition of her great-power-status. Secondly, it was a means of demonstrating the style of diplomacy of this 'newest' power to Asia and the world.... Finally... [Beijing] was determined to ensure that no settlement unfavorable to China's interests would be made..."  

The first and second goals related are essentially about finding their space on the international stage, while the last is the national interest. The two are inextricably linked though, as the identity desired supports China's national interests. Their message of leading a movement for peace and anti-colonialism worked in favor of China's goals, supporting the claim that, "China's efforts to alter the relative distribution of international power are no more – nor less – benign than those of other states acting to assert or protect what they see as their national interests."  

This message of peace and anti-colonialism was not directed at the other major delegates, but rather at the observers. They hoped that through such a message, they could expand their contact with other nations, especially Asian countries, and break out of the ring of containment that the US was attempting to erect around them.

This message was primarily anti-US on the grounds of opposing imperialism and supporting peace and independence throughout Asia. Their opposition to the US was based largely on considerations for their own security, and the US was seen as the foremost threat due to their positions on Taiwan and Vietnam. Security was paramount, so, "To achieve his primary objective of denying the United States any excuse to establish bases in Laos and Cambodia, Zhou was willing to bargain away the Viet Minh-supported local Communist position in these countries."  

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9 Feuerwerker, 3.
intervene in Asia was central to China’s approach in Geneva, even more important than communist internationalism. But they framed this goal in the message of peace in order to expand contacts, thus breaking the US embargo. As Zhou Enlai told the conference, “We consider that the aggressive acts on the part of the United States should be stopped, that peace in Asia should be ensured.... That the national rights and freedom of the Asian peoples should be safeguarded. We also hold that... all foreign military bases in Asia be removed...” Zhou held that the greatest danger to China was the possibility that the US would intervene in Vietnam, or pull any of the states of Indochina into a military alliance. The Chinese worried about China, in that they didn’t want to find themselves encircled in US military bases and allies that could strangle trade or interfere in their affairs, but they framed the argument in terms of peace and sovereignty for those nations. Leadership was less important than actually bringing these nations into a neutral position where they were no threat to China.

The other aspect of the message that China presented was as spokesman for Asia, and through that, a great power. This was the message sent to the permanent participants of Geneva; that China deserved to be there. There were not many Asian nations represented in Geneva, so as the largest and only permanent member represented throughout the conference, China wanted to claim the right to speak for the rest. But rather than serve as Asia’s leader, “…the part played by Premier [Zhou] at Geneva supported the image of the [PRC] as a ‘peace-maker’ in Asia, an image the Chinese leaders sought to cultivate in 1954.” Zhou said it himself when accused of claiming a monopoly on representing Asia when he said, “No, gentlemen, we do not claim any monopoly. What we are voicing is nothing but the aspirations of the Asian peoples for peace, independence, democracy, and freedom.”

Zhou was careful not to say that China was leading Asia, since there were many charges laid against

12 Randle, 549.
them of plotting to conquer or turn Asia red, and instead said that China only inspired and spoke for Asia. They were able to do so because they were geographically Asian, and had suffered under the same yoke of imperialism. Asian nations were capable of and ought to speak for themselves, but until the international environment allowed them to do so, China would express their emotions for them since China held similar aspirations. They supported this position by offering the proof that they had been victorious in their struggle against imperialism; “The victory of the Chinese people has radically changed the state of affairs in Asia. It inspires the peoples of Asia to struggle for their national independence, and for their ultimate liberation from the imperialist yoke.”14 All of this was meant to prove that China deserved an important position in international affairs. The messages were not exclusive though; presenting themselves as a leader in these terms aimed to gain recognition from both the large and small countries. One historian noted both goals, summarizing, “The Geneva Conference provided China a good opportunity to enhance its international prestige and increase influence among the neutral nations of Asia by playing the role of peacemaker.”15 All these themes were elaborated upon and built into even more cohesive narratives a year later in Bandung.

China did, in fact, make some contributions to the Conference, and in general considered it a victory. They were active in the back rooms during the Indochina debates and played an important role in getting concessions from both the French and the Vietnamese to ensure that they reached a consensus. Also among their contributions was a proposal to have the prospective Korean peace agreement and elections administered by a neutral-nations committee, which did help move the Korean talks forward for a while, even though they never reached a conclusion. The neutral-nations committee reappeared as an aspect of the agreements on Indochina. On the topic of whether Geneva was a success, Zhou said that, “... if the duration of one month and the actual situation of the Conference are

14 Zhou Enlai, ‘Speech by Mr. Chou En-lai, Head of the Delegation of the People’s Republic of China, April 28, 1954,’ in Young, 15.
15 Qiang, 55.
considered, the achievement of the Conference leaves much to be desired, the rate of progress has been very slow and our Conference has fallen considerably short of the expectations of the people of the whole world.”

What he didn’t mention was that China’s goals of projecting out to Asia had been met, as agreements with India and Burma were signed during breaks in the Conference, and other diplomatic channels previously blocked had been opened up. But most importantly, Geneva represented a victory for the propaganda department since it allowed them to spin a growing narrative of Chinese prestige and a new national identity.

Geneva in China

Within China, the propaganda organs of the party were faced with the task of adjusting to an evolving foreign policy and an unfamiliar international environment. Peaceful for the first time in their history, the party needed to develop new themes to motivate and instruct the Chinese people with. In response to Geneva, propaganda used themes similar to those presented at the conference in different ways in order to build legitimacy for party leadership and to create a new national identity based on hard work. The party’s methods of claiming legitimacy were based on instructing their people in the need for leadership as well as the party’s close relationship with the people, while their desired national identity was one which believed that each person’s hard work and sacrifice in their role was vital for the nation as a whole to develop.

The first major theme of domestic reporting on the Geneva Conference was the need for leadership to achieve any major international and national goals. At the heart of this theme was the attempt by the CCP to build its legitimacy through building a belief in the need for a vanguard party to lead China. Foreign propaganda, such as the reports covering Geneva, stressed this tangentially by showing the need for China to lead Asia against the forces of imperialism. Unlike in Geneva, where they claimed only to inspire Asia, domestically the communists argued that without a vanguard acting as the

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16 Zhou Enlai, ‘Speech by Mr. Chou En-lai, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, June 9, 1954,’ in Young, 157.
leader, the goals of liberation and national construction throughout Asia's nations was unreachable. In addition to this, they wanted to show the successes of the Party in foreign affairs and build legitimacy through results, particularly appealing to more patriotic impulses by showing China's newfound influence. In terms of leadership, propaganda on Geneva focused on two themes: the reasons that China could and should lead Asia, and the results that leadership would obtain. The first manifested itself in propaganda stressing the common history and interests of China with other Asians and how it was still foremost among them, while the second focused chiefly on defying the United States and its imperialist plots to bring about true liberation and freedom in Asia.

In domestic propaganda, as well as to some degree in Geneva itself, the party claimed to lead and speak for all Asia by virtue of having been the first Asian nation to 'stand up.' They claimed that a vanguard was necessary for Asia, just as it was for China, repeatedly emphasizing that the will of the people could only be presented effectively through a suitable leadership, which the party claimed for itself. The CCP claimed this because of their deep relation to and understanding of Asia, and therefore also of their own people. This is expressed clearly by the Renmin Ribao editorial, which said, "These kind [desires for peace and negotiation] of clear and great opinions of our country's delegation represent Asia's mutual wishes, it is the resounding voice fully trusted by those Asian peoples who have already stood up and are now waking."17 China was more concerned about its own interests in Geneva, and even to some degree sold out the Vietnamese in the agreement in order to prevent further wars and instability in the region, but to their people they portrayed themselves as the paramount representatives of Asia. They shared history, beliefs, and wishes for the future with all other Asians, according to the propaganda. Most importantly, they shared a similar colonial legacy with other Asians; "The Chinese people, who have seized their own country's fate, from their own and other Asian people's long-term bitter experiences under colonialism, deeply understand the urgent desire to defend one's

17 NCNA, 'Zheng qu shi xian qian bai wan ren de he ping yuan wang (Strive to Realize A Thousand Million People's Desire for Peace),' Remin Ribao, May 12, 1954.
national security, strive for a peaceful environment, and build their own great homeland.”18 It is from this common experience that mutual understanding grows, and why China can represent Asia. They also knew what issues were important to Asia;

“Foreign Minister [Zhou Enlai’s] speech of April 28th pointed out that ... peace in Asia should be ensured, the independence and sovereignty of Asian nations be respected, the national rights and freedom of the Asian people safeguarded, interference in the internal affairs of the Asian nations stopped, all foreign military bases in Asia removed, foreign armed forces stationed in Asian countries withdrawn, the revival of Japanese militarism prevented and all economic blockades and restrictions abolished. This just and unselfish demand of the Chinese delegation represents the common aspirations of the Asian people. It is the resounding and confident voice of the Asian people who have stood up or are awakening.”19

Most Asian countries didn’t face economic blockade, but this is just one of many examples where a Chinese problem was attributed to other countries in order to explain China’s difficulties. This pattern of discussing the problems which faced China via propaganda about foreign events occurred repeatedly throughout the period. Here, the propaganda department wanted to have China believe that because Asia faced similar problems, all Asia would be able to work together to resolve them. Based on their shared history and their shared purposes in the present, China depicted itself as able to represent Asia. But the next goal was even more important for establishing legitimacy among their own people; Asia had to accept that leadership.

Asian nations were portrayed as happily accepting Chinese leadership and representation because that provided proof that China’s claims to that leadership were legitimate. Whether or not Asians actually supported the Chinese position at Geneva – and at least a handful sympathized with

18 NCNA, ‘Bao zheng ge guo he ping gong chu de zheng que yuan ze (Protect the Correct Principles of All Countries’ Peaceful Coexistence),’ Renmin Ribao, July 2, 1954.
China as Zhou Enlai made stops in India and Burma during the breaks in the Conference to sign agreements which enunciated the Five Principles of Coexistence – was not important to the Chinese propagandists. Support from Asia built up their claims to leadership within China itself, both by providing legitimacy by showing China as a major player on the world scene once again but also by proving the wide acceptance of Chinese Communist leadership. An enthusiastic propagandist wrote assuredly that Asians would support China, saying, “Asians will stand up and oppose all of the United States’ destructive conspiracies, and strive for the smooth opening of the Geneva Conference and struggle for its success!” Other reports gave examples of how Asians were already supporting the Chinese delegation. A previously quoted article also said that, “Asia’s public opinion wholly supports and works for the USSR, PRC, DPRK, and North Vietnam’s struggle to establish and consolidate Asian mutual safety, they advocate the peaceful resolution of the Korean problem, stopping the Indochina war and ensuring complete independence for Indochina, oppose America’s colonialism in Asia and its expansion of Asian wars. The May 5th to 8th Asian Trade Union Association Conference in Beijing’s final announcement expresses Asian workers of all nations’ attitude.” The representatives of Asia were even willing to come to Beijing to show their support for China’s delegation to Geneva in this report. As a consequence of this support for the Chinese, results were starting to be realized throughout the Asian continent. Another wrote that, “China’s righteous voice is already resonating widely within all Asian countries. If imperialists oppose Asians and Asian Peace and Asian security and Asians seizing their own destiny and their determination and decision to work hard together, if they oppose how Asia is undergoing deep, fundamental changes, and still tenaciously carry out the outmoded policies of

20 Zheng Wan, ‘Mei guo yin mo po huai ri nei wa hui yi (America Conspires to Destroy the Geneva Conference),’ Shijie Zhishi 7 (1954), 12.
21 ‘Zheng qu shi xian qian bai wan ren de he ping yuan wang (Strive to Realize A Thousand Million People’s Desire for Peace).’
imperialism and colonialism, then they will certainly meet failure."22 Because Asians were following Chinese leadership, as they must have been because their message in Geneva was reverberating throughout Asia, then Asia would certainly be victorious and achieve its independence. One of the other hallmarks of having a shared history with Asia was also that Asia shared a future with China; similar circumstances produce similar results. This theme would be developed further later, particularly during the Bandung Conference, but during Geneva it was used to show how leadership brings results. According to the Communist Party, Asians recognized China’s rise and by following in its footsteps they could also achieve such great successes, just as China needed the Communist Party to lead them down the correct path.

Among those claimed successes achieved by the unity of Asians behind China was the defeat of imperialism, embodied by the United States, and the expansion of Chinese prestige throughout the world. The spiting of America was foremost among these successes, as the propaganda focused a constant tirade against the wiles of John Foster Dulles, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and the rest of the ‘American ruling clique.’ Because of Korea, Taiwan, the blockade, non-recognition, and numerous other reasons, America was public enemy number one; not an article on Geneva could go by without referring to their attempts to derail the conference and their hate for the Chinese people. But the papers reported that thanks to the leadership and hard work of the Chinese delegation and the support of Asians and other peace-loving people, America had been defeated in Geneva. In fact, the power of China had been felt before the Conference began, as the party propaganda reminded its readers that, "Due to the diligent work of the Chinese and Korean people, as well as the support of the forces of peace led by the Soviet Union, the realization of the Korean Armistice finally made the initial steps of warming the international situation. At the Berlin Conference, the USSR suggested a meeting of the five great powers, and this was warmly welcomed by all peace-loving, decent

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22 Zhang Fang, ‘Wei fan dui mei guo de xin zhi min zhu yi, bao wei ya zhou de he ping he yu an quan er tou zhengl (To Oppose America’s New Colonialism, Struggle to Protect Asia’s Peace and Security!),’ Shijie Zhishi 11 (1954), 9.
people. Under these circumstances, Western countries representatives didn’t dare to completely oppose this issue which had come from the hearts of the people, and agreed to meet in Geneva on the 26th of April to convene a conference with representatives from the USA, France, England, the USSR, and China.”

From the very beginning of the Korean War, the Chinese had been building up towards this moment and growing their prestige through each step along the way. Even when negotiations on the Korean peace fell apart and the Conference dropped them from the program, the papers still wrote, “Although the Geneva Conference on the Korean question has been destroyed and cut short by America and its supporters, the Korean question has certainly not been wiped off of the international consultation itinerary. Just as minister Nam Il correctly pointed out, though Geneva was unable to fully accomplish the task of peacefully resolving the Korean problem entrusted to it, the discussions on the Korean question in Geneva already brought about some definite accomplishments.”

Even in the face of defeat, the successes were pointed out. The imperialists certainly still had some bite left, as the failure of talks on Korea showed, but they were still entirely able to be defeated. Another paper reported that, “The emancipation of the 600 million Chinese people, the defeat of American aggression in Korea and, now, the restoration of peace in Indo-China are all big victories for the Asian people... These victories... demonstrate the genuine awakening of more than 1,000 million Asian people and the end of the days when the imperialists could dominate Asia.”

This editorial combines the Chinese Communist Revolution, the Korean War, and the Vietnamese Armistice into victories for a single entity; the Asian people. But the sequence is more than just temporally listed, it highlights the fact that China was the first to awaken, and that it has had a role in the awakening of the other 400 million Asians outside of China. It was their leadership that brought the end to imperialism in Asia, according to this narrative,

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23 WKPS, ‘Cong bo lin dao ri nei wai (From Berlin to Geneva),’ Shijie Zhishi 6 (1954), 2.
24 NCNA, ‘Han chao ren min zheng qu guo jia he ping tong yi de yi zhi (Koreans’ Determination to Strive for the Peaceful Unification of their Country),’ Renmin Ribao, July 10, 1954.
and without the Chinese Revolution none of the other events could have possibly occurred. This was a mirror for the domestic realm, where the CCP claimed the legitimacy to lead the country due to their success in mobilizing the masses to achieve common goals, including liberation. Their claims of leading Asia are the same as those of leading the country; that without the Communist Party, China would not be free and on the path to modernization.

Outside of defying the United States, the other major accomplishment of China’s purported leadership over Asia was the enhancement of Chinese prestige. One paper reported that, ""The people of the world realise that the joint efforts of the Five Major Powers, including the People’s Republic of China, are indispensable to agreement on the major international issues and the relaxation of world tension... No major international issues, in particular those concerning Asia, can be settled without the participation of the People’s Republic of China.""26 All organs of the propaganda department were highlighting this theme. Their role in the world, particularly in Asia, was one of crucial importance. It is not just that they deserved to be represented, but that their contribution was vital for the effective and peaceful resolution of world issues. A similar editorial concluded that, "This [China’s participation in Geneva] shows the importance and use of China’s strive to struggle for the betterment of the tense international situation. New China’s policy and economy both have had great success in consolidating the people’s democratic system, which means it has become the Asia-Pacific region’s source of stability, and that its influence on global affairs is growing daily."27 Propaganda made Chinese participation in Geneva out to be both regionally as well as globally important, since their unique opinions helped create stability in Asia and otherwise had a major impact on all other conflicts. Even though they had only participated in Geneva and a handful of other one-on-one talks with other countries, China was heralded as a great force for peace across the world, and listed far more successes than it could actually claim in foreign affairs. But when the goal is to establish a basis for legitimacy, the proof fits the thesis

27 ‘Cong bo lin dao ri nei wai (From Berlin to Geneva),’ 2.
rather than the other way around.

Much of this success in raising the prestige of China was attributed to the hard work of the delegation, and Premier Zhou Enlai, in particular. Another article stated that, “The delegation of the People’s Republic of China has during the past ten days received many messages of greeting from individuals and organisations in Switzerland, France, and other parts of the world. The messages indicate that the senders desire the parties concerned secure agreement at the Geneva Conference through sincere negotiations so as to consolidate peace in Asia and lessen international tension.” The article went on to list quotes and summaries of eight organizations and individuals from around the world who praised the Chinese for their special role in the conference. Each were leftist organizations, but the goal was to portray China as a global power that had gained the respect of people from all over the world. Barely three weeks into the Conference, the world was reported to have acknowledged China’s new standing as a premier nation in the world. One article listed the four great achievements of the Geneva conference as; 1) there was an agreement on the restoration of peace in Indochina, 2) China became recognized as one of the five great powers in the world, 3) America’s plots were defeated, and 4) China and the other communist countries showed their commitment to peaceful negotiation, and thus has the rest of the world on their side against the US. The second achievement remarked upon China’s growing recognition as one of the five great powers, which translated into deserving the UN Security Council seat that had been denied to the PRC. To have gone to Geneva and talked on equal footing with the other UN Security Council members, as they did to an extent but exaggerated in their propaganda, proved the ascent of China and their right to that position. Even if they were not yet allowed on the UN Security Council, those nations were said to see China as an equal. Reporting about the end of the Geneva Conference, an editorial stated, “For the first time, the People’s Republic of China, in the role of

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one of the big Powers, joined the other major Powers in negotiation on vital international problems, and made its own contribution that won the acclaim of wide section of world public opinion. The international position of the People’s Republic of China as one of the big world Powers has been recognised universally... China’s rightful place was playing the role of a big power, not just because of the size of its territory or population, but because of the hard work it demonstrated in the international arena striving for peace. It made important contributions to the conference, thus proving their right to be there, and earning universal recognition as a big power. And all of this was due to the hard work of the Chinese delegation to Geneva.

The successes achieved by the Chinese delegation in Geneva sent dual messages from the first theme of leadership and the second major theme of instilling the attribute of diligence into the Chinese national identity. The word 努力 meaning ‘hard work’ or ‘diligence’, perhaps more than any other, featured in the reporting on the Geneva Conference. At the time of the Conference, China was in the middle of national construction, with extensive help from the Soviet Union, which would not immediately bear fruit for the people working and which was predicted to require many years of diligent work. Without a war to mobilize their people for, the communists needed a different source of inspiration to rally their people around and motivate the Chinese people to continue on with the program of socialist construction. But more than a temporary inspiration, the Communist Party wanted to instil a permanent work ethic into their people. Unwilling to resort to ‘capitalist’ incentives, they instead relied on propaganda to teach the Chinese about what was expected of them and give them moral rather than monetary incentives to work. Moreover, they needed the people to mobilize around those moral incentives. Internationalism played an integral role in the narrative of hard work both by giving reasons why the people should mobilize as well as examples of hard work in action.

Internationalism was taught through the reporting on the Geneva Conference, which encouraged the

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working people of China to learn from the events and to further implement these lessons. Zhou Enlai and the Chinese delegation served as a model for how people ought to work. The reason given to work was made by linking the hard work of the common Chinese to the relaxation of the tense international situation, as the propaganda told them that their increase in production and their willingness to sacrifice personal benefit for the sake of the country would directly impact the easing of international tensions and the development of world peace.

Zhou Enlai, as he would continue to do even after his death, served as the model Communist for the regime, giving the people a concrete example of what the new citizen of China ought to be like and providing legitimacy for the government through proof of its hard work. One historian argued that, “It is one of the fundamental assumptions in the Chinese theory of learning that people are innately capable of learning from models.” The use of models to teach lessons began very early in CCP propaganda, and throughout his life and service Zhou Enlai was the model exemplary model. The Geneva Conference was not only the start of China’s ventures onto the global diplomatic stage, it was also one of the first events in the legend of the Prime Minister. Zhou was mentioned frequently, but since his myth was just beginning, the great majority of articles talked about the delegation’s hard work in Geneva rather than him personally. Zhou and the delegation thus were used to inspire the Chinese to work diligently for their homeland and for the actualization of the socialist road. One Chinese magazine said, “Looking back at Geneva thus far, two paths become apparent. One is the road of honest hard work, which is using the success of Geneva to lessen the tense international situation; the other is procrastinating by every means, obstructing and even destroying the Geneva Conference in order to harm the tense international situation.” It goes without saying that the first road is that of Zhou Enlai and his delegation, while the other is the path of the Americans. Here, though, the Chinese and the other

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32 WKPS, 'Ya zhou ren min de yuan wang shi jue dui bu rong hu shi de (Asian’s Desires are Absolutely Impossible to Ignore),’ Shijie Zhishi 11 (1954), 3.
communist countries are attributed with ‘honest hard work’ for peace. Another wrote, “Even though
the enemies of peace use all sorts of methods to disrupt the peaceful resolution of the Indochina
problem, however due to the hard work of the Vietnamese, Soviet, and Chinese delegations, as well as
the help of the whole world’s peace-loving people and the fair supervision of the talks, the conference
has broken through the hefty barriers and is succeeding.” Here again the delegations of the
communist countries are described as working hard to break through the barriers that imperialist
nations set before them on the road to peace. Neither of these passages explains what, exactly, that
hard work was, nor what the exact results turned out to be; what mattered was that the Chinese
delegation worked hard, as should other Chinese. Moreover, these passages attempt to create
legitimacy for the government by showing its people how hard the government was working for them.
Zhou was a model citizen for sure, but his role in the government was equally crucial. If one internalized
the ideal of hard work that the propaganda wanted to teach, then Zhou’s hard work inspired both the
mobilization of that ideal as well as the belief that the Party’s leadership of the country was legitimate
through their mutual belief in the norm.

While the leadership of China wanted to build legitimacy through their hard work and instill a
set of norms for other Chinese to follow, they also needed to mobilize those norms. It was not enough
to have a hardworking leadership; the followers had to be exerting themselves just as much if not more.
To do this, they had to find as much meaning in their job as there was in the negotiations of the Chinese
delegation to Geneva, a rather unlikely feat since most were doing much dirtier jobs. The propaganda
department had three ways to try to build this connection; first, they had to make the Chinese people
internationalist in nature and sympathize with the cause of Geneva and with the Chinese delegation
there; second, to make Geneva relevant to their lives; and third, to get the people to work harder in the
belief that they would help the Chinese delegation’s position in Geneva by doing so.

33 Zhang Mingyang, ‘Rinelwa hui yi zhong guan yu Yinduzhina wen ti de tao lun (Discussions from the Geneva
Their first job was to get the masses to believe in the goals of Geneva, which they did through using propaganda to convince the Chinese that international events mattered to them. The CCP used Geneva specifically to garner legitimacy because it was a cause around which they could rally the people to support a government policy. Nearly every article about the Geneva Conference included some mention of the masses of Chinese’s support for the Geneva Conference, which was meant to not only convince the people that their government was legitimate, but also inspire them to make Geneva important to their own lives. Sometimes it was a call for them to continue to support the Chinese delegation, other times it just said that the Chinese already supported them. Regardless of how this support was phrased, it made it clear that supporting the Chinese delegation to Geneva and their hard work was an issue of national importance. One article ended by imploring, “For peace and international cooperation, for the smooth execution of the Geneva Conference, for the future of the UN, Asians and all the world’s peace-loving people must renew their vigilance, resolutely uncover and stop the US activities designed to use the UN to destroy the Geneva Conference, ask America and its lackeys to approach negotiation reasonably, and make the Geneva Conference achieve success on the peaceful resolution of the Korean question and the restoration of Indochinese peace.”34 This sort of moralizing and rallying ending was very typical of the Chinese domestic literature on Geneva. The final sentence in another article provides another ending typical of the time, saying, “The Chinese people take the greatest joy and pride in the efforts and achievements of the Chinese delegation.”35 Yet another article put both exhortation and outright support together when it wrote, “‘We, Chinese, together with millions in other countries who abhor war and demand peace are anxiously longing for every success at Geneva...’” it quotes, and then goes on to summarize the sentiment of the article, saying, “The Chinese

34 Qiu Renda, ‘Fan dui mei guo li yong lian he guo po huai ri nei wa hui yi de yin mou (Oppose America’s Plot to use the UN to Destroy the Geneva Conference),’ Shijie Zhishi 12 (1954), 11.
35 ‘Another Great Victory of Peaceful Negotiation.’
Delegation has the unanimous support of the Chinese people in its efforts for results helpful to peace.  

This article forces home the theme that the Chinese should care about the hard work being put in by their representatives and appreciate what they are doing. It is moreover notable for its characterization of what defines a Chinese person, particularly the way they chose to word it. A good, communist Chinese doesn’t just want peace, they demand it and watch its progress with trepidation. They should care about the international situation, and also be hard working to help it arrive at a peaceful conclusion.

As the last example shows, the Chinese were expected to support the Chinese delegation at Geneva not necessarily automatically, but instead because they represented the Chinese themselves and shared many of the same values. This expanded upon the first task, since this theme’s purpose was to build support for the government and its work in Geneva. For example, the President of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions said, “The speeches of Foreign Minister [Zhou Enlai] at the Geneva Conference... fully express the foreign policy of peace of China, the determination of the Chinese people to seek peaceful settlement of international disputes through negotiation, and the aspirations of the peace-loving peoples of Asia.” The goal is, again, to show that Chinese should support their delegation, in this case because it represents the beliefs of the Chinese people, which includes their mutual belief in peace and negotiation. The leaders of the All-China Federation of Democratic Youth and the All-China Students’ Federation declared similarly, saying that, “... the proposals made by Foreign Minister [Zhou Enlai] at the Geneva Conference are in conformity with the aspirations of the Chinese youth, who will strive for the realisation of these proposals... [they] said that the Chinese students are determined to unite more closely with the peace-loving people and students of Asia and the whole world and struggle for the consolidation of world peace.” The youth, represented in two different organizations, also share the same values as the Chinese delegation, and support it because of these mutual beliefs.

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The government used this message to increase their legitimacy among the people and to convince them that the Party represented their wishes and desires, but that was not all the CCP wanted from its people. More than establishing legitimacy through demonstrating their hard work and sympathy with the masses, they needed the masses to mobilize and support the projects of the party through their hard work. To do this, propaganda had to mobilize the norms which it had hopefully inculcated.

Once convinced to support the Chinese objective in Geneva, the second step to mobilization was to make the Geneva conference significant to the lives of ordinary Chinese by moving beyond the papers. Even if every single Chinese read the newspapers every day and paid attention to the articles on Geneva, that was still not enough to imprint the message strongly enough into the audience. Propaganda had to become a part of their daily lives to make the message feel both pertinent and pressing. To this effect, “A rally of 6,000 people representing all sections of the Capital’s population was held here this afternoon to express support for the position taken at the Geneva Conference by the Foreign Ministers of China, the Soviet Union, the Korean Democratic People’s Republic and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The rally was held under the auspices of the China Peace Committee.”

The message here is hardly unique, but the report that these messages were delivered to crowds of all sorts of people is; it shows that the propaganda machine’s aim was mobilization, not just indoctrination. Geneva entered into the Chinese citizens’ daily lives through interaction with party members and through rallies such as this one. Another report wrote, “At Wuhan, the proceedings at Geneva have been widely publicized through loudspeakers, wall papers and other means to workers and residents. Newspaper groups in many factories have met constantly to discuss the developments of the Geneva Conference.”

The loudspeakers and wall papers highlight even more methods that the CCP could spread their message to the people, but the truly interesting aspect is the newspaper reading

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groups. Illiterate Chinese who could not read on their own were still being given the information, and it is entirely possible that many were learning to read through study of these reports on Geneva.

Encouraging literacy was one of the early campaigns of the PRC, and a clear show of their commitment to the people and to building a new China. This commitment was a powerful source of legitimacy for the party. Campaigns like the one for literacy gave people a sense of common political direction\(^\text{41}\), and mixing Geneva into them brought increased attention to the conference and insured that its themes would be considered of primary importance. Moreover, these people were not only having Geneva enter their lives so that they could be implored to support the cause, they were being mobilized to put forth concrete action that would support China; they were supporting Geneva by learning to read and thus opening up new possibilities, such as becoming more skilled workers or even cadres. This seedling of the Great Leap’s ‘Proletarian Intellectual’ predated the ‘Red vs. Expert’ debate by years, so for now it shows only how important it was for the Chinese to get their message deep into the lives of a very wide audience and to get that audience mobilized.

The true coup of the propaganda on the Geneva Conference was to connect the realization of world peace to the work of Chinese laborers. If all processes went according to plan, once the Chinese had read about the models of diligence and hard work present in the Chinese delegation to Geneva, then had the message of supporting the Conference enter and take meaning in their lives, they then would need an outlet to express their feelings. This was the last step to mobilization; the press gave the masses this outlet by using model workers to show them how excelling in their jobs supported the Chinese goals in Geneva. They essentially showed people how they could mobilize. Reports about workers deciding to work harder in the factories and on the farms to support the Chinese delegation to Geneva occurred in all areas of the country. One wrote, “In [Chongqing], after hot discussions, workers of textile mills decided to raise their working efficiency as a practical step to lend their strength to the

four Foreign Ministers [China, USSR, North Korea, and North Vietnam] at Geneva."\(^{42}\) A series released in late May reviewed a number of cities and explained how people there were devoting themselves to the cause. In Shenyang, “Train conductor Ma Zhanyou, who once participated in the Korean War and was honored with the DPRK Badge of Honor, said; ... ‘We resolutely support Foreign Minister Zhou’s and Nam II’s cooperative suggestion to peacefully solve the Korean question.’ When the Geneva Conference opened, Ma Zhanyou’s locomotive small group of workers, in order to express their decision to strive for peace, put forth a coal saving rate in April which will exceed original plans by 100%.\(^{43}\) In Guangzhou, the youth were pulled in as well when, “The Guang Ya Middle School Student Union, in order to help their classmates learn about the Geneva Conference, specially published a special current affairs column called ‘We Look Forward to Geneva.’”\(^{44}\) Elsewhere, “The Xi’an #1 power plant workers held a meeting on the 17th where everybody unanimously displayed that they would support our country’s Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai’s just ideas through our diligent production. Industry labor model Quan Shude said, ‘We really care about the progress of the Geneva Conference, and sincerely hope for the success of the conference.’”\(^{45}\) Also in Xi’an, minorities were quoted in favor of the Geneva Conference; “Muslim representative Ma Liangji said at the [Xi’an all-city council] meeting, ‘All of us Xi’an Muslims stand together with all other ethnicities, support Foreign Minister Zhou’s words with our concrete actions, and strive to obtain success in the Conference.’”\(^{46}\) One article in the *Renmin Ribao* compiled letters supposedly written to them by workers throughout the country giving their opinions on the Geneva Conference. Among many others, Tang Yongxian, a worker in a steel factory in Shanxi province, wrote that, “We are currently increasing our production operations in order to sustain the success of the

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\(^{42}\) ‘Chinese People Support Four Foreign Ministers’ Stand at Geneva.’
\(^{43}\) NCNA, ‘Shenyang ge jie ren min (Shenyang’s People of All Walks of Life),’ *Renmin Ribao*, May 19, 1954
\(^{44}\) NCNA, ‘Guangdong sheng he Guangzhou shi ge jie ren min (Guangdong Province and Guangzhou City’s People of All Walks of Life),’ *Renmin Ribao*, May 25, 1954.
\(^{45}\) NCNA, ‘Xi’an shi ge jie ren min (Xi’an City’s People of All Walks of Life),’ *Renmin Ribao*, May 25, 1954.
\(^{46}\) Ibid.
Geneva Conference and maintain the cause of world peace.”47 Finally, Zhang Mingyang wrote that ensuring peace is the responsibility of the people, saying that in order to bring about peace, “...we can’t but support the developments of world peace, can’t but protect the boons brought about by international peace, and take up the burden of responsibility.”48 No explanation is given how, exactly, producing more and better textiles or saving coal will support the Four Ministers’ quest for world peace, but the idea of fulfilling one’s responsibility is implied. Textile workers make textiles, and Foreign Ministers negotiate, yet their roles are linked. The press wanted to build the idea that each and every task, from the lowest to the highest, was vital to the final goals of the Party. Even though only one part of the entire machine may be visible to the outside world, world peace could only be obtained when each mechanism worked at its most efficient at its specified role. For the workers, their role was to work hard, which the press attempted to make them do through a propaganda campaign aimed at creating a work ethic by using the example of the Chinese delegation to Geneva, of raising internationalist concern for the outcome of Geneva, then finally linking the two together by saying that each individual’s hard work influenced the Conference. This conclusion returns to the very first point of building legitimacy for the leadership of the Party, because in propaganda, their role in this machine was to lead.

A year after the Conference, one of the May Day slogans issued for 1955 listed the Geneva agreements as still important to work for and realize; “Work for the complete implementation of the agreements to restore peace to Indo-China, consolidate peace there! Continue to work for peaceful solution of the Korean question!”49 This proclamation came at number thirteen on the list, following the salutations to the communist world, and to the Soviets in particular, as well as slogans extolling the

48 Zhang Mingyang, ‘Ren min zhong guo zai guo ji shi wu zhong de di wei he he fa quan li (People’s China’s Place in International Affairs and its Legal Rights),’ Shijie Zhishi 8 (1954), 8.
Bandung Conference which had concluded just earlier in April, and stated opposition to the United States and nuclear and bacteriological warfare. Being listed after Bandung (which encompassed the slogans eight through ten) creates a link between the two conferences, since fulfilling the promises of the Bandung Conference also meant working for the realization of the Geneva Accords. But key to the whole point is that foreign policy slogans came early on. Directly after the Marxist slogans of uniting with the global working class comes slogans revolving around events where foreign policy was created, in Bandung and Geneva. It not only shows the importance of these events, but also that these two unrelated events were considered part of a linear progression to Chinese propagandists. At the time of Geneva, the CCP could not predict Bandung, but in Bandung they could look back and incorporate Geneva into their evolving narrative of internationalist propaganda. As it was in Geneva, the need to work and strive for goals, giving people a sense of purpose and belonging in the world order, was at the heart of the message in Bandung. The authorities in China wanted people who worked hard without complaint at whatever they were told to work on, overcoming any difficulty. They could do very little to affect change in the United States or on the global arena, but if they believed that through hard work they could make the world better, then at least they could boost production in their country. This narrative, which began in Geneva, carried forward into Bandung, as these May Day slogans make clear. However, Bandung also represented an evolution of the narrative, integrating older themes with newer ones to weave a more nuanced, believable, and powerful story for the readers.

*The Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung, Indonesia*

**China in Bandung**

The Bandung Conference was planned by the five nations of India, Burma, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Indonesia at the Bogor Conference of 1954, and grew in scope throughout the year. By late 1954 they had decided to open up participation to newly independent nations from throughout Asia and Africa with a generally undefined schedule meant to increase contact and to show the Western powers
in the UN that they ought not to ignore the countries of Asia and Africa when discussing problems related to their region. Nearly all of the invited nations decided to attend the one week conference from April 18-24 1955, including the PRC. The main topic discussed in Bandung was colonialism, but part of that agenda was to discuss whether the Soviet Union’s actions in Eastern Europe constituted a new form of colonialism. In the end, the final indictment in the united communiqué released by the conference condemned all forms of colonialism.

Unlike Geneva, there were no wars to be solved or major objectives to achieve; the conference convened to sponsor friendship among the many newly born, decolonized nations. This meant that the topic was wide open, allowing nations to, more or less, promote whatever message they desired. What was astounding about the conference was that, despite the various backgrounds, ideologies, and political circumstances of the many countries, they were still able to sign a unanimous communiqué; a fact which not only inspired China to pursue a new foreign policy course, but also played a significant role in the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement.

This unanimous announcement condemning colonialism in all its forms fostered the belief that third world nations could unite and thus play a larger role in international politics, a belief which led to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). The NAM officially began several years later, but the seeds of the idea were sown and began to sprout at Bandung. While one of the stated goals was to build and gain greater sovereignty for the newly created nations, “...the Bandung Conference also strengthened, reinterpreted and extended those very principles in a broad, inclusive fashion in order to accommodate diversity and difference. In this regard, a key accomplishment of the Conference... was the consensus that differing political systems and ideologies should not be the basis for exclusion from international cooperation.”50 This sort of consensus made NAM possible. In fact, the NAM’s founding

principles were based off of the 5 Principles of the People originally written by Zhou and Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the latter of whom would go on to become a cofounder of the NAM. These principles were echoed as well in the final communique of the Bandung Conference.

Also, whereas Geneva was controlled by the great powers of Europe, the US, and the USSR, Bandung was led by ex-colonized nations all still in their early phases of diplomacy. Of the five major nations which participated in Geneva, China was the only one to also attend Bandung, opening up room for China to pursue a new course. Moreover, this audience of decolonized and newly minted nations was exactly the crowd that China wanted to preach its message to.

The goal in Bandung was, "...to win friends, break the embargo and tap all possible resources, not only in the Soviet bloc but in the entire world market, in order to build an independent New China..."51 These objectives were largely unchanged from Geneva, in that they participated to protect their national interests as well as display their identity to the world, but that identity changed subtly to fit the altered environment. Targeting the other third world nations was seen as the best way to build and develop China because, by this point, the tension between Russia and the PRC had begun to rise. The suitability of the imported Five Year Plan model and the one-man, top down leadership being practiced in Soviet assisted factories was being questioned by the Chinese leadership. China wasn’t questioning their alliance with the USSR, but they were not getting the amount of support which they had hoped for, and also desired greater independence so that they would not have to over-rely upon a single ally, leading China to begin looking in other directions. The CCP’s hope was not just to find friends, but due to the growing dissatisfaction with the Soviet Union, also to support a new international order that would suit them better; "Beijing took the Conference as an important forum for breaking up its isolation on the international scene – especially among the countries in Asia and Africa – while, at the same time, creating a new discourse of international norms that would allow the ‘New China’ to

challenge the existing international system and institutions." It was the international system, more than the actors which populated it, which isolated China, and the CCP wanted to end this. Where Geneva gave the Chinese the idea of reaching out to more countries for this reason, in Bandung it became policy.

Their message, while still extolling peace and cooperation and preaching against the United States, changed to become more of a systematic attack on the sources of the power that created the problems they spoke against. This was their challenge to the world order; an attack against the weapons which superpowers used to bend the world order to benefit themselves. China decided that their, "...primary interest is to redefine the international system in ways that begin to equalize power (economic power particularly) and end exploitations of the weakest states, China included." In essence, China's message altered from an attack on certain colonialists to an attack on colonialism. As Zhou himself said at the conference, "We should leave aside our different ideologies, different state systems and the international obligations which we have assumed by joining this side or that side. We should instead settle all questions which may arise against us on the basis of common peace and cooperation." Zhou told the conference that China was willing to set aside their commitments to one bloc and their ideology in order to further the cause of peace, and they encouraged other nations to do similarly. This was a tactical decision based around the premise that unaligned and peaceful was better than aligned against them. The USSR was never directly targeted in Bandung, though they were certainly implicated in the rhetoric. Instead, "...Communist China's policy towards the nonaligned states has been directed toward detaching them from friendly relations with the United States rather than...

The focus was still on opposing the US, but they opposed the US not because it was a capitalist country, but because it was a hegemonic power, a critique that implicitly included the USSR. It was moves like these that ended up splitting the alliance between the PRC and the USSR several years later, particularly during the Hungarian crisis which caused the Chinese conception of the world to clash with that of Russia.

Their attack upon the system which produced colonialism manifested itself most when China encouraged other nations to remain nonaligned, and thus non-antagonistic towards the PRC. The CCP decided that the best environment for China’s growth would be a peaceful world where they could trade freely with as many nations as possible, so they tried to build peace and cooperation wherever they could. This was in opposition to military alignment, which Zhou described as the greatest threat to peace; “We are against formation of ever more antagonistic military alliances in the world because they heighten the crisis of war.”56 This included not only NATO and the proposed Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), but also China’s treaty with the USSR. China was already willing to gamble that relations with unaligned and peaceful nations were more beneficial to them than following the leadership of the Soviets, which was proving to be not quite as beneficial as hoped. Zhou and the CCP planned to form, “… an anti-imperialist and anticolonial united front of the nations of the Third World, supporting the policy of nonalignment as a device to enlarge the area of peace and neutrality in Asia and beyond.”57 Thus, they reached out to the nations at Bandung, inviting them to visit China and see for themselves that China meant no harm to its neighbors. One historian argued that China’s outreach to Thailand, which was firmly aligned with the US, wasn’t just a ploy, stating; “There is no reason to think

that this conciliation in any way superficial; it was in fact necessarily linked with China’s search for
common ground upon which to build Asian solidarity and ‘zones of peace.’” China was genuinely
interested in peace and nonalignment, and was willing to reach out to enemies in favor of friends to
spread this vision for the world.

The other major aspect of the identity presented at Bandung was to identify China as a leader of
the third world, not because they planned to take the helm and lead them militarily and politically, but
because they were essentially the same. China considered itself an ex-colonial nation, and since they
had lifted themselves out of the problems caused by colonial legacies, they could speak for other third
world nations. First, China had to gain the trust of the third world. Zhou told the conference that, “The
overwhelming majority of the Asian and African countries and peoples have suffered and are still
suffering from the calamities of colonialism... If we seek common ground in doing away with the
sufferings under colonialism, it will be very easy for us to have mutual understanding and respect...
instead of mutual suspicion and fear...” By relying on their shared histories of colonialism, they could
find like causes and work together to build a better world. China proposed that this common cause was
essentially to resist new forms of colonialism and sponsor true sovereignty among the new nations. And
according to China, the perpetrator of the new forms of colonialism was the US. China’s message in
Bandung attempted to prove to the other representatives that, “The analysis of the U.S. alliance
changed from that of an alliance in preparation for aggressive war to that of a new form of
colonialism...” By evaluating the US as perpetrators of neocolonialism, they tied their kinship with the
third world to their vision of a neutral world. To rally the third world nations around a flag of resisting
neocolonialism, they espoused peace.

Thanks to China’s participation in Bandung, Zhou Enlai certainly assuaged some of the worries

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60 Wilson, “China, Thailand and the Sprit of Bandung (Part II),“ 111.
that many nations had about the role ‘Red China’ was to play in the region, convincing them that the
PRC was not a serious threat. Some attribute Chinese participation in the conference to the failure to
launch SEATO, as many of the prospective nations became less concerned about regional security after
the conference, though this can be attributed as well to the growing influence of the NAM. But as was
ture in Geneva, the narrative of Bandung presented to the domestic audience was written before the
events it incorporated actually occurred.

**Bandung in China**

The narrative of Bandung reflected many of the themes that had been developed in Geneva, but
also expanded upon them and introduced new ones. Leadership continued to be one of the major
themes of the propaganda campaign surrounding Bandung, but it was infused with new reasons for why
the party was the legitimate leader, and had more clearly defined successes. Most important to both of
these changes was the new narrative of historical inevitability, which provided support for leadership in
the present and also put forth a more concrete plan for the future. As for the national identity,
internationalism became a much stronger theme, as the Chinese were implored more specifically to care
about the direction of the world, rather than the results of any one specific event. This played directly
into the modifications made to the Geneva theme of hard work, which remained the key word, but
gained a new preceding adjective; ‘mutual’ hard work.

Bandung continued to use foreign examples of how a vanguard was needed to lead the nation,
adding the argument that the unstoppable forces of history were in motion and called for the Party’s
leadership. They attempted to use the many nations of Bandung as examples of how development
naturally took the Chinese route and that they too will eventually liberate themselves from imperialism.
But, in order to do so, they needed the leadership of China. This theme was meant to be analogous to
China, in that the CCP claimed its leadership was necessary for the masses to realize their goals of
development.
Much like Geneva, in domestic propaganda, China claimed to be similar to other third world nations within the conference, and used those claims to declare leadership of the third world. This was an attempt to use foreign examples of how leadership was necessary to provide legitimacy for the party in its leadership role over the country. But more so than in Geneva where the audience was primarily the world’s leading nations, propaganda on the Bandung Conference repeated how much the third world nations of Asia and Africa welcomed China’s leadership. First, they reminded the audience that China’s desires were in line with those of Asia and Africa. As one article said, “Zhou Enlai’s words are in complete accordance Chinese desires, and also with all the peoples of Asia and Africa’s common desires as well.” But more important than just sympathizing with the mutual goals of the third world, those nations recognized China’s contribution and applauded them for it. Another report stated, “Our country’s delegation, led by Premier Zhou Enlai, from start to finish supported the goals of the Conference, supported agreeing to disagree, and to strive for the success of the conference, put forth unflagging effort, which obtained him the common praise of the conference.” Their role in Bandung, according to the domestic presses, was being recognized as vital for the success of the conference. Importantly, all of these themes echoed the way in which the CCP wanted to portray its style of leadership at home. After Zhou Enlai gave his first speech to the Bandung Conference, the papers in China reported that, “Warm and prolonged applause greeted Premier [Zhou Enlai] as he took the floor in the plenary session of the Asian African Conference this afternoon... As Premier [Zhou Enlai] spoke, the hall was quiet and those present listened attentively. The hall resounded with applause at the end of the speech when Premier [Zhou Enlai] stepped down the rostrum and returned to his seat.” China was being accepted by the attending nations not only because they were similar to the third world countries

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62 NCNA, “Qing he ya fei hui yi de cheng jiu (Celebrate the Success of the Asia-Africa Conference),” Renmin Ribao April 26, 1955.
at the conference, but also because those nations recognized the hard work and the unique contribution
China was putting forth. They were not merely recognized for this role, but applauded heartily for it.
None of the aspects of this theme differed greatly from Geneva, though they did differ significantly from
the message presented in Bandung itself. The new reason why the party deserved legitimacy was based
on history.

For a Marxist party, the irresistible tides of history are the key to their own legitimacy. Marx did
not write about the proletarian revolution and the coming of communism as a goal, but as the natural
course of history. All history had been defined by the conflict between classes, and the current and final
stage of history was marked by the struggle between the capitalist and proletarian classes. Marxist
parties, then, based their legitimacy off of their adherence to the path that Marx described as the course
of history. Weaving the Bandung Conference into the CCP narrative of history shows exactly how
important internationalism was to their legitimacy and to their goals for shaping the country; the affairs
of other nations became proof of the validity of communist rule. This vindicated not only the party’s
rule, but also the policies they pursued, which by 1955 were not universally popular. This discourse had
three sections; giving examples of how the nations of Asia and Africa all had similar histories, how they
all had similar futures because of that shared history, and finally China’s place within that history.

While the theme of China sharing similar historical experiences with Asia was also used in
Geneva, by Bandung these shared experiences were used not only to prove China’s relationship with
Asia, but also to prove Marx’s thesis of the inevitability of history. The goal of propaganda was to prove
that all of these newly decolonized nations followed similar patterns, and that this was the doing of the
forces of history. It fortified the legitimacy of the CCP by arguing that the formation of a vanguard party
leading its people down the road to communism was inevitable. As per Lenin’s critique of imperialism,
the shared bonds of history meant the shared suffering under imperialism; “Asian and African peoples
clearly know, are steeped in the history of imperialism, and in the fresh blood of Chinese and other
Asian and African peoples. This shared fate makes Asian and African relations so close. Therefore, no matter the schisms or obstacles colonialists put before us, Chinese and the peoples of this area will still have a historical tradition of long-term friendship.\textsuperscript{64} A similar sentiment was repeated after the end of the Conference, saying, “In the recent era, Asians and Africans were under imperialist rule, suffered from ruin and oppression living a slave’s life, met with racial discrimination and persecution, lost their independence in politics, and fell into poverty and backwardness in economics and culture. Under colonial rule, our fate was manipulated, our desires and our voice were not valued. All major world decision were made in London, Paris, and Washington, while Asians and Africans were not allowed the right to speak.”\textsuperscript{65} Most telling was the way they told the histories of the participating nations. The periodical \textit{World Knowledge} ran a series over the course of several issues introducing each of the nations attending Bandung to their readers. Nearly every introduction followed a similar pattern; first introduce the basic geographic and statistical information about the country, such as where it is, how large it is, and its population. After that, they would start in on the history, which in most cases started with the coming of colonialism. This section was generally quite short, but was followed by an in-depth section about the American exploitation of the area after World War II. After several paragraphs of American exploitation, it would finally come to a stock conclusion. One very typical example of such a conclusion said, “Egypt’s people are currently continuing to struggle for national independence and world peace. The provisional constitution [\textit{hu yu shu}] which the Egyptian Security Council gave the Egyptian government expresses the opinions of the Egyptian people. The provisional constitution requests the peaceful resolution of international conflict, opposes the militarization of West Germany,

\textsuperscript{64} Hu Jin, “Ya fei hui yi de po huai zhe de yin mou (The Plots of the Saboteurs of the Asia-Africa Conference),” \textit{Renmin Ribao} April 1, 1955.

opposes the arms race, and turning Egypt into a base for military aggression."\(^{66}\) China’s major enemy remained the United States, but it was an enemy because it was nearly the last imperial power in the world and, unlike the others, was still expanding. But the critique was leveled against the system, which was a product of history, rather than against the wiles of a single ‘ruling clique’ as it was during Geneva. The conclusion of Egypt’s summary points to the next aspect, which was that according to a Marxist, history does not only mean the past, but also the future.

Marx’s theory did not only describe the past, but it described the future as well, so in order to make China’s communist revolution legitimate the regime wanted proof that other nations were following the same path as China. As such, the propaganda department used the nations of Bandung not only to prove that all nations went through similar stages of history in the past, but that they would continue to pass through similar stages in the future. Moreover, they framed these stages to meet the Maoist vision of Marxism, which saw the struggle against colonialism and imperialism as the new and defining battlefront of the proletarian revolution, a view at odds with the ideology espoused by the Soviet Union. Before the beginning of the Bandung Conference, China told its people that, “The opening of the Asia-Africa Conference marks a first in history. This is a vitally important sign that the peoples of Asia and Africa will look after their own affairs, and will never again be controlled by others.”\(^{67}\) Another editorial which appeared before the Conference remarked that, “The fact which stands out today is that in wide areas of Asia the people have broken off the shackles of colonialism and have achieved independence. In Africa, the people’s national awakening is swift. The convening of the Asian-African Conference reflects the universal desire of the Asian and African peoples for freedom and independence.

\(^{66}\) WKPS, “Ya fei hui yi guo jia jie shao; er (Introduction to the Countries of the Asia-Africa Conference; Part 2),” *Shijie Zhishi* 4 (1955), 25.

\(^{67}\) NCNA, “Huan ying ya fei hui yi sheng li zhao kai (Welcome the Victorious Opening of the Asia-Africa Conference),” *Renmin Ribao* April 18, 1955.
and their opposition to imperialist colonialist rule and intervention..."68 More or less the same was repeated at the end as well; "The conclusion of the Asia-Africa conference shows that Asians and Africans will continue to unite together to grasp their own fates in their hands, and will advance the enterprise of peace. This has already become the irresistible tide of history."69 In all of these quotes, the Chinese argue that history leads inevitably towards resistance against imperialism and the desire for peoples to free themselves from oppression. Their shared pasts made it inevitable that the people would rise up and cast off their chains. Oddly enough, this message was mostly in tune with the message delivered within the Conference; their message about China’s place in this unstoppable process, however, was not.

Marx did not have much to say about colonialism, and his self-appointed successor Lenin only added that imperialism marked the final stage of capitalism; it was Mao who equated the struggle against colonialism with the struggle of the proletariat. Marx and Lenin both saw the proletariat as a creation of industry, a worker who had lost their humanity due to the exploitation of the bourgeois. Mao, however, believed that the experience of the peasantry under colonialism was just as dehumanizing and prepared them to fight for communism alongside the industrial proletariat of the advanced countries. Key to this was their belief that, what the Russian Revolution had done for the course of history in advanced countries, the Chinese Revolution had done for the third world; it proved that the revolutionary proletariat could come from the third world rather than the developed world. To prove this to their people, and thus to build a foundation for the legitimacy of their party’s leadership over the country and the policies they were enacting, the CCP inserted the importance of China’s Revolution into the histories of the nations of Bandung. One report says specifically that, “China’s victory has fundamentally altered the Asian situation, and boosted the morale of Asians’ national

independence movement to struggle to liberate themselves from imperialist terror. These changes show; the era of imperialist rule in Asia and Africa is over for good. The holding of the Asia-Africa Conference shows; the awakened peoples of Asia and Africa’s struggle for peace and independence is growing in influence daily on the stage of international affairs.” The Chinese Revolution, in this view, paved the way for national independence movements across Asia and Africa; without it the area would still have been subjugated. The report went on, saying, “The Chinese have already eternally shattered the chains of imperialism, and victoriously follow the socialist path forward. China’s experience fully shows that Asian and African countries can only obtain independence and prosperity once the rule of imperialism has been crushed.” While the paper claims that China’s experience demonstrates that national independence is obtained through defeating colonialism, it also implies that socialism is the next logical step in the process. The Daily Worker sounded off on the theme more obliquely, saying, “For a long time, the overwhelming majority of the people of Asia and Africa have suffered the enslavement of colonialism, and the disaster and menace of imperialist aggressive wars. Now the situation in Asia is fundamentally changed, and the movement of national independence is spreading in Africa. These new developments in Asia and Africa make possible the holding of the Asian African Conference.” The fundamental change alluded to is the Chinese Revolution, and it alone has made all other subsequent developments possible. In fact, Bandung itself was a product of the Chinese Revolution according to this narrative. All of this propaganda—the similar histories, futures, and China’s impact—was meant to prove to the Chinese people that history had mandated the existence of the CCP. Unfortunately for the future of communist solidarity, the USSR did not agree with this interpretation of history, and in fact rather resented the Chinese narrative that saw their revolution being supplanted in global importance by another. It was considerations such as these that led to the split a few years later,

71 Ibid.
but for the time being, they would continue to focus on mutual goals.

Propaganda listed several major accomplishments of Asia and Africa achieved under the leadership of the PRC, mirroring the accomplishments of the Chinese underneath the leadership of the party. Both in Geneva and Bandung, the propaganda organs acclaimed the successes of China through parallels with other nations, thus making information about the international scene support their claims to legitimacy. The most important of these accomplishments listed, and the most frequently used in propaganda about the Bandung Conference, was the growing respect of Chinese opinions on the world stage and the defeat of American imperialism.

Similar to the propaganda about the Geneva Conference, that about Bandung focused on the role played by the Chinese delegation and their ideas in attaining the success of the conference. By showing that Chinese participation was integral to the world order, it not only built legitimacy for the party, it also fed into the narrative of reclaiming China’s place in the world. After ‘the century of humiliation,’ China, under the leadership of the CCP, was reported to have finally regained its deserved world standing. This objective was among the most important justifications for party rule. In propaganda, Asian acceptance of Chinese leadership was most often expressed by their adherence to the five principles of coexistence. Focusing on proving China’s role in the world, one article wrote, “One of the defining characteristics of the international situation since Geneva has been the influence of the five principles of peaceful coexistence growing deeper into people’s hearts.”

Since the five principles were growing in acceptance, so was respect for China since the CCP claimed these principles as their own. It went on to say, “The five South Asian nations planned to include China and Vietnam in the Asia-Africa Conference. The opening of the Conference is gaining more attention daily. This is one answer [to whether the five principles are being accepted by Asia].” Bandung itself was tied into the

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73 Shao Zonghan, “He ping gong chu shi ya fei ren min de gong tong yuan wang (Peaceful Coexistence is the Mutual Wish of Asians and Africans),” Shijie Zhishi 7 (1955), 5.
74 Ibid, 7.
successful proliferation of belief in the five principles. More than just ideas though, Asia recognized the
work that China’s leaders put into solving international problems, further legitimizing their leadership
within China. One article returned to the theme of hard work, saying, “This Conference’s great success
is inseparable from the hard work put forth by Zhou Enlai and the Chinese delegation he led.”\textsuperscript{75} Another
focused instead upon Zhou Enlai’s voice of reason, reporting, “…Zhou Enlai’s comments reminding
everybody to unite together and to not quarrel deeply played on the people’s heartstrings, receiving the
common praise of the nations’ delegates. American ‘observers’ hopelessly watched as their long
prepared ‘first salvo’ failed, and they went back to ‘planning a counterattack.’”\textsuperscript{76} A final editorial
concluded that,

“Nobody can deny that Premier Zhou Enlai, as leader of the Chinese delegation to the
conference, made a great contribution. As per the Chinese government’s policy, the Chinese
delegation consistently pushed for world peace, advanced a foreign policy of international
cooperation; on one hand standing by their opinions, on the other acting according to a spirit of
agreeing to disagree; they listened attentively to differing opinions, and used a persuasive
attitude to strive for greater unity. This, without a doubt, gave the attending delegates a deep
impression, and can hereafter serve as a perfect model for international conferences.”\textsuperscript{77}

Using Bandung, the CCP wanted their people to believe that China was not just accepted, but respected
and emulated by the rest of the world. Their policies were changing the world, their hard work drew
admiration from the world, and their model inspired the world. This was displayed in stark contrast to
the wiles of America.

In Geneva, America was a threat because it was threatening to China, but in Bandung, in

\textsuperscript{75} Zhang Mingyang, “Zhong guo ren min bao wei he ping tou zheng huo de wei da sheng li de you yi nian (Another
Magnificently Victorious Year for the Chinese People’s Struggle to Protect Peace),” \textit{Shijie Zhishi} 19 (1955), 3.
\textsuperscript{76} NCNA, “Wan long hui yi sheng li bi mo (The Victorious Closing of the Bandung Conference),” \textit{Renmin Ribao} April
26, 1955.
\textsuperscript{77} Zhang Xiruo, “Ya fei hui yi de yi yi, cheng jiu he ying xiang (The Asia-Africa Conference’s Meaning,
accordance with the previous mentioned theme of the tides of history, the American threat became based upon their place in history. The logical conclusion of the Maoist discourse on Leninism was the belief that the final defeat of imperialism and colonialism would herald the coming of the communist era. In this view, America’s reasons for opposing China became the product of their position, in that the US was clinging to the last strands of imperialist global domination. Much of the attention on America during Bandung was focused on explaining these reasons. One article reported, “America’s plots to break the Geneva agreements and the Korean armistice are also making this region tenser. All of these American activities are obviously trying to start a new war, in order to enslave the Asian and African peoples, and all of mankind. They hate advocacy for and the opening of the Asia-Africa conference.”

The vocabulary of slavery is particularly significant, harkening to the themes of oppression throughout communist literature in relation to the coming of the communist age. Moreover, it also goes backwards to incorporate the Geneva Conference into the growing narrative of America’s place in history. Another article did similarly, saying,

“Disregarding the Geneva agreements on the restoration of peace in Indo-China, the U.S. has included Laos, Cambodia and the southern part of Viet-Nam into the Manila treaty area. This has the purpose of dragging them into a military alliance and converting them into U.S. military bases. The U.S. interventionists are trying by hook or by crook to realize this goal so as to rekindle the flames of war in this area. This is an attempt to coerce them into abandoning their policy of independence and sovereignty and accepting U.S. dictation. There are signs that the designers of the Manila aggressive bloc are showing panic and uneasiness over the consistent refusal by the major countries of Southeast Asia, having four-fifths of the total population of the area, to participate in this fake ‘Southeast Asia’ bloc. They particularly fear the

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Conference to be held in Bandung shortly...”

Another editorial explained that, “It's not hard to understand why the American ruling clique fears the Asian African Conference and has racked its brains to obstruct and destroy it. The goals of the Asian-African Conference are to advance peace in the Asia-Africa region, to advance friendly cooperation between Asian and African countries. This is not beneficial to American imperialism and its aggressive war policy in Asia and Africa.” The age of imperialism was perpetuated by war, while the coming age would be one of peace, so naturally the Americans had to support war. In each case, the propaganda was careful to mention that their need for war led them directly to their opposition of the Bandung Conference, thus making the success of the conference a crucial step towards eventually defeating America.

The new, imperialist based understanding of America's role in history also meant that the defeat of America was a great, if not ultimate step towards the final realization of socialism. Bandung became hailed as a major event leading towards that eventual victory because it was depicted as opposing American policy and defying continued imperialism, thus necessitating the peoples support of the conference. One report stated that, “There is misunderstanding among the countries in Asia and Africa. The imperialists, fearing friendly cooperation among the Asian and African countries, are attempting to increase this misunderstanding... This Asian-African Conference has given us the precious opportunity of removing misunderstanding and promoting understanding.” Another article stressed the difference between the aims of the Conference and American policy, saying, “The suggestion by the five presidents of South Asia to hold an Asia-Africa conference received the wide welcome of the entire world's public opinion, and resonated in Asia’s and Africa’s peace-loving people’s hearts, which is the opposite of the feelings aroused by the American warmonger's and their allies' announcement last year that a

80 Shao Zonghan, “Mei guo zen yang po huai ya fei hui yi (How America is Destroying the Asia-Africa Conference),” Renmin Ribao April 15, 1955.
Southeast Asian military bloc was to be formed at the Manila Conference, which was completely opposed.  

The Bandung Conference and the Manila Conference were frequently used as foils for each other throughout propaganda at the time. At the end of the Conference, the press reported that,

“China agrees to expand contact with Asian and African countries, as well as with Western countries; it’s just that some people not only fear letting China visit, but that they want to prevent other countries from having China visit them... But because of the direct contact of the Asia-Africa Conference, China has already established the beginning steps to understanding with many Asian and African countries. At the Asia-Africa Conference, we invited all delegates and other dignitaries to come pay a visit to China. These kinds of visits and contact will advance understanding between the parties, and from them will help the soothing of the tense international situation.”

America, and imperialism, was on the retreat and clearly suffering many defeats, and the Bandung Conference was one of them. This achievement was a historical one, as mentioned earlier, and had come about because of those tides of history, which China was leading. But at the heart of this is more than just a conference; it is the idea that victory will be attained through people of all oppressed nations understanding each other and uniting together, or to put it simply, through internationalism. According to the propagandists, Bandung was not just remarkable for the achievements obtained by the leadership of China, but also for allowing the process of internationalism to move forward.

The narrative of the tides of history changed not only the justification for party rule, but also changed the way that the Chinese perceived themselves. This view of history required different sorts of motivation and different kinds of action, and the propaganda on Bandung reflected each of these trends. Whereas in Geneva the propaganda used that conference as a tool to motivate the masses to work

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83 Zhang Mingyang, “Zhong guo ren min bao wei he ping tou zheng huo de wei sheng li de you yi nian (Another Magnificently Victorious Year for the Chinese People’s Struggle to Protect Peace),” Shijie Zhishi 19 (1955), 4.
diligently to meet Chinese needs, in Bandung the tool was no longer the conference in particular, but a true sense of internationalism. It was not a one-off event that needed to be mobilized around, but rather an intrinsic belief in the importance of identifying with other oppressed people. This value developed from the narrative of historical progress, since ongoing conflicts with America were now described as the global struggle of the proletariat against imperialism. This also changed the way mobilization needed to occur, as the Geneva theme of hard work, which emphasized the individual, progressed into the theme of mutual hard work, which focused upon the need for group affiliation.

More important to the planners at home, however, was the need to advance the movement towards collectivization. China, at this time, was attempting to move people into larger and larger collectives in the belief that this would not only lead towards a communist society, but also increase production. If people could believe in internationalism and the need to work with people of other countries, then they could certainly work together with their neighbors as well. Propaganda attempted to instill this value of internationalism as well as mobilize that ideal to produce a mutual effort.

In Bandung, internationalism rather than specific international events became an important tool for the propagandists to encourage the Chinese masses to work harder. As part of their campaign to produce belief in the historical mandate of the party and the unstoppable path to socialism, internationalism came to play a key role in building a sense of responsibility for the fate of the world. If they cared about the world, then they would certainly care about China’s place in it and the policies China enacted. One report put it bluntly, saying, “Most Asian nations which have already achieved independence and freedom not only worry about their own affairs, but also about Asian affairs, and moreover about world affairs.” As a preface to *World Knowledge*’s series introducing the nations attending Bandung, the editor wrote, “Since the Bogor Conference [where the Asia-Africa Conference was announced], many readers have sent us letters asking us to introduce the circumstances of the

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attending countries."\textsuperscript{85} Here, the Chinese, according to propaganda anyway, were interested in understanding and uniting with the other peoples of the world. In further proof of this, the press quoted several Chinese people as well to establish their internationalist spirit. The Secretary-General of the China Islamic Association said that, "China's Moslems, together with the Moslems in the Asian-African countries, opposed colonialism and would strive for friendly cooperation and peaceful co-existence... 'We Chinese Moslems will whole-heartedly support the delegation of our country to the Asian-African Conference...,'" while the Deputy Secretary-General of the Chinese Buddhist Association added, "On behalf of Chinese Buddhists, he pledged to work for friendship and cooperation among the nations of Asia and Africa."\textsuperscript{86} But more than just exhorting them to believe in internationalism, they showed that a spirit of internationalism already existed in other nations around the world, lying blatantly when they had to. For example, one paper wrote that, "Neither artificially created friction nor American maneuvers to form military blocs can alienate them [India and Pakistan]."\textsuperscript{87} In 1955, India and Pakistan were most certainly not on good terms, but to show the solidarity of the countries which opened the Bandung Conference, this fact was ignored. Furthermore, the papers reported that at the conclusion of Bandung, the Syrian delegate said that, "... at the UN, he rarely saw an entirely unanimous opinion, but at this Asia-Africa Conference there was a unanimous decision, which shows that Asians and Africans oppose colonialism and their resolute determination to request peace and cooperation."\textsuperscript{88} The Chinese and the peoples represented in the Asia-Africa Conference were clearly portrayed as having an internationalist spirit; this was another reason which made such diverse nations able to work together. But therein lays the reason the Chinese chose to promote internationalism: it led to mutual

\textsuperscript{85} WKPS, "Ya fei hui yi guo jia jie shao (Introduction to the Countries of the Asia-Africa Conference)," \textit{Shijie Zhishi} 3 (1955), 15.
\textsuperscript{88} Wu Wendao, "Cong Wanlong kai shi (Starting From Bandung)," \textit{Renmin Ribao} April 27, 1955.
The main reason to endorse internationalism, besides the legitimacy it gave the communist party through building faith in the historical inevitability of communism, was that it could mobilize the people to participate in collective labor and contribute towards the fulfilment of the First Five Year Plan. By sympathising with the plight of other people, and seeing themselves as a unified group despite their different cultures and nations, they could more easily unite with their neighbours in carrying out the policies of the state. And in 1955, China needed people to work together and put their individual needs behind not only the needs of the state, but also behind the needs of their community. First, propaganda established that collective hard work was more efficient than individual labor through the example of the nations of Bandung. In an editorial declaring racism and discrimination, the author wrote, “The Asia-Africa Conference is the first chance for all countries to put their strength together and to struggle against racism. Asians and African’s struggle will certainly be victorious, because justice always prevails.” 89 Once their strength has been put together justice will prevail, according to the writer. Another article reported that, “These twenty-nine countries’ social systems are different, their ideologies differ, their government forms differ, their lifestyles and religions are different. Their opinions on many issues are also quite different. But, all of these differences didn’t stop them from coming to mutual agreements on many problems, and even reaching a united proclamation... This is because they obtained a greater understanding of each other.”90 Understanding is vital to the actual implementation of internationalism, as it is the path to establishing common bonds and seeing past ephemeral cultural differences. The papers also said clearly that, “Asians and Africans trust from practice that their striving for independence and freedom, and their struggle to oppose aggressive

89 Chen Tiqiang, “Ya fei ren min fan dui zhong zu zhu yi (Asians and Africans Oppose Racism),” Shijie Zhishi 8 (1955), 16.  
90 WKPS, “Ya fei hui yi de zhong yao cheng jiu (The Important Success of the Asia-Africa Conference),” Shijie Zhishi 9 (1955), 2.
intervention, and that they should support and rely upon each other."91 A final example exhorted them further to foster this sort of trust, saying, "To oppose colonialism, to strive for and advance national independence, and to protect peace, Asians and Africans must cooperate. If the countries of Asia and Africa cooperate in the aspects of politics, economics and culture, this will not only help each nation’s independence and economic development, it will also help advance friendly mutual relations. The Asia-Africa Conference put forth several proactive ways to realize this kind of cooperation."92 In all of these cases, the propaganda demonstrated that only through cooperation and mutual effort could any goals be accomplished on the international stage. Be it the opening of the Bandung Conference to the furthering of world peace or defeat of racist policies, it is the cooperation of those involved that would bring about success.

Second, to enhance the message, the press made sure to report that the Chinese people trusted in internationalism as well. In fact, since they were the first nation of Asia to awake and stand up, it was their responsibility to support the cause of internationalism so that others would follow. One paper warned that, "...imperialism will certainly not sit idly by as the project of peace develops, or watch the influence of the Asia-Africa Conference expand. Therefore, Chinese people must time after time increase vigilance, and together with the peoples of Asia and Africa, put forth hard work in order to implement the decisions of the Asia-Africa Conference."93 Another reported, "The Chinese people congratulate the Asian-African Conference on its achievements and are ready to make joint efforts with the Asian and African peoples to carry out the various agreements of the Conference."94 The Chinese are placed first, before the rest of Asia and Africa, to stress that it is their initiative that can inspire the

92 NCNA, “Qing he ya fei hui yi de cheng jiu (Celebrate the Success of the Asia-Africa Conference),” Renmin Ribao April 26, 1955.
rest of the world to gather together under the banner of internationalism as well. Many papers chose to give concrete examples of this exchange in action, showing how Chinese support for the struggles of other nations inspired those nations to support China. For example, one paper said that, “Chinese struggle to help Indonesia obtain West Irian, struggle to help India liberate Goa, and as for the struggles of the Far East, Middle East, and North Africa against colonialism, they exhibit complete sympathy and support. Moreover, these countries’ people exhibit their complete sympathy and support for China’s just quest to liberate Taiwan. This kind of mutual sympathy and support advances our mutual relations, friendship, and unity, strengthens the opposition to aggression, and protects the forces of peace.”\(^9\) The propagandists assumed that the Chinese reader would be more likely to adopt and internalize their message if they read about other Chinese who had already done so. Saying that so many other Chinese had already adopted the proper sense of internationalism, and that they had begun working together with others in mutual benefit, encouraged others to take up the lesson as well.

The retroactive addition of Geneva to many of the narratives introduced in Bandung highlight the fact that China’s propaganda organs were learning and evolving over time, as well as with the times. As their policies changed, so did their propaganda. It should be obvious that their message changed depending on the desired result, but what is not obvious is how intertwined the various threads of propaganda are. Changes to domestic policy color the coverage of Bandung. This suggests that the narratives were decided upon and worked into every piece of propaganda throughout the nation, and furthermore that understanding that narrative could lead to a code to break the propaganda. In the case of internationalism, it becomes obvious that China fit other nations into their narrative in order to give it further support. This unity in propaganda also harkens back to the basic definition that propaganda is an instructive device; finding the lessons means discovering the trends. The addition of the forces to history to narratives in propaganda shows the party’s desire to inculcate their people with

\(^9\) Zhang Mingyang, “Zhong guo ren min bao wei he ping tou zheng huo de wei da sheng li de you yi nian (Another Magnificently Victorious Year for the Chinese People’s Struggle to Protect Peace),” *Shijie Zhishi* 19 (1955), 4.
Marxist ideology. The PRC was an instructional republic, to use the vocabulary of Apter and Saich, and the goal was none less than the reshaping of mankind. But Geneva and Bandung both represented victories for the party that could easily be incorporated into laudatory narratives and provide legitimacy to the socialist path. To really understand how Chinese propaganda learned and evolved a challenge need also be presented to see their reactions when the event cannot easily be assimilated. This is the main reason to include a section about a defeat for the ideology and an event which does not fit into any of the narratives. The events of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 provide an ideal example.

The Hungarian Revolution of 1956

Hungary and China

The Revolution in Hungary in 1956 was a short and frenetic one, which was only compounded by the fact that the party itself miscalculated the severity of the protests and began to fall apart. While it started as a peaceful protest against certain communist rulers of Hungary, the people who attempted to hold the party together in the face of the protest ended up doing more harm than good, causing the revolution to turn against the party as a whole as well as the Soviet Union. In order to keep Hungary within the Warsaw pact, the Soviets undertook a bloody, military intervention to restore a new incarnation of the Hungarian communist party to power. The protest became a revolution then became a war, not at all dissimilar to 1848 when Hungary first attempted to declare independence from the Austro-Hungarian Empire; it is not at all a coincidence that some of the figures of that 1848 Revolution inspired the 1956 Revolution.

It started with the death of Stalin and the slow de-Stalinization that occurred afterwards. Around the Communist bloc, rulers installed by Stalin purely on the basis of their loyalty to him were falling and giving way to more liberal and forgiving governments. No longer backed by their patron in Moscow, many found their regimes untenable and allowed more liberal regimes to replace them, following the line of de-Stalinization pioneered by Nikita Khrushchev. In pursuit of this goal, Khrushchev
even reached out to and brought about the reconciliation of Tito and Yugoslavia, heralding better times for relations within the communist bloc. Khrushchev’s secret speech delivered to the 20th CPSU congress in February 1956, which elaborated the crimes of Stalin and criticized his forms of leadership, both summarized and reinforced these movements.

Hungary, however, lagged behind. Their Stalinist leader, Matyas Rakosi, held on to power stubbornly. Even in authoritarian Eastern Europe, Rakosi was considered particularly ruthless and unpopular. In June 1956, four months after the secret speech, Rakosi finally chose to resign rather than wait for the party to push him aside; however, as his successor, he appointed his closest ally and another Stalinist, Erno Gero. Gero continued many of the hated policies of his predecessor, did nothing to gain the trust of his people, and generally refused to follow the trend of liberalization sweeping through the communist bloc.

The Polish October spurred the Hungarian people to action. In Poland, in the face of peaceful protests their Stalinist leader stepped aside voluntarily and appointed a more liberal and reform minded Wladyslaw Gomulka. Gomulka was still loyal to the USSR and to communist ideology, but he was perceived as a liberal reformer and more independent from the Soviet Union than his predecessor. He was essentially in the perfect middle position; the USSR trusted him well enough to allow him to lead, but he was able gain support from the protesters as well. While the CPSU initially did not trust Gomulka and considered military intervention in Poland, Gomulka’s early actions in reigning in the protests convinced them that he would be able to keep Poland solidly within the Soviet sphere of influence and manage the country along socialist lines. A Chinese delegation consisting of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were present in Moscow at the time and were consulted when making the decision to intervene or not intervene in Poland, and suggested that the Soviets do not.96 They saw initially that the protests were not anti-communist in nature, but rather against the tyranny of the USSR, and

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furthermore that Gomulka had things under control. Moreover, the similar and related events in
Hungary distracted the communist bloc from Poland.

When their neighbor Poland successfully transitioned power from their Stalinist ruler to a
popularly supported, reformist government, the Hungarians decided they could not stand Erno Gero any
longer. Calling for solidarity with Poland, they gathered together under the statue of Jozsef Bem, a hero
of the 1848 Revolution, on October 23rd to ask that the party follow the Polish path. They wanted Gero
to peacefully walk out of office and install Imre Nagy as the new premier of the country, just as power
had shifted in Poland.

Nagy’s fame among the people, however, was more based on their own perception of him than
on any real exploits. After Stalin died, the USSR tried to open up the Stalinist Rakosi group by having
Nagy appointed as Prime Minister, but with Rakosi holding all the real power, the position was
meaningless. Nevertheless, Nagy was able to speak about a platform of liberalization even while he was
never able to realize it. This experiment didn’t last long, and Nagy was not only removed from his still
new position of Prime Minister, but also expelled from the Party. His suffering at the hands of Rakosi
and Gero in this instance made him nearly the only recognizable face from within the Party outside of
the Stalinist group.

Nagy regained his party membership on the 13th October 1956, only ten days before the
beginning of the protests. He was made Prime Minister again in response to the failure of Hungarian
Security forces to contain the revolt, as a concession meant to placate the crowds. Nagy’s first speech
calling for peaceful reform seemed empty to the crowds\(^{97}\), and Gero’s subsequent address threatening
the Hungarian people with counterattack aggravated them further to confront the Party. Faced with
angry crowds of fellow Hungarians, the Hungarian armed forces were not strong enough, physically or

\(^{97}\) Granville, Johanna, ‘Poland and Hungary, 1956: A Comparative Essay Based on New Archival Findings,’ in
*Revolution and Resistance in Eastern Europe; Challenges to Communist Rule*, ed. Kevin McDermott and Matthew
Stibbe (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 68.
mentally, to combat the popular uprising. Many army units put their guns down and allowed the protest to continue, others joined the crowds. The Hungarian armed forces and police completely disintegrated, leaving no arm of enforcement for communist policy, except, of course, for the Soviet army.\textsuperscript{98}

Under the terms of the Warsaw Pact, the USSR had troops stationed throughout Hungary, including inside the capital Budapest. These troops were activated on the 24\textsuperscript{th} of October and came into the square to contain the protest. At first they were greeted warmly since it was assumed that the Soviets had come down on the side of liberalization and were merely keeping the country peaceful during the fall of Gero, and many Hungarians rode Soviet tanks to the gates of Parliament.

It’s unclear who shot first on the 25\textsuperscript{th}. What is clear, however, is that the grounds in front of Parliament turned into a bloodbath, and that the crowds blamed the Russians. Most of the dead were at their hands, since the Soviet troops fired upon the crowd. This event turned the protest against a Hungarian Stalinist leader into a war for national liberation, as all the hatred of the Hungarian people became directed at the now intolerable interference of the Soviet Union.

For the next several days, the Soviet army battled with civilian guerrilla units. Using what weapons they could capture and the famous Molotov Cocktails, the Hungarians chased the Russians out of Budapest. By the 28\textsuperscript{th}, Khrushchev ordered a general withdrawal from Budapest, though not from Hungary.

The Hungarian communist party was in shambles by this time. Gero, Rakosi, and many others had fled the country with the retreating Russians, and the next government was organized by Imre Nagy as the highest ranking party member left in the country. But the party was dissolving from the ground up at the same time that it was falling apart from the top down. The membership evaporated overnight, partially in response to the cajoling, threats, and attacks of the protestors, but also in protest against the

Soviet intervention. With the party disintegrating around them,

"The Party leaders and the government, including Imre Nagy, were faced with the dilemma of either being swept away or gradually giving in to an irresistible pressure. The difference between the Stalinist rigorists, on the one hand, and the Prime Minister and the ‘rightists,’ on the other, lay in the means each group chose to approach the inevitable. The first did so out of necessity; the second did so with evident willingness, influenced by a realistic assessment of the situation and persuaded that a common denominator between real democracy and Communistic objectives might be established."  

Nagy continually tried to emulate Gomulka and find the support of both the communist camp and the crowd, but remained at odds with both and let the situation slip entirely out of his hands.

On the ground, the Revolution appeared to be victorious, and the international community seemed supportive of Hungarian autonomy. The Russians were leaving and taking their Hungarian lackeys with them. Moreover, the Soviets made an announcement on October 30th admitting to mistakes made in the relations between Warsaw Pact countries and making commitments to rectifying those relations, a clear offer of truce to Hungary. Many other communist nations, including China, hoped for a peaceful settlement of the situation, even at the expense of Soviet pride.

But unlike events in Poland, the foundations of power in Hungary had changed entirely. Between the 28th October and the 4th November, Nagy issued increasingly liberal decrees regarding the nature of the Hungarian state. Starting from allowing political parties from the 1945 coalition government to reform and giving some of their members positions in the cabinet, he moved in the end to formally abolishing the single party rule and founded a parliamentary democracy that would hold fair

99 Váli, 296.
100 Váli, 345.
and open elections. He also started from a promise to negotiate the eventual removal of Soviet troopers from Budapest to finish at withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact and declaring neutrality, thus losing any goodwill from the Communist Bloc. Gero tried to end the revolution by force, but only made it grow larger. Nagy suffered the same fate through a different path; he tried to ally with the revolution, but this only emboldened it to ask for more.

By the 4th, a new, much larger force of Soviet military converged on Budapest to put down the revolution. Janos Kadar, who was originally in the first Nagy government, appeared in the Ukraine and simultaneously announced a new Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government, and formally requested the help of the Soviets in suppressing the revolution. The creation of this new government was absolutely organized by the Soviets, with some advice from the Chinese and other communist parties. In fact, throughout the 31st of October and into the 2nd of November, just after finishing talks with Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in Moscow, high powered delegations from the Soviet Union visited all of the Eastern European socialist countries to confer with their leaders about the situation in Hungary. Their input might have changed the final look of the new Hungarian Party, since sources indicate that most Russian communists did not like Kadar and hoped to give the government to a different Hungarian.

At the request of the new Kadar government, which supposedly represented the true interests of the workers and peasants, who were in reality rebelling against them across the country, the Red Army invaded Budapest. Before November 4th was out, the revolution was crushed, and the new Kadar government came in to power on the backs of Soviet tanks. Nagy fled to the Yugoslavian embassy, where he received refuge for some time before finally being tricked into falling into Soviet custody. He was executed along with several other members of his government in 1958. Kadar was lenient with the

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102 Lendvai, 122-125.
participants of the revolution for some time as his power was slowly established in the wake of the invasion. Local revolutionary councils formed throughout the country during the revolution remained a powerful force in politics for quite some time until Kadar finally felt comfortable enough to crack down on them and prescribe the death sentence for anybody participating in one of the organizations. Despite this, he did not follow the Stalinist model of Gero or Rakosi, and ruled Hungary until the 80’s guiding it to significant growth.

China presented its views on the Hungarian Revolution and on international affairs in general through their delegation in Moscow. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were both sent to the Kremlin when the Polish October began unfolding in order to let the USSR know China’s opinions on the matter, and they remained there until October 31st to, one day later than intended, to confer with the Soviets about Hungary before they returned to China. The Chinese were likely behind, or at least heavily contributed to, the October 30th announcement on the new basis for relations amongst the Warsaw Pact countries. The October 30th announcement was as much a nod to China as it was to the countries of the Warsaw Pact. They had similar problems with Soviet leadership and completely sympathized with the requests of the Polish and Hungarians for more local autonomy. They certainly conveyed this to the Soviets. Liu and Deng, representing the CCP, were willing to support Gomulka because he did not threaten the integrity of the communist camp while still looking for more autonomy for his country. 103 The Chinese had gone through a similar struggle with Soviet advisors before and during the Long March, and wanted the Russians to give their satellites more independence. They saw autonomy within the communist camp not only as important for resolving the popular unrest in Poland and Hungary, but also for the health of the international communist movement as a whole. Given the many failures of Soviet policy in China throughout the 1920’s, as well as the excesses of Stalinism, they thought that local autonomy would be the answer for promoting the revolution, just as it had apparently saved their own revolution.

103 Lendvai, 122-123.
They were also still unsure of Khrushchev’s leadership and wanted to start to express their own mind within the communist bloc, both in terms of leadership as well as ideology.

But as events unfolded, the Chinese reversed their decision to let the Hungarian incident play itself out;

"In reference to Hungary, Beijing at first adopted a similar position [to that of their position on Poland] and warned the Soviet leaders against big-power chauvinism. However, Mao’s attitude to the situation was gradually changing in view of the increasingly obvious breakup of the regime and as a result of alarming intelligence reports and diplomatic cables from the Chinese Embassy in Budapest. On 30 October two emissaries, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, who had been staying in Moscow since 23 October, received instructions to extend their visit by a day in order to dissuade Khrushchev from pulling out the Soviet troops from Hungary."  

At the time, China’s words did carry some noticeable weight among communist countries. China’s advice was generally followed during both the Hungarian Revolution and the Polish October, and their suggestions were likely influential on sending the Soviets across Eastern Europe looking for confirmation on their decision to invade Hungary. But most importantly, their roles in Geneva and Bandung, as well as in other events that shaped foreign policy, was gaining China the sort of international standing that it had been looking for. Moreover, their foreign policy path of pursuing mutual coexistence in those conferences made the CCP appear more moderate than the Stalinists, while still remaining solidly communist and revolutionary. China was trusted to defend the interests of communist parties because of its important role in the Korean War. Economically the First Five Year Plan was doing what it had been designed to do, which was build up the country’s industry. The convulsions of the Great Leap Forward were still over a year away, so China, in all aspects, appeared to be a reasonable and stable country that could be relied upon.

104 Ibid.
The CCP’s critical change in opinion occurred as a result of the news of violence against members of the Communist Party in Hungary. As one writer put it, “... during the latter part of the revolution there was isolated looting here and there, as well as more or less aggressive harassment of prominent Communists... Although the acts of revenge were promptly and sharply condemned by several of the insurgent leaders... Communist propaganda organs from Moscow to Paris and Peking used the gruesome pictures of the victims of the lynchings to accuse the revolution across-the-board of ‘counterrevolutionary terror’ and ‘Communist hunting.’” 

The reports from the Chinese embassy in Hungary to Mao were likely exaggerations in themselves, but these became even more amplified in the internal propaganda.

The Presentation of the Hungarian Revolution in China

The general explanation for the Hungarian Incident within China was that a small group of remnant counterrevolutionaries and Hungarian fascist prisoners of war released by the West back into Hungary infiltrated the peaceful protest of the 23rd and incited violence. The crowd, so the propaganda said, was mostly good communist youth who were justifiably upset at their government, but were tricked by these counterrevolutionary elements into attacking the party. Imperialists in the West were mostly to blame for providing the arms used in the Revolution as well as for training the special agents which led the rebellion, and for their long term plots of subversion. But this explanation was not ideologically palatable for the CCP, who could not just pretend Hungary was a freak event when it challenged the narrative of internationalism which they had been building since Geneva. They needed some way to explain the events in Hungary in the language of the necessity for a vanguard party and proletarian internationalism, but to do so each theme was forced to expand in ways which would have unforeseen and dire consequences for the future. Leadership moved towards devolution to the people, who were instilled with a sense of duty and vigilance against counterrevolutionaries, which foretokened

105 Lendvai, 107-108.
the disasters of the Hundred Flowers and the Great Leap Forward.

Particularly in the theme of vanguard role of the Communist Party, the propaganda organs of the CCP were hard pressed to find ways to integrate Hungary into their campaign of internationalism. In fact, propaganda remained silent about Hungary for the first several days while a solution to the problem was likely worked out. But when news broke, in addition to the explanation of imperialist plotting, it was loaded with themes concerning the leadership of the party. For the Chinese, the events in Hungary reaffirmed the need for the leadership of the party, but added that that leadership needed to be based upon more popular support and that the leadership group could not become divorced from the people. They affirmed the need for correct leadership by highlighting the mistakes of the Hungarian government, as well as those of the USSR, and contrasted those with the achievements of communism. However, their propaganda on leadership during the Hungarian Revolution varied from that of Geneva and Bandung, in that they also made note of the correct path and the even greater achievements which it could obtain. This implicitly critiqued the previous path which followed the Soviet model, instead proposing a better form of leadership which was in accord with Maoist ideology and the theme of proletarian internationalism. Despite this affirmation of Maoist leadership, they also reiterated their complete and total loyalty to the leadership of the Soviet Union. However, the USSR’s leadership was presented in Chinese propaganda as generally adhering to the new, correct, Maoist path, implying that the Soviets would be better leaders if they listened to China. These three themes of mistakes vs. achievements, the correct path for the future, and Soviet leadership were not just responses to Hungary, but to internal events as well, all of which contributed to the decision later to open up the Hundred Flowers movement.

One of the biggest admissions of the CCP during this time was the admission that communist states and parties were still prone to mistakes, something which the USSR did not like to admit. It was, however, an important ideological point for the Chinese to make in order to preserve their
internationalist propaganda campaign and the narrative which directed it, as well as an attempt to tell their people that they may have erred and were going to fix it. But this admission was hedged by constant reminders of the progress already obtained and the progress still to come underneath party rule. They could admit that they were still working out the kinks in socialism, but would not allow the system itself to be questioned.

Possibly a prelude to Mao's speech *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*, the propaganda on Hungary admitted to and critiqued mistakes made by communist parties, namely the Hungarian and Soviet parties. Propagandists did not want to portray any irreparable rift, as would later develop due to Chinese interpretations of ideology, but rather show that there were gaps and shortcomings which could and should be remedied to strengthen the communist movement. Moreover, it was an admission of some of the troubles which faced the PRC at the time. Many of the problems which were ascribed to Hungary appeared again in Mao's *Contradictions* speech in February as well as in the subsequent Hundred Flowers Movement, signaling the fact that the Chinese used foreign news to discuss their internal affairs without having to explicitly discuss themselves. One of the earliest editorials to appear said that, "The development of the situation shows that the Hungarian working people, who have obtained great progress on the foundation of the people’s democratic system, have properly raised the questions of the need to eliminate the serious shortcomings of the economic construction, to further improve people’s material well-being, as well as with the struggle against bureaucratic deviation in government agencies." Part because of transposing their problems onto other countries, and part because Hungary and China truly did share some similar issues, the Chinese admit to many of their own problems in this selection. The Hungarians’ original protests revolved around the request that economic growth serve them and increase their standards of living; China’s

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106 NCNA, ‘Su lian zheng fu guan yu fa zhan he jin yi bu jia qiang Su lian tong qi ta she hui zhi yi guo jia de you yi he he zuo de ji chu de xuan yan (The USSR’s Proclamation About the Development and Advancement of the USSR’s Fundamental Friendship and Cooperation with Other Socialist Countries),’ *Renmin Ribao*, November 1, 1956.
Soviet led First Five Year Plan produced the exact same problem. Moreover, bureaucratic problems arose when the Soviet, one-man management system was introduced forcefully into many Chinese enterprises, and produced significant tensions in the workplace. Another article went further on the topic of people’s democracy, saying, “In the past, particularly before 1953, the leadership of the ruling Working People’s Party committed several errors in implementing the people’s democracy. Some party leaders did not honestly rely on the masses or inspire the masses, and did not adequately trust in or care about the masses.” This proposition, inspired by the Maoist practice of the ‘Mass-Line,’ was not only projected into international debate, but also to domestic audiences. After several years of sitting back and letting others run the First Five Year Plan, Mao’s views were gaining credence in the face of shortcomings in the plan. This trend would continue from this time forward. Finally, the Chinese attributed some mistakes to common sense, reminding their people that, “The socialist cause is new in man’s history. A new cause cannot be immune from errors of one kind or another owing to lack of experience. There is no exception to this, too, as regards the mutual relations between the socialist countries; there is nothing strange in this... although socialist countries have made errors in their mutual relations, their achievements are very much greater [than capitalist countries] and have helped them gain rapid social and economic progress and create the possibilities of greater social and economic progress in the future.” The CCP also reminded their domestic public that while mistakes exist, they will be corrected because the system itself was not flawed.

Even with the list of shortcomings and problems of socialism exposed by the case of Hungary, Chinese propaganda left no doubt that socialism itself could not be questioned because its achievements outweighed its temporary shortfalls. Harkening back to the successes of the past, one article rhetorically asked, “During the days of counterrevolutionary chaos, many old partisans appeared,

and some people believed in fantasies about them, believing that in the last twenty years the Communist Party hadn’t done a single good thing; well, would anybody but the Communist Party have given the workers and peasants land reform and the nationalization of private industry? 109 The legitimacy of socialism was no longer just based on ideology or the future outlook of socialism, but based on the progress it had already made. It was still a new movement in history, but not without any experience. Legitimacy from achievements was also based on the present, as one article presented the contrast of a Hungary under Nagy and a Hungary under Kadar, saying, “The citizens of Budapest are replying to the government’s call to return to work, and are slowly returning to their own work places. Now, thousands of workers are once again peacefully laboring, most industry, private companies, and government organs are all returning to work.” 110 According to this narrative, once mistakes had been rectified, life had returned to normal nearly immediately, and progress along the socialist path once again resumed. Not only had socialism been successful in the past and in the present, socialism would also continue to be more successful than capitalism in the future, as this selection makes clear; “Without a doubt, some of Hungary’s leadership made mistakes in the past, and these mistakes created discontent in the Hungarian people, but Hungary’s independence, freedom, prosperity can all only be realized under socialism; leaving socialism is also leaving the glorious future, and can only bring serious disaster to Hungary’s people.” 111 It wasn’t just that socialism was going to be successful, but that there was no future in any other system, even if it didn’t always appear as such. Socialism was the destiny of history, and it was already predetermined that it would defeat capitalism and usher in a utopia. The aim of this narrative of leadership meant to contextualize mistakes within the backdrop of inevitability; their

110 NCNA, ‘Xiong ya li ge di zhong jian zheng chang zhi xu, cheng xiang ren min xiang ying zheng fu hao zhao fen fen hui daogong zuo gang wei (All Hungary Restoring Normal Order, Urban and Rural People Responding One by One to Government’s Call to Return to Work Places),’ Renmin Ribao, November 14, 1956.
111 NCNA, ‘She hui zhu yi ge guo de wei da tuan jie wan sui (Long Live the Great Unity Between Socialist Nations),’ Renmin Ribao, November 3, 1956.
admission of mistakes could not jeopardize the dictatorship of the party, neither domestically nor internationally. But for that future to be possible, the Chinese had a specific path charted for the socialist movement, one that predicated both the Hundred Flowers as well as the Sino-Soviet split.

Interspersed within the admissions of mistakes was a description of the path which the Chinese believed would lead the communist camp through the challenge of Hungary and onward to their utopian future. It was in this respect that a clearly Maoist line emerged in the CCP narrative of internationalism and leadership, one which had been conspicuously missing in the propaganda on Geneva and Bandung. One writer, very likely an important person using a pen name, clearly identified the four prongs of the Chinese solution to Hungary by writing, “This October, there were mass movements in both Poland and Hungary. These two countries both requested that the leaders of the government and country rectify their past mistakes, as well as increase the people’s democracy, improve the people’s lives, and adjust relations between socialist countries. These two countries’ requests were not at all strange.”112 While the third, improving people’s lives, is rather self explanatory, the others represented a complex value which the Chinese believed needed to be inserted into the global communist movement in order for it to be successful; hard work on the part of the party in correcting their errors, a correct ideology of reliance upon the people, and finally an adjustment to the leadership of the USSR over the communist camp.

One of the clearest themes, that of the party’s need to work hard for the people and to rectify their mistakes, was portrayed in the contrast between the Nagy and Kadar governments. Whereas Nagy’s government – once he had lost control of the movement – was described as ineffective, complacent, and immobile, the Kadar government displayed initiative and hard work. Nagy’s path led him to accommodate the protesters, which only emboldened them and made the situation spiral out of control. Kadar’s government, however, inspired the people through its hard labor and thus was able to

112 Shui Tu, ‘Bo lan shi jian he Xiong ya li shi jian (The Poland Incident and the Hungary Incident),’ Shijie Zhishi 22 (1956), 12.
rally the people to do similarly for their causes. One article reported that, “The essential turn for the better seen in Hungary’s domestic situation is the fruit of the great and diligent labor put forth by the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party and the Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government. They support the place of the revolution and have obtained real progress, leading and uniting the entire party as well as the entire people, gradually overcoming all difficulties.” 113 The article went on, describing exactly what sort of work the government participated in; “At the same time as the Hungarian Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government was suppressing counterrevolutionaries, they were also vigorously launching party-building and army-building work, obtaining outstanding results. This is another important victory obtained by the forces of the Hungarian revolution in these past months.”114 An earlier report stated this more simply, saying, “The Hungarian government and working people are in the midst of their diligent work to restore normal life, and are currently struggling with obstacles in the way of returning to work.”115 According to the narratives presented, when the party worked hard, the country followed them, even if that country had just recently been rebelling against their rule. This sort of leadership through example, and examples of hard work overcoming obstacles, was by no means a new theme Chinese propaganda, but Hungary tied ideology, labor, and legitimacy together as it had not been done before. Hard work was legitimacy, as only through work could communists prove their commitment and their ideological correctness. An interview with a Hungarian Poet, Marosán György, revealed that, “...he [Marosan] said that on the first day Comrade Kadar’s government made a promise, that was truly a first announcement for a communist party!... Now they need to rally, work, and

113 Liu Jing, ‘Xiong ya li ren min liang ge yue lai de nu li (Hungarian People’s Hard Work These Two Months),’ Renmin Ribao, January 14, 1957.
114 Ibid.
115 NCNA, ‘Xiong ya li ren min nu li hui fu zheng chang sheng huo, ji ji dui zu nao fu gong de huo dong jin xing tou zheng (Hungarian People Working Hard to Restore Normal Life, Struggle Energetically in Movement Against Barriers to Returning to Work),’ Renmin Ribao, November 17, 1956.
through work prove who is good and who is bad, who is and who is not..."116 Nobody with an incorrect ideology would work hard for the people. But there were other aspects which distinguished correct from incorrect ideology.

A correct ideology not only encouraged cadres to work hard for the people, it also looked to the people for the ways in which that work ought to be directed. A party divorced from the people, no matter how hard working, would inevitably channel their energies down unproductive paths because they did not rely on the people to show them what was necessary. Here, Mao’s views on the mass-line and on reliance on the masses came to the fore after being subsumed by the Soviets’ plan for economic construction, and in fact provided the impetus for his call to let a hundred flowers bloom. After the Soviet invasion, reports in China claimed that, “The Prime Minister of the Hungarian Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government, Janos Kadar, received delegates from the Budapest Central Workers Council on the 14th, and furthermore carried out long talks with them about the requests of all the factories and workers.”117 In fact, before the Nagy government started to follow the requests of the protesters too closely, they too were praised for their connection with the masses; “…the armed rioters in Hungary’s capitol Budapest have already made a temporary ceasefire with the [Nagy] government and military. As per the requests of the rioters, the Hungarian government is currently undergoing talks with the representatives of the rioters.”118 Their responsibility was to unite with the people and work together with them to make the country, and their lives, better. This was one major difference between the reporting on Hungary compared with that on Geneva and Bandung; socialism served the country first and the people second before, but now it needed to serve both in order to serve either. But

117 NCNA, ‘Ka da er tong Bu da pei si gong ren dai biao tan hua, gong ren dai biao biao shi yao bao wei sheng chan zi liao de she hui suo you zhi (Kadar Talks with Budapest Workers Representatives, Workers Representatives Show They Want to Protect Society’s Control Over the Means of Production),’ Renmin Ribao, November 19, 1956.
118 NCNA, ‘Bao luan fen zi qing qiu tan duan, Bu da pei si zhe shi ting huo, Xiong zheng fu he ren min zheng she fa hui fu he ping sheng huo (Rioters Request Talks, Temporary Ceasefire in Budapest, Hungarian Government and People Trying to Find a Way to Restore Peaceful Life),’ Renmin Ribao October 29, 1956.
learning from the people was not a one way street, the party also needed to be a teacher of the people in order to ensure that their requests and desires were in line with communist principles. As one article puts it, “Because in the past mistaken policies were contrary to the national characteristics, and ignored increasing proletariat’s living standards, this was contrary to the motives of socialist construction, which made some people upset with the party, and some of these students and workers were used by counterrevolutionaries. But they didn’t even know who they were struggling against; this reflects problems in way the party taught ideology.” The final fault lay with the party, not only for the existence of mistakes in their work and ideology, but also because they failed to guide the ideology of their people correctly. An informed people would not have rebelled, even against the long list of mistakes committed by the Hungarian Communist Party, if they had only been indoctrinated properly about the necessity of the party and the proper methods of critique. Believing that their people had been correctly taught, the CCP opened up their party to critique from the people less than a year later, hoping that this vent would prevent the events in Hungary from recurring in China. The existence of discontent in Hungary was not the fault of the Hungarian government alone, though, as the USSR’s role in Hungary also played a role in the mistakes made there.

The success of the international socialist movement did not rely only on the correct ideology in each component part, but upon applying correct ideology to the movement as a whole, including its leader the USSR. The Soviets were never blamed or attacked directly in Chinese propaganda on Hungary; instead they were criticized between the lines of propaganda by describing how the USSR was emulating China’s foreign policy path, even when it was not. Most conspicuous of these contextual critiques was that the USSR was shown to be following the Chinese policy of supporting the five principles of coexistence. In response to the USSR’s announcement of October 30th, the Chinese wrote that,

“The government of China knows that the USSR’s announcement is correct. This announcement

concerning the rectification of mistakes in the aspect of relations between socialist states, and about improving the unity between socialist states, is of great significance. China recognizes that mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in domestic affairs, mutual benefit, and the five principles of coexistence should become the world’s criterion for establishing and developing mutual relations.\(^{120}\)

The announcement had very little to do with mistakes made between socialist states, and even less to do with China’s five principles of coexistence, yet in China this became the major theme regarding the Soviet announcement. This was not just a critique of what the USSR ought to have done, but an ideological critique, implying a far deeper attack. Another article states this more firmly, saying,

“The immovable foundation of USSR’s foreign relations in the past, today, and in the future has been a policy of peaceful coexistence and friendly cooperation between countries. This policy’s deepest and most valuable expression is in the mutual relations between socialist countries. Each country in the big family of socialist countries, in order to reach their mutual aspirations for socialist society and build the principle of proletarian internationalism, must unite together; their mutual relations are built upon total equality, respect for territorial integrity, national independence and sovereignty, and the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs.”\(^{121}\)

Following the Chinese lead was not only what the USSR ought to be doing in response to the Hungarian Incident, but what they ought to have been doing all along. In addition, the Chinese provided several examples of how this policy should be realized; “As per this policy, under the principle of mutual benefit, the Soviet Union has established relations of economic cooperation with other socialist countries as well

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\(^{120}\) NCNA, ‘Zhong hua ren min gong he guo zheng fu guan yu Su lian zheng fu de yi jiu wu lian shi ri xuan yan de sheng ming (The PRC’s Statement on the USSR’s Proclamation of October 30, 1956),’ \textit{Renmin Ribao}, November 2, 1956.

\(^{121}\) NCNA, ‘Su lian zheng fu guan yu fa zhan he jin yi bu jia qiang Su lian tong qi ta she hui zhi yi guo jia de you yi he he zuo de ji chu de xuan yan (The USSR’s Proclamation About the Development and Advancement of the USSR’s Fundamental Friendship and Cooperation with Other Socialist Countries),’ \textit{Renmin Ribao}, November 1, 1956.
as countries with underdeveloped economies, and moreover gave these countries considerable aid."

The key word is aid, of which China was not receiving, instead getting loans from the USSR. China wanted the Soviets to sacrifice and give China help in order to support the international communist tide, rather than look to its own national interests. Essentially, they wanted the Russians to possess a more internationalist outlook. Despite all this, the Chinese were not arguing against the leadership of the Soviet Union at this point, simply pointing out shortcomings in their leadership and suggesting how the USSR could use that leadership to better support the interests of communism. One writer expresses this clearly, saying, “The Hungarian Incident makes the peoples of socialist countries see more clearly the savage countenance and plots of imperialism and counterrevolutionaries, as well as making them more deeply recognize the need for increasing their unity with the USSR and other socialist countries. The peoples of each socialist country’s political zeal and awareness must be raised. The internal consolidation and relationships of socialist countries must be strengthened; this is the fountainhead of the strengthening of socialist countries, as well as the safeguard of the promise of world peace.”

Cracks and mistakes certainly existed in the relations between socialist nations, and these cracks would inevitably lead to the Sino-Soviet split, but, for the moment, the Chinese stressed that the future could only be attained by remaining devoted to the leadership of the USSR.

In every instance where the Chinese admitted that mistakes were made in socialist nations or advanced remedies for these mistakes, they made sure to first reiterate their commitment to the USSR. This was, in fact, the difference they identified between Poland and Hungary; “Poland supported the socialist system, and moreover continued to uphold the Warsaw Pact, continued their policy of friendship with the Soviets. However, in Hungary, counterrevolutionaries have become dominant, and

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123 Gu Si, ‘Cong Ai ji shi jian he Xiong ya li shi jian kan guo ji jiu ji (Observing the International Situation from the Egyptian Incident and the Hungarian Incident), *Renmin Ribao*, November 22, 1956.
moreover the Nagy Government announced its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact.” They also made it very clear that the Hungarian Revolution was not a reason to abandon the USSR, despite the mistakes committed and the need to rectify them along more Chinese lines, but rather a reason to remain behind the USSR. Whether sincere or not, the CCP told their people that, “History since the October Revolution is abundant, and the lessons of the Hungarian Incident are deep, and we should remember them. The Hungarian Incident tells us: abandoning the USSR, abandoning socialism, will invite disaster and capitalist restoration. Let ‘October’s’ cannon salute resonate forever in our hearts, let us forever follow forward the road opened by the October Socialist Revolution!” Another report stated, “Some people underestimate the importance of friendship with the USSR, underestimate the Soviet people’s internationalist spirit, underestimate the necessity of socialist unity and the Warsaw Pact, and underestimate the need for supporting the principle of proletarian internationalism, and the lessons in implementing internationalism, in overcoming the nationalist orientation of many people. The startling recent happenings in Hungary should teach these people an important lesson.” The Chinese leadership clearly had reservations about the leadership of the USSR, as exhibited by their admission of mistakes and the methods they suggested be used to rectify those shortcomings, but their narrative could not accommodate a true critique of the Soviet Union. Not only was their economy and security still largely reliant on loans from the USSR, the Chinese discourse of proletarian internationalism built up since Geneva succeeded only when all proletarian nations remained united together. As for the mistakes, they reassured their people that, “... the mistakes made in socialist countries’ mutual relations can all be corrected or eliminated, and in reality all mistakes which have occurred have either been corrected or are being corrected. Therefore, this kind of circumstance [mistakes in relations] absolutely

124 NCNA, ‘Ai guo de Xiong ya li ren min, wei bao wei she hui zhi yi, ji bai fan ge ming fu bi er fen dou! (Patriotic Hungarian People, to Protect Socialism, Struggle to Defeat Counterrevolutionary Restoration!),’ Renmin Ribao, November 4, 1956.
125 Yu Zhiguang, “‘Shi yue” de hao pao (“October’s” Cannonade),’ Renmin Ribao, November 7, 1956.
126 NCNA, ‘Qing zhu Xiong ya li ren min de wei da sheng li (Celebrate the Great Victory of the Hungarian People),’ Renmin Ribao, November 5, 1956.
cannot become a pretext for breaking apart socialist unity, absolutely cannot become a pretext for
breaking away from the friendship of the USSR.”127 The Chinese still trusted, or at least wanted their
people to trust, that the narrative of proletarian internationalism would not face setbacks, and would
continue on growing stronger by recognizing and solving its errors. Only when the Soviets were clearly
not going to support the Chinese ideal of internationalism or learn from the Chinese were they willing to
stop supporting the leadership of the Soviet Union. Complicating matters was the use of western
imperialism to explain away the events of Hungary, since more than ever the communist camp needed
to show a united front to the challenge. One article mentioned that, “Western imperialism and
Hungarian domestic counterrevolutionaries’ motive in creating this counterrevolutionary riot was to
destroy the Hungarian socialist system, break down the brotherly unity between Hungary and other
socialist countries, especially the USSR, then open up cracks within the entire socialist camp, and
through this progress towards defeating socialism and starting a new world war. Now, our enemies’
attemptes have been defeated.”128 This again reinforces the importance of the narrative of
internationalism, since, according to this propaganda, imperialism’s plan to defeat socialism focused on
breaking down internationalism and the unity it built. The internationalism that the CCP wanted to
foster in its people was portrayed as the glue which kept the bloc working together and progressing.

The propaganda of national identity saw great modifications due to the Hungarian crisis, ones
that heralded the eventual turn to the Great Leap Forward. The major change grew out of the
admission of mistakes made by the party and their rectification; the CCP proposed the need to rely more
upon the people, but to do so, those people had to be reliable. As previously quoted, one of the
mistakes identified by the Chinese was the failure of the Hungarian government to instill their people
with the correct ideology. Chinese leadership did not want to make a similar mistake. In this

127 NCNA, ‘She hui zue yi ge guo de wei da tuan jie wan sui (Long Live the Great Unity Between Socialist Nations),’
Renmin Ribao, November 3, 1956.
128 Shui Tu, ‘Bo Ian shi jian he Xiang ya li shi jian (The Poland Incident and the Hungary Incident),’ Shijie Zhishi 22
(1956), 13.
atmosphere, internationalism became an even more important tool in instructing the people how to imagine and practice communism. However, the forms of practice that internationalism took on in Hungary differed greatly from its original appearance in Bandung; internationalism was no longer just a rallying cry, but a duty. The people were encouraged to show a proper proletarian internationalist spirit, and to activate that spirit through their exhibition of constant vigilance against counterrevolutionaries and their sense of responsibility for the success of communism. It was the combination of constantly looking for ideological impurities in their neighbors and this sense of duty that encouraged the over estimations and excesses that defined the Great Leap Forward.

In response to the Hungarian Revolution, Chinese propaganda recast internationalism as a proletarian, communist ideal rather than a third world value, as it had been in Bandung. While the Chinese were still expected to maintain an interest in the rest of the world and particularly in developing nations, as shown by reports on the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt which occurred nearly simultaneously as the Hungarian Incident, even then they were expected to be interested via their concern over the global communist movement. Propaganda’s primary goal, then, was to change the term to show how only communist countries could exhibit internationalism, a goal they set out to accomplish chiefly by recasting the Soviet invasion of Hungary as a noble action motivated by the ideal of proletarian internationalism. One article reported that, “... the Soviet army, as per the request of the Hungarian Workers and Peasants Revolutionary Government, went in to help the Hungarian people restore the revolutionary order; they helped from a position of proletarian internationalism, which was completely in accord with the desires of the Hungarian people...”129 Another repeated the sentiment, saying, “The position of the USSR in the Hungarian Incident was that of the just position of proletarian internationalism. The USSR respected the People’s Republic of Hungary’s territory and sovereignty, and did not interfere in their internal affairs. The USSR had no reason to stand idly by when representatives

129 WKPS, ‘Xiong ya li ren min de wei da sheng li (Hungarians’ Great Victory),’ Shijie Zhishi 22 (1956), 3.
of the Hungarian people’s will and interests requested the aid of the USSR, since had they had not helped, the people of socialist Hungary would be reduced to fascist slavery."  

Working in accord with the peoples they helped and following the principles of coexistence defined the internationalist position of the USSR in this propaganda. This was not just another attempt to propose Chinese paths of rectification while still supporting the USSR; it was also used to show that only communist countries could behave in these ways. Another article supports this, writing, “The Hungarian working people’s struggle is not alone or without help. Hungary’s neighboring countries’ working people all show their intimate sympathy for the fate of Hungary’s people and the future of its socialist enterprise. Public opinion in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia all point out the danger of counterrevolutionary restoration in Hungary, and all show support for the Hungarian working people’s struggle to protect the socialist enterprise.”

This was further propagandized by repeated reports of these nations’ rebuilding aid sent to Hungary after the end of the protests. The Chinese were also included; in addition to many general claims of Chinese support for Hungary, one article gave specific examples of Chinese individuals showing their internationalism;

“After reading the news in the papers, every Xinhua printing press workshop and every small group of workers all gathered together to discuss the Hungarian situation. They recognized that the Soviet army’s aid to Hungary was not only in accord with the interests of the Hungarian people, but also unanimously in the interest of the entire socialist camp. Automated press machine worker Qian Yu said, ‘Nagy’s reactionary government has already completely revealed their anti-revolutionary, anti-people face. We can’t let white terror rule Hungary again!’”

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130 NCNA, ‘Qing zhu Xiong ya li ren min de wei da sheng li (Celebrate the Great Victory of the Hungarian People),’ Renmin Ribao, November 5, 1956.
131 NCNA, ‘Ai guo de Xiong ya li ren min, wei bao wei she hui zhu yi, ji bai fan ge ming fu bi er fen dou! (Patriotic Hungarian People, to Protect Socialism, Struggle to Defeat Counterrevolutionary Restoration!),’ Renmin Ribao, November 4, 1956.
132 NCNA, ‘Xiong ya li ren min sheng li xi xun chuan lai shou du ge jie da wei jie da wei zhen fen (News of the Hungarian People’s Victory Reaches and Inspires the Capitol’s People),’ Renmin Ribao, November 7, 1956.
The same article went on to add, “Wangfujing Shopping Center workers all completely believed in the victory of the socialist enterprise in Hungary. They recognized, Hungarian patriots would certainly and had to be victorious. At the same time, from this incident they particularly feel that determining friend from foe and differentiating right from wrong is extremely important.”\textsuperscript{133} Internationalism was again an ideal which required mobilization, and the propaganda on Hungary again proves this link. But as the last quote shows, mobilization did not just mean gathering together to talk or even sending aid; it meant adopting the proper ideology and through that protecting socialism.

After the events in Hungary, the propaganda organs of the CCP added an ‘only if’ to the narrative of unstoppable historical progress; socialism would advance only if the people remained vigilant. While this had been said, if subdued, earlier in Bandung, here in Hungary there was proof that imperialist plots still had some bite to them, and that enemies still lurked within their own country as well. Given the explanation that the Hungarian Incident became violent due largely to Western interference, vigilance against imperialist plots became the main responsibility of all good socialists. As one report stated clearly, “Imperialist countries constantly sent their specially harbored and trained reactionaries and special agents into Hungary to implement activities to undermine the regime; in fact in only the latter half of this year, Hungary arrested forty imperialist special agents.”\textsuperscript{134} The West’s assault on communism was due entirely to the progress of history, since communism was bound to supersede capitalism; “With the wheel of history rolling towards peace, independence, and socialism’s continuing advance, those imperialist reactionary powers whose days are numbered are so terrified, grieved, and infuriated! They fear the existence and unity of socialist countries like they fear the end of the world. They make every attempt to carry out all kinds of plots and plans to overthrow these countries and

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{134} Zhang Ye, ‘Di guo zhu yi guo jia dui Xiong ya li de dian fu huo dong (Imperialist Countries’ Subversive Activities in Hungary),’ \textit{Renmin Ribao}, November 14, 1956.
reclaim power."\textsuperscript{135} Hungary was just one example of this desperation, and there would be many more in the future, as another article points out; "Although imperialism and reactionaries' armed rebellion in Hungary was defeated, they have not lost heart, and are currently inciting a cold war anti-USSR, anti-communist, anti-democratic movement across the world. These new, criminal activities of the imperialist clique are creating a tense international situation, and are pose a grave threat to world peace."\textsuperscript{136} There is nothing surprising in these quotes, except that they admit that the imperialist bloc had more power left to it than admitted previously. The prescription also remained the same; to defeat imperialism’s plots, the populace of all socialist nations needed to be vigilant and aware. However, unlike the anti-Western propaganda from Geneva and Bandung, the search for imperialist plots no longer meant only an external search, but an internal one as well.

In a move that likely led to the excesses of the Great Leap Forward, propaganda on Hungary also stated that enemies existed among the people, counterrevolutionaries who were just waiting for a chance to betray the communist cause. This was a crucial departure from previous propaganda which identified only foreign enemies. Everybody became suspect, which meant that everybody had to be continually displaying their loyalty and commitment to the socialist enterprise lest they be accused of lacking revolutionary ideals, and thus being a counterrevolutionary. In such a climate, it is no far stretch to imagine people constantly raising their estimations of their harvest in order to not appear to be falling behind others. As Hungary proved, even good communists could be fooled into counterrevolutionary activities, so the people thus had to be vigilant against counterrevolutionaries making use of them. One article wrote, “They [the student marchers] requested that the Hungarian Workers Party and government strengthen socialist democracy and improve the living conditions of the people... This march was orderly and peaceful; moreover, it attracted full support from the party,

\textsuperscript{135} NCNA, ‘Wei da de he ping bao wei zhe Su lian wan sui! (Long Live the Great Defenders Peace, the USSR!), Renmin Ribao, November 7, 1956.
\textsuperscript{136} NCNA, ‘He yuan guo ji jin zhang jus hi de zhong da chang yi (An Important Initiative to Relax International Tension), Renmin Ribao, November 19, 1956.
government, and masses... But, in Budapest this peaceful march was used by counterrevolutionaries. They snuck into the ranks of the marchers, and began instigating against the people’s democratic system and against the Soviet Union, and on that evening manufactured an armed rebellion."137 Here, loyal but upset youth were not on guard against counterrevolutionaries and thus were tricked by them into rebelling against the government. Another article stresses how difficult times create confusion, but reminds the reader that proper ideology can overcome smokescreens; “The times may become tense, and those good hearted and clear sighted people can sometimes have their vision clouded, such as in this recent Hungarian Incident, so it is hard to avoid that some people will temporarily not understand. But, if we look to see which side the demons are standing on, who they oppose, and who opposes them, the truth will become apparent.”138 Not even the party was safe either, as Nagy’s government seemed to prove; “After the start of the chaos, the newly created Nagy government, under attack by counterrevolutionary forces, slid backwards step by step.”139 With the threat of counterrevolution coming from both the people and the government, not to mention from imperialists outside the country, the country was essentially urged to be on constant alert against rightists. Anybody who expressed second thoughts could be considered as working against the cause. The solution was to actively and persistently struggle against the forces of counterrevolution, which were loosely defined by propaganda. One article wrote that, “In the past these sorts of circumstances occurred [Hungary and Egypt], and in the future they will probably occur as well. This is because the easing of international tensions is not an automatic process, it will only occur as the accomplishments of the repeated and acute struggle of the

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137 NCNA, ‘Bu da pei si deng di xue sheng ju xing he ping de you xing, fan ge ming fen zi cheng ji hun ru zhi zao wu zhuang bao luan, xiong zheng fu yao qing Su lian zhu jun bang zhu hui fu zhi xu (Budapest and Other Area’s Students Hold a Peaceful March, Counterrevolutionaries Opportunistically Snuck in to Make Armed Rebellion, Hungarian Government Requests USSR Garrison’s Help Restoring Order),’ Renmin Ribao, November 27, 1956.

138 Shu Wu, ‘Shen he mo (God and the Devil),’ Renmin Ribao, November 20, 1956.

139 Shui Tu, ‘Bo lan shi jian he Xiang ya li shi jian (The Poland Incident and the Hungary Incident),’ Shijie Zhishi 22 (1956), 13.
forces of peace against the powers of war."\textsuperscript{140} While the era of Geneva and Bandung had been more conciliatory towards people of different ideologies and systems, Hungary called for determining right from wrong and struggling against the wrong. Only through this constant vigilance and struggle could socialism be successful, so it was the responsibility of all Chinese to do so. This ethic came to define not only the Great Leap Forward, but the next twenty years of Maoist leadership.

Over and above their need to be on constant guard, the Chinese were also inculcated with a sense of responsibility for the success of socialism and for the debt they already owed it for previous successes. This was expressed most often in examples of how Hungarians went beyond the calls of their government, even defying the ‘counterrevolutionary’ Nagy government, to provide extraordinary service to the ideals of communism. In an interview with a Hungarian widow, the press reported that her late husband, “In the moment before he left this world, he used his last dying breath to say two sentences to his wife; ‘Tell Comrade Kadar, tell him to keep heart, and to pay attention to his safety.’ He continued and said, ‘Look after our two children.’ These two sentences were the last words of a warrior who spent his whole life indefatigably fighting for the proletarian cause.”\textsuperscript{141} For a true hero, the party came before their own family; in fact, the hero of this article was reported to have been shot by revolutionaries as he was defending a party building, he came home to his family only once his life was spent. He was not the only hero, as the press also stated that, “But, those once liberated Hungarians resolutely refused to allow counterrevolutionary elements’ plans to succeed. Many security officers loyal to the regime, Communist Party members and patriots from start to finish carried out heroic struggle against the counterrevolutionaries.”\textsuperscript{142} Throughout the country, heroic sacrifice fighting against the counterrevolution was ongoing, according to Chinese propaganda. However, the Chinese had no

\textsuperscript{140} Gu Si, ‘Cong Ai ji shi jian he Xiong ya li shi jian kan dang qian guo ji jus hi (Observing the International Situation from the Egyptian Incident and the Hungarian Incident), Renmin Ribao, November 22, 1956.

\textsuperscript{141} Hu Sisheng, ‘Xiong ya li gong chan dang ren de xie bus hi bai liu de (The Blood of Hungarian Communist Party Members Was Not Shed in Vain),’ Renmin Ribao, November 30, 1956.

\textsuperscript{142} Zhou Meisheng, Liu Jing, ‘Xiong ya li shi jian de qi yin he jing guo (Causes and Effects of the Hungarian Incident), Renmin Ribao, November 10, 1956.
counterrevolution to die fighting against, so another form of heroism was presented to them as their responsibility at the end of the revolution. One editorial wrote, “Two days ago, after the news that the establishment of the Hungary’s Worker and Peasant Revolutionary Government had been spread, the people of the capitol city were all greatly inspired, and from the workshops to the fields, from the classrooms to the stores, all the people were very pleased and with relieved hearts read or heard the news. All work units held meetings and talks, and everybody showed their congratulations to the Hungarian people and their respect for the Soviet army.”143 According to this propaganda, just a day after the Soviet invasion, people throughout Budapest returned to their posts and held meetings to discuss the events. The Kadar government did not even call the meetings; the people were gathering to rectify their ideology and understand the events of the revolution on their own accord. Finally, this work was tied to the success of the revolution against foreign enemies as well, just as the work of common Chinese was portrayed as having an effect on the proceedings of the Geneva Conference. One poet published a poem in the papers saying, “Life begins again! / My Dear friends / The people are brave / The people are confident / Brick by brick / Stone by stone / Build life back up! / The broken, is rebuilt / The dirty, is cleaned! / Listen! Death knells chime in Washington / For Hungarians have already returned to work!”144 When the people labor for the socialist enterprise, Washington and other imperialists mourn, meaning that the work of the common person could move empires. The difference between mobilization stemming from propaganda on Geneva and that on Hungary was that for Geneva, the mobilization was more voluntary and portrayed as exceptional, while for Hungary, mobilization was a responsibility and those who shirked it became counterrevolutionaries.

This turn, from volunteerism to responsibility, from hope for the future to vigilance against reactionaries, from cooperation to struggle, dramatically changed the path of China. Compounded with

143 NCNA, ‘Xiong ya li ren min sheng li xi xun chuan lai shou du ge jie da wei zhen fen (News of the Hungarian People’s Victory Reaches and Inspires the Capitol’s People),’ Renmin Ribao, November 7, 1956.
144 Yuan Shipai, ‘Sheng huo you kai shi le (Life Begins Again),’ Renmin Ribao, December 14, 1956.
the turn for leadership to fall more upon the people, it spelt ruin for the country. The mixing of these ideologies brought forth the disasters of the Hundred Flowers and the Great Leap, as well as influencing the decades of Maoist rule afterwards.

Conclusion

Given the narratives constructed in Hungary, it should come as no surprise that during the Anti-rightist movement in 1957, which followed the Hundred Flowers, dissenters were commonly branded as counterrevolutionaries attempting to create a ‘miniature Hungary.’ Their crimes were portrayed using the same vocabulary and justifications, and indeed they merited the same punishment. Just as in propaganda concerning the Hungarian Revolution, the propaganda organs attempted to build up motives and crimes that would discredit the dissenters of the Hundred Flowers. This sort of interaction again proves how instrumental foreign propaganda was in legitimizing the rule of the Communist Party, as the themes, and even the vocabulary, of foreign news seemed to completely penetrate and intermix with domestic narratives, just as the propaganda organs of the CCP intended. Their plan was to build propaganda campaigns around these events in order to create new morals and values, as well as to activate those ideals and encourage mobilization around the programs of the party. But most importantly, the population was targeted by this propaganda in order to build in them trust in the government, as well as a sense of duty to work for the country.

What is a surprise, however, was the level that the protesters themselves interacted with the propaganda on foreign affairs. Not only did the propaganda ascribe the labels of Hungary upon the protest, some of them took the labels upon themselves; “Once, when Ch’en Ch’i-hsia attended a banquet, a member of Chiang Feng’s anti-Party group admitted right out that their group of people ‘were like the Peteofi Club.’”145 To many others, the Hungarian Revolution was a disheartening event.

which disproved many of the narratives of the global communist movement. In one post-Hundred Flowers confession, a journalist claimed that, "...‘After the Hungarian incident, I came to the conclusion that the Party itself should change. I wanted to join the party in order that I might reform it with bourgeois ideology.’" In a meeting of the China Democratic League held during the Hundred Flowers, one delegate stated,

"... that the Stalinist mistakes in the proletarian dictatorship of the Soviet Union, and the Hungarian incident arising out of the proletarian dictatorship in that country had proved that the political system of the proletarian dictatorship was open to question. He added that the proletarian dictatorship was in effect the dictatorship of the Communist Party. In this way, the Communist Party, in implementing its policies, in exercising its leadership of the country, must first rely on the members of the Communist Party, next rely on the members of the Communist Youth League, then rely on those who had sided with the Party. Under such circumstances, it would be unbelievable if sectarianism, subjectivism and bureaucratism did not emerge..."

The Hundred Flowers Campaign called upon these allied parties to exercise a degree of supervision over the Communist Part in order to help it perform better, but experience and particularly the Hungarian Revolution proved to these parties that no such relationship was possible until the CCP changed the nature of its rule. In essence, despite the attempts of propagandists to continue to build a narrative of leadership based on internationalism, many throughout China were rejecting it.

Not all Chinese rejected the internationalist narrative: others had accepted the narrative of internationalism and in fact wanted to see it developed further. However, while some had clearly accepted the narrative of internationalism, they also used the Hundred Flowers to force it to develop in

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147 China Democratic League, ‘Proletarian dictatorship is the source of sectarianism,’ Kuang Ming Daily, June 10, 1957, in ed. MacFarquhar, 228.
ways that benefitted themselves rather than the government. One paper reported that, “In deciding the pay scales for the old and young workers, their ‘working ages’ have been completely ignored. Young workers are promoted by leaps and bounds while the old ones always remain at the same place under the ironic pretext of protecting their wages. At the time of the Hungarian and Polish incidents, some young workers manifested wavering in their thinking while the old workers maintained a firm standpoint.” The older workers wanted to be compensated better, and used their belief in the propaganda of the party as one of the key reasons for doing so. Once again heralding the upcoming ‘Red vs. Expert’ debate, segments of the people were asking that ideology be given preference over skill. One dissenter complained that there hadn’t been enough propagandizing, saying, “… I feel that we have too few political poems today. Our poems rarely deal with important events... Poems in defense of world peace, like Shih Fang-yü’s Ho-p’ing ti tsui-ch’iang-yin (The Crescendo of Peace), are rare. A few years ago, Yüan Shui-p’o, Kung Mu, and Shao Ou had written various sarcastic poems directed toward our international enemies, but such poems are also decreasing in number.” This poet felt that internationalism needed a more prominent place in ideology, as well as more coverage in the papers. Another thought that propaganda could do a better job of inculcating proper political thought, remarking that, “… poetry differs from political declarations, notices, or addresses. These present themselves to readers without embellishment, and their content is entirely political. The political element in poetry is presented through the figurative structure of art. If in discussing politics we are discussing the principal ideology of our era, the spirit of victory and popular thought, then poetry can give expression to this ideology without mentioning its name, footnoting, or direct propagandizing.”

He goes on to conclude later that, “Political poetry is the weapon by which a poet participates in the

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struggle... the poet can also use poetry as a trumpet, as a torch or a war drum with which to summon his comrades and lead them in the fight against the enemy. This is the highest goal of political poetry.”

This critique is more than one of style; it is a critique of the movement from propaganda to mobilization. Propaganda can inform, it can even teach, but the author argues that it cannot effectively mobilize the population; only non-state factors can incite the people to act upon their norms. It is essentially up to those outside the communist party to mobilize for the party’s goals. So, many throughout China did not dispute the leadership of the party, nor the national identity which the CCP wanted to build, but instead argued for a restructuring of both that would provide the people with more responsibility.

The CCP wanted to have its people believing in the leadership of the party and that hard work was rewarded by a better global system and stronger societies. Internationalism was the tool that the CCP used to attain both of these goals, and they built this narrative through events such as the Geneva Conference, the Bandung Conference, and the Hungarian Revolution. The evaluation of propaganda in support of this thesis reveals more than just a reconstructed narrative; in addition to tracing the buildup of the internationalist propaganda campaign, it has also made several contributions to the understanding of the CCP and the circumstances of the Chinese state during the First Five Year Plan.

Among the most useful discoveries is that Chinese propaganda frequently used foreign events to discuss their internal problems. As problems mounted during the First Five Year Plan, and tensions grew within the Sino-Soviet alliance, the Chinese were unwilling to discuss these issues openly. However, these problems were often exported, ascribed to other countries rather than China, and discussed as if it were a foreign policy issue. Through foreign propaganda, the party could then discuss how to resolve these problems and reassure the people that appropriate steps were being taken, all without admitting to any fault made by themselves. Further study of China’s foreign news could then provide greater understanding of the internal affairs of the country. This practice was evident throughout the period,

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151 I Hsing, 56.
and particularly in relation to the Hungarian Revolution, when nearly every grievance attributed to the Hungarian protestors related to Chinese difficulties.

The second contribution is to delve into the minds of the party center. If the CCP believed in internationalism as they preached it in their propaganda, then their decision to launch the Great Leap Forward becomes more understandable. The Great Leap was, after all, a policy meant to overtake Britain in economic production. More than just national pride or becoming independent from the Soviets, they saw the need to surpass imperialist powers as their responsibility; by leaving imperialism in the economic dust, it would prevent future conflicts from occurring. Proletarian internationalism called on them to make the revolution victorious for the sake of the other oppressed people around the world. Similarly, if the people believed in internationalism their passion for the Great Leap could be contextualized. Their overestimation of crop hauls and overwork at the disastrous enterprises of backyard furnaces, among others, wasn’t just a fit of madness brought about by Mao’s utopian vision, but the result of years of indoctrination. The ability of the Chinese worker to contribute to international problems expressed in Geneva, the tides of history presented in Bandung, and the vigilance against counterrevolutionaries preached in response to the Hungarian Revolution all contributed to the ethic which sent the Great Leap down its deadly path. If even a segment of the people believed the narratives taught to them via propaganda, which the materials of the Hundred Flowers suggests, then the road to destruction had been paved before Mao first declared that China could surpass Britain.

However, the major finding of this study is a new perspective on the buildup to both the Hundred Flowers and the Great Leap Forward. The Hundred Flowers campaign was quite obviously a reaction to the events in Hungary, but the Hungarian Revolution didn’t just cause the CCP to consult their people, it built an ideological foundation upon which interaction between the party and people needed to be built. The propaganda’s reaction to Hungary, which claimed that the prime mistake of the Hungarian communists was inattention towards the will of their people, meant that the relationship
between the people and the party had to be reevaluated. The people needed to be more engaged with the affairs of the state, and more importantly, more relied upon to carry out certain duties on their own. The Great Leap devolved the responsibility of economic construction down to the people, through the medium of the commune, making the people rather than the party's central economic planners more responsible for the growth of the country.

In this light, both the Hundred Flowers and the Great Leap Forward mark attempts to return responsibility to the people and then harness the energies then released to build the country, ones that correlate directly to the two major themes in propaganda; leadership and hard work. The Hundred Flowers invited the people to engage with the party to make the leadership of the communists more effective and responsive, while the Great Leap called for the hard work of the people to build a stronger country in record time. This was not just a solution caused by the challenge posed to communist ideology by the Hungarian Revolution, but only the latest development in a long campaign to establish legitimacy for the party's leadership of China and to build a national character which would work tirelessly for the good of the country and the global communist movement.