

# Chinese move toward Moscow and away from Washington

by Richard Katz

Evidence is mounting that in the weeks following the September Chinese Communist Party Congress, Peking made a decision to sharply downgrade its previous strategic alignment with the United States. At the same time, the Chinese talks with the Soviet Union are producing a rapprochement between the two countries at a faster pace than almost anyone had previously imagined.

It is not known exactly what occurred in the secret talks in Peking. However, the Chinese must have been pleased since they agreed to full, continuous resumption of formal negotiations to normalize relations. The delegation, originally in China for only a short visit, will now stay in Peking indefinitely. Talks will alternate between Peking and Moscow.

With these moves, Peking has torn up the "China Card"—the 12-year illusion of Kissinger, Brzezinski, and Haig that the United States could deal with the Soviet Union through geopolitical gimmicks instead of genuine economic and military strength.

The most important developments in Peking's policy shift are:

- a scorching blast at U.S. policy by Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua to the New York Council on Foreign Relations in which Huang Hua accused Washington of increasing the obstacles to U.S.-Chinese relations and demanded to know, "Does the U.S. government regard China as a friend or an adversary?";

- an unprecedented criticism of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty by a leading Chinese official while on a trip to Tokyo;

- Chinese Communist Party Secretary-General Hu Yaobang's comment to visiting French Communist Party chief-tain George Marchais that China would like not only improved state-to-state relations with the Soviet Union but a restoration of party-to-party ties with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; and

- Soviet leaks to Japanese politicians that they would be willing to withdraw troops from the Chinese border if the Chinese also pull back, an unprecedented offer that meets one of the Chinese demands for "normalization."

Though some of the ascending Chinese political factions are definitely communist ideologues, the most important factor in China's turn away from the United States and toward fence-mending with Moscow is not ideology. Rather, it is China's perception of growing U.S. economic, military, and

diplomatic weakness. Ironically, this weakness was caused by the "technetronic" economic and military policies of precisely the same U.S. factions who pushed the China Card as the appropriate geopolitics of the post-industrial era. In other words, these factions destroyed their own "card."

The Chinese press now continually harps on the weakness of the United States in the face of the Soviets, and on the weakening of the U.S. economy. Earlier, Peking had felt that allying with the United States was its own best bet for access to the equipment needed for industrial and military modernization. Now, Peking is no longer so sure. If a war occurs between the two superpowers, as China warns, the Chinese would like to remain neutral. If they cannot avoid taking sides, they have no intention of allying with the geopolitical loser.

## China: "We're nobody's card"

Peking has been distancing itself from Washington slowly but surely ever since the beginning of the year, as *EIR* discussed in its March 16 cover story. However, Foreign Minister Huang Hua's Oct. 6 speech indicates that a policy decision has likely been made to move even further. Huang Hua went beyond China's customary complaints about Taiwan to accuse Washington of *increasing* the restrictions on exports of military-related high-technology goods to China and of *increasing* the barriers to Chinese exports to the United States.

To add insult to injury, Huang reminded his American audience that, the Shanghai II communiqué notwithstanding, "Our government has repeatedly stated that it will never make any commitment to any foreign country that it will not use force with regard to Taiwan."

Huang's acid comments reportedly stunned the Council on Foreign Relations attendees, since he had been viewed as one of the prime architects of Peking's previous "America Card" policy. That policy no longer pertained, the Chinese Foreign Minister told his audience. "China neither plays the U.S. card nor the Soviet card," he insisted. "At the same time, *we will never permit others to take China as a card.*" Premier Zhao Ziyang used the same expression in private talks with visiting Henry Kissinger the same week.

Even more astonishing, according to the October 10 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Chinese official Sun Pinghua told Tokyo re-

porters that China now opposes the longstanding Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, which Peking had previously supported. "China's mass media have never reported China's support of the Japan-U.S. security setup," declared Sun, who was in Tokyo for a three-day conference as head of the China-Japan Friendship Association. "In principle it is not a good thing for an independent nation to be supported by another nation," Sun added.

### **Tilt toward the Third World**

China's attempt to weaken Japan's ties to the United States is only one element of the new "Third Worldist" posture stressed by Peking. China now calls itself "a socialist country belonging to the Third World." Both parts of the term are important, but two opposing factions in Peking stress different aspects. The ruling Dengist faction has dropped China's previous alignment with the United States in favor of a "Third World" stance of opposition to both "hegemonist superpowers," i.e. the United States and Soviet Union. The Dengists are trying to recruit to China's side not only the developing countries, but also those it calls the "Second World," i.e. Europe and Japan. Thus, the new opposition to the U.S.-Japan Treaty emerges at the same time that Peking is stepping up its economic cooperation with Japan. Peking wants Japan to act as a "Second World" nation, not as an ally of the United States.

The Dengists want a new kind of non-alignment in which China will still retain close ties with the rest of the West but less so with the United States. This was reflected in an Oct. 7 editorial in the Hong Kong Communist paper *Wen Wei Po* "During its recent talks with the United States, China did not denounce the Soviet Union for its "hegemonist" and territorial expansionism. This does not mean that China will no longer oppose the "hegemonism" that the Soviet Union is pursuing. It demonstrates, rather, that China will . . . not stand on the side of the United States to combat the Soviet Union. However, China's policy toward the U.S.S.R. was mentioned during the recent Sino-Japanese and Sino-British talks. This shows China will strictly abide by its independent principles in its relations with the Soviet Union and the United States."

### **Leaning toward the Soviet Union**

A faction that opposes Deng domestically and is gaining strength—a coalition of the Army and the heavy-industry proponents—wants to go even further. They want to "lean toward" the Soviet Union while remaining non-aligned. They do not wish to restore the 1950s domination by the Soviet "big brother." However, as shown by growing visits by Chinese economists to the Soviet Union, this Army-heavy industry faction views the Soviet economic model as more successful than Deng's anti-industry pogroms; they want a return to centrally planned industrial and military buildup. They emphasize the "socialist" part of the "socialist country belonging to the Third World" label. Since this faction great-

ly increased its strength at the September Party Congress, (see *EIR*, Sept. 27), the Dengists have had to make compromises with it.

The results are seen in the current Sino-Soviet talks. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Leonid Ilyichov arrived in Peking in early October to resume "normalization talks" for the first time since Peking suspended them in 1979 after the Afghanistan invasion. China announced three preconditions for normalizing relations: Soviet pullback from Afghanistan; Soviet pressure for Vietnamese troop withdrawal from Kampuchea; and settlement of the Sino-Soviet border disputes including Soviet troop pullback from the border.

Knowledgeable observers regarded the final condition as the most important. They were struck by the rapidity of a Soviet announcement of apparent willingness to agree on troop cutbacks. On Oct. 14, Japan's Kyodo press reported that Ivan Kovalenko, deputy chief of the Soviet Communist Party International Affairs Bureau, told a visiting Japanese Socialist Party leader that the Soviet Union would meet China's demand for a drastic Soviet troop pullback if China also pulled back. Moscow has never before made such an offer.

Chinese Communist Secretary-General Hu Yaobang commented to reporters, "The Chinese side sincerely hopes the obstacles to normalization of relations will be removed so that relations between the two countries will embark on the road of healthy development."

Hu went even further in a meeting with French Communist Party (PCF) chieftain Georges Marchais. The CCP just restored party ties to the PCF, having broken them in 1965. Marchais had been regarded, at least in part, as an intermediary for the Soviets. He seems to have obtained some results, for he told the press that Hu had said to him, "It is a pity that ties between the CCP and the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) were interrupted such a long time ago," and expressed a desire to end the rupture.

Moscow is sending out almost daily overtures to the Army-heavy industry faction. In an Oct. 5 broadcast "Program for Chinese Soldiers" Soviet Radio warned that the Reagan administration's "target is to wipe out socialism," and that "several hundred nuclear warheads have been directed at all the socialist nations, *including China* [emphasis added]." The broadcast concluded that the best way to stop "the imperialist's adventurism" was for all "socialist nations," presumably including China, to conduct joint military coordination."

Kissinger and the State Department are putting out the word that nothing is happening in the Sino-Soviet talks, that China is just playing hard to get, to strike a better bargain with the United States. However, as a U.S. specialist on the Chinese military warns, "Something is definitely up between the Chinese and the Soviets. The Chinese are not just playing maneuvering games. I see things happening I didn't see six months ago. I don't know how far it will go, but Washington had better pay attention."