

China Report by Michael O. Billington

China held up as slave labor model

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali tells the world to follow the slave-labor policies of Deng Xiaoping.

China's deal with the "new world order" envisioned by George Bush and Anglo-American financial interests took a leap forward in mid-April as several spokesmen for the U.N. and the bankrupt financial institutions in the West heaped praise on China as a model for the Third World.

One reason for this praise is that China has continued to refrain from the use of its veto power in the U.N. Security Council, abstaining on the vote to impose sanctions on Libya, just as it abstained on the votes that unleashed the U.S. war against Iraq last year. In return, U.N. and Anglo-American leaders have continued to prop up the bloody Deng Xiaoping regime, ignoring atrocities and human rights violations in China far worse than those that draw economic and military attacks in other parts of the world.

The second reason is that Deng is imposing reforms under the direction of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank which have turned the Chinese population into an unlimited pool of dirt-cheap labor for western speculators. While China is constantly reported in the West to be experiencing prosperity, the infrastructure of the vast nation is collapsing, while the export zones provide a gloss of wealth for the few through speculation, drugs, and cheap labor sweat shops.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, chairing a meeting of the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in Beijing April 14, devoted most of his

speech to effusive praise of the dictatorship, without once referring to the massacre of June 4, 1989, or the suppression of basic freedom of thought.

Said Boutros-Ghali: "The hosting of this foremost regional intergovernmental forum is a further indication of China's commitment to the promotion of international cooperation and multilateralism, and the role of China in promoting awareness of the problems and needs of the Third World." He paid tribute to "the commitment of China to the achievement of the economic and social goals of the United Nations and to China's historic solidarity with the developing countries in their efforts to realize the right to development for their peoples."

Such hypocrisy stems from the fact that the IMF is imposing on eastern Europe the same "shock therapy" policies it has imposed on the Third World over the past 20 years: shutting down government support for the population and state-sector industries, while reducing the standard of living to starvation levels. China is the model, where the unskilled labor in export industries is paid about 1% of the wage paid in the advanced sector. This slave wage is guaranteed by the vast pool of 150-200 million unemployed, desperate peasants.

Those backing shock therapy joined the chorus of praise for China's "successful economic policies." Allan Meltzer of the American Enterprise Institute argued, at a debate over aid for Russia, that no aid is needed. "China, with little aid, but a lot of trade, has been helped quite a bit,"

claimed Meltzer. "That is, we may not like their politics, but their economics have been pretty effective. They freed agriculture, they opened up industrial zones, they established the rules of a market system and a market order. They allowed people to profit . . . and the result is that their exports are growing very rapidly."

This follows the argument of Harvard's Marshall Goldman, whose recent book *What Went Wrong With Perestroika* (see "Sovietologist Still in Love with Gorbys," *EIR*, April 17, 1992), argues that the Soviet failure could have been avoided if Gorbachov had only imitated Deng Xiaoping's free trade zone policies. These "free trade" advocates apparently agree with Deng that free trade is best enforced through the liberal use of tanks and machine guns.

In Asia, the chorus of support for Deng's regime is backed by the elder statesman of Singapore, former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Lee provided an interview to the U.S.-based magazine *New Perspective Quarterly*, published by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, an organization which interfaces the drug lobby and the junk bond set on Wall Street. Lee praises Deng, and claims that China is "sloughing off not just the communist system but also those outdated parts of Confucianism that prevent the rapid acquisition of knowledge needed to adjust to new ways of life and work."

Singapore Foreign Minister Wong Kan Seng went further, adopting the British racist argument that democracy is bad for Asians. Said Wong: "A vast and ancient country of more than 1 billion people can never be governed as a 'democracy' in the western sense. Pressures by the West on China to adopt their models of democracy and human rights which ignore this reality will do more harm than good."