

# The People's Republic Of China: III

## The Cultural Revolution Decade, 1966-76

In the early 1960s, Mao was on the political sidelines and in semiseclusion. By 1962, however, he began an offensive to purify the party, having grown increasingly uneasy about what he believed were the creeping "capitalist" and antisocialist tendencies in the country. As a hardened veteran revolutionary who had overcome the severest adversities, Mao continued to believe that the material incentives that had been restored to the peasants and others were corrupting the masses and were counterrevolutionary.

To arrest the so-called capitalist trend, Mao launched the Socialist Education Movement (1962-65), in which the primary emphasis was on restoring ideological purity, reinfusing revolutionary fervor into the party and government bureaucracies, and intensifying class struggle. There were internal disagreements, however, not on the aim of the movement but on the methods of carrying it out. Opposition came mainly from the moderates represented by Liu Shaoqi (劉少奇) and Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平), who were unsympathetic to Mao's policies. The Socialist Education Movement was soon paired with another Mao campaign, the theme of which was "to learn from the People's Liberation Army." Minister of National Defense Lin Biao's rise to the center of power was increasingly conspicuous. It was accompanied by his call on the PLA and the CCP to accentuate Maoist thought as the guiding principle for the Socialist Education Movement and for all revolutionary undertakings in China.

In connection with the Socialist Education Movement, a thorough reform of the school system, which had been planned earlier to coincide with the Great Leap Forward, went into effect. The reform was intended as a work-study program--a new xiafang movement--in which schooling was slated to accommodate the work schedule of communes and factories. It had the dual purpose of providing mass education less expensively than previously and of re-educating intellectuals and scholars to accept the need for their own participation in manual labor. The drafting of intellectuals for manual labor was part of the party's rectification campaign, publicized through the mass media as an effort to remove "bourgeois" influences from professional workers--particularly, their tendency to have greater regard for their own specialized fields than for the goals of the party. Official propaganda accused them of being more concerned with having "expertise" than being "red" .

### The Militant Phase, 1966-68

By mid-1965 Mao had gradually but systematically regained control of the party with the support of Lin Biao (林彪), Jiang Qing (江青 Mao's fourth wife), and Chen Boda (陳伯達), a leading theoretician. In late 1965 a leading member of Mao's "Shanghai Mafia," Yao Wenyuan (姚文元), wrote a thinly veiled attack on the deputy mayor of Beijing, Wu Han (吳晗). In the next six months, under the guise of upholding ideological purity, Mao and his supporters purged or attacked a wide variety of public figures,

including State Chairman Liu Shaoqi and other party and state leaders. By mid-1966 Mao's campaign had erupted into what came to be known as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (**文化大革命**), the first mass action to have emerged against the CCP apparatus itself.

Considerable intraparty opposition to the Cultural Revolution was evident. On the one side was the Mao-Lin Biao group, supported by the PLA; on the other side was a faction led by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, which had its strength in the regular party machine. Premier Zhou Enlai, while remaining personally loyal to Mao, tried to mediate or to reconcile the two factions.

Mao felt that he could no longer depend on the formal party organization, convinced that it had been permeated with the "capitalist" and bourgeois obstructionists. He turned to Lin Biao and the PLA to counteract the influence of those who were allegedly "'left' in form but 'right' in essence." The PLA was widely extolled as a "great school" for the training of a new generation of revolutionary fighters and leaders. Maoists also turned to middle-school students for political demonstrations on their behalf. These students, joined also by some university students, came to be known as the Red Guards. Millions of Red Guards were encouraged by the Cultural Revolution group to become a "shock force" and to "bombard" with criticism both the regular party headquarters in Beijing and those at the regional and provincial levels.

Red Guard activities were promoted as a reflection of Mao's policy of rekindling revolutionary enthusiasm and destroying "outdated," "counterrevolutionary" symbols and values. Mao's ideas, popularized in the Quotations from Chairman Mao, became the standard by which all revolutionary efforts were to be judged. The "four big rights"--speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates, and writing big-character posters--became an important factor in encouraging Mao's youthful followers to criticize his intraparty rivals. The "four big rights" became such a major feature during the period that they were later institutionalized in the state constitution of 1975. The result of the unfettered criticism of established organs of control by China's exuberant youth was massive civil disorder, punctuated also by clashes among rival Red Guard gangs and between the gangs and local security authorities. The party organization was shattered from top to bottom. (The Central Committee's Secretariat ceased functioning in late 1966.) The resources of the public security organs were severely strained. Faced with imminent anarchy, the PLA--the only organization whose ranks for the most part had not been radicalized by Red Guard-style activities--emerged as the principal guarantor of law and order and the de facto political authority. And although the PLA was under Mao's rallying call to "support the left," PLA regional military commanders ordered their forces to restrain the leftist radicals, thus restoring order throughout much of China. The PLA also was responsible for the appearance in early 1967 of the revolutionary committees, a new form of local control that replaced local party committees and administrative bodies. The revolutionary committees were staffed with Cultural Revolution activists, trusted cadres, and military commanders, the latter frequently holding the greatest power.

The radical tide receded somewhat beginning in late 1967, but it was not until after mid-1968 that Mao came to realize the uselessness of further revolutionary violence. Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and their fellow "revisionists" and "capitalist roaders" had been purged from public life by early 1967, and the Maoist group had since been in full command of the political scene.

Viewed in larger perspective, the need for domestic calm and stability was occasioned perhaps even more by pressures emanating from outside China. The Chinese were alarmed in 1966-68 by steady Soviet military buildups along their common border. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 heightened Chinese apprehensions. In March 1969 Chinese and Soviet troops clashed on Zhenbao Island (known to the Soviets as Damanskiy Island) in the disputed Wusuli Jiang (Ussuri River) border area. The tension on the border had a sobering effect on the fractious Chinese political scene and provided the regime with a new and unifying rallying call.

### **The Ninth National Party Congress to the Demise of Lin Biao, 1969-71**

The activist phase of the Cultural Revolution--considered to be the first in a series of cultural revolutions--was brought to an end in April 1969. This end was formally signaled at the CCP's Ninth National Party Congress, which convened under the dominance of the Maoist group. Mao was confirmed as the supreme leader. Lin Biao was promoted to the post of CCP vice chairman and was named as Mao's successor. Others who had risen to power by means of Cultural Revolution machinations were rewarded with positions on the Political Bureau; a significant number of military commanders were appointed to the Central Committee. The party congress also marked the rising influence of two opposing forces, Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, and Premier Zhou Enlai.

The general emphasis after 1969 was on reconstruction through rebuilding of the party, economic stabilization, and greater sensitivity to foreign affairs. Pragmatism gained momentum as a central theme of the years following the Ninth National Party Congress, but this tendency was paralleled by efforts of the radical group to reassert itself. The radical group--Kang Sheng (康生), Xie Fuzhi (谢富治), Jiang Qing (江青), Zhang Chunqiao (张春桥), Yao Wenyuan (姚文元), and Wang Hongwen (王洪文)--no longer had Mao's unqualified support. By 1970 Mao viewed his role more as that of the supreme elder statesman than of an activist in the policy-making process. This was probably the result as much of his declining health as of his view that a stabilizing influence should be brought to bear on a divided nation. As Mao saw it, China needed both pragmatism and revolutionary enthusiasm, each acting as a check on the other. Factional infighting would continue unabated through the mid-1970s, although an uneasy coexistence was maintained while Mao was alive.

The rebuilding of the CCP got under way in 1969. The process was difficult, however, given the pervasiveness of factional tensions and the discord carried over from the Cultural Revolution years. Differences persisted among the military, the party, and left-dominated mass organizations over a wide range of policy issues, to say nothing of the radical-moderate rivalry. It was not until December 1970 that a party committee could be

reestablished at the provincial level. In political reconstruction two developments were noteworthy. As the only institution of power for the most part left unscathed by the Cultural Revolution, the PLA was particularly important in the politics of transition and reconstruction. The PLA was, however, not a homogeneous body. In 1970-71 Zhou Enlai was able to forge a centrist-rightist alliance with a group of PLA regional military commanders who had taken exception to certain of Lin Biao's policies. This coalition paved the way for a more moderate party and government leadership in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The PLA was divided largely on policy issues. On one side of the infighting was the Lin Biao faction, which continued to exhort the need for "politics in command" and for an unremitting struggle against both the Soviet Union and the United States. On the other side was a majority of the regional military commanders, who had become concerned about the effect Lin Biao's political ambitions would have on military modernization and economic development. These commanders' views generally were in tune with the positions taken by Zhou Enlai and his moderate associates. Specifically, the moderate groups within the civilian bureaucracy and the armed forces spoke for more material incentives for the peasantry, efficient economic planning, and a thorough reassessment of the Cultural Revolution. They also advocated improved relations with the West in general and the United States in particular--if for no other reason than to counter the perceived expansionist aims of the Soviet Union. Generally, the radicals' objection notwithstanding, the Chinese political tide shifted steadily toward the right of center. Among the notable achievements of the early 1970s was China's decision to seek rapprochement with the United States, as dramatized by President Richard M. Nixon's visit in February 1972. In September 1972 diplomatic relations were established with Japan.

Without question, the turning point in the decade of the Cultural Revolution was Lin Biao's abortive coup attempt and his subsequent death in a plane crash as he fled China in September 1971. The immediate consequence was a steady erosion of the fundamentalist influence of the left-wing radicals. Lin Biao's closest supporters were purged systematically. Efforts to depoliticize and promote professionalism were intensified within the PLA. These were also accompanied by the rehabilitation of those persons who had been persecuted or fallen into disgrace in 1966-68.

### **End of the Era of Mao Zedong, 1972-76**

Among the most prominent of those rehabilitated was Deng Xiaoping, who was reinstated as a vice premier in April 1973, ostensibly under the aegis of Premier Zhou Enlai but certainly with the concurrence of Mao Zedong. Together, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping came to exert strong influence. Their moderate line favoring modernization of all sectors of the economy was formally confirmed at the Tenth National Party Congress in August 1973, at which time Deng Xiaoping was made a member of the party's Central Committee (but not yet of the Political Bureau).

The radical camp fought back by building an armed urban militia, but its mass base of support was limited to Shanghai and parts of northeastern China--hardly sufficient to

arrest what it denounced as "revisionist" and "capitalist" tendencies. In January 1975 Zhou Enlai, speaking before the Fourth National People's Congress, outlined a program of what has come to be known as the Four Modernizations for the four sectors of agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology. This program would be reaffirmed at the Eleventh National Party Congress, which convened in August 1977. Also in January 1975, Deng Xiaoping's position was solidified by his election as a vice chairman of the CCP and as a member of the Political Bureau and its Standing Committee. Deng also was installed as China's first civilian chief of PLA General Staff Department.

The year 1976 saw the deaths of the three most senior officials in the CCP and the state apparatus: Zhou Enlai in January, Zhu De (then chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and de jure head of state) in July, and Mao Zedong in September. In April of the same year, masses of demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in Beijing memorialized Zhou Enlai and criticized Mao's closest associates, Zhou's opponents. In June the government announced that Mao would no longer receive foreign visitors. In July an earthquake devastated the city of Tangshan (唐山) in Hebei Province. These events, added to the deaths of the three Communist leaders, contributed to a popular sense that the "mandate of heaven" had been withdrawn from the ruling party. At best the nation was in a state of serious political uncertainty.

Deng Xiaoping, the logical successor as premier, received a temporary setback after Zhou's death, when radicals launched a major counterassault against him. In April 1976 Deng was once more removed from all his public posts, and a relative political unknown, Hua Guofeng (華國鋒), a Political Bureau member, vice premier, and minister of public security, was named acting premier and party first vice chairman.

Even though Mao Zedong's role in political life had been sporadic and shallow in his later years, it was crucial. Despite Mao's alleged lack of mental acuity, his influence in the months before his death remained such that his orders to dismiss Deng and appoint Hua Guofeng were accepted immediately by the Political Bureau. The political system had polarized in the years before Mao's death into increasingly bitter and irreconcilable factions. While Mao was alive--and playing these factions off against each other--the contending forces were held in check. His death resolved only some of the problems inherent in the succession struggle.

The radical clique most closely associated with Mao and the Cultural Revolution became vulnerable after Mao died, as Deng had been after Zhou Enlai's demise. In October, less than a month after Mao's death, Jiang Qing and her three principal associates--denounced as the Gang of Four (四人幫)--were arrested with the assistance of two senior Political Bureau members, Minister of National Defense Ye Jianying (葉劍英 1897-1986) and Wang Dongxing (汪東興), commander of the CCP's elite bodyguard. Within days it was formally announced that Hua Guofeng had assumed the positions of party chairman, chairman of the party's Central Military Commission, and premier.

# The People's Republic Of China: IV

## The Post-Mao Period, 1976-78

The jubilation following the incarceration of the Gang of Four and the popularity of the new ruling triumvirate (Hua Guofeng 華國鋒, Ye Jianying 葉劍英, and Li Xiannian 李先念, a temporary alliance of necessity) were succeeded by calls for the restoration to power of Deng Xiaoping (鄧小平) and the elimination of leftist influence throughout the political system. By July 1977, at no small risk to undercutting Hua Guofeng's legitimacy as Mao's successor and seeming to contradict Mao's apparent will, the Central Committee exonerated Deng Xiaoping from responsibility for the Tiananmen Square incident (天安門事件). Deng admitted some shortcomings in the events of 1975, and finally, at a party Central Committee session, he resumed all the posts from which he had been removed in 1976.

The post-Mao political order was given its first vote of confidence at the Eleventh National Party Congress, held August 12-18, 1977. Hua was confirmed as party chairman, and Ye Jianying, Deng Xiaoping, Li Xiannian, and Wang Dongxing (汪東興) were elected vice chairmen. The congress proclaimed the formal end of the Cultural Revolution, blamed it entirely on the Gang of Four, and reiterated that "the fundamental task of the party in the new historical period is to build China into a modern, powerful socialist country by the end of the twentieth century." Many contradictions still were apparent, however, in regard to the Maoist legacy and the possibility of future cultural revolutions.

The new balance of power clearly was unsatisfactory to Deng, who sought genuine party reform and, soon after the National Party Congress, took the initiative to reorganize the bureaucracy and redirect policy. His longtime protege Hu Yaobang (胡耀邦) replaced Hua supporter Wang Dongxing as head of the CCP Organization Department. Educational reforms were instituted, and Cultural Revolution-era verdicts on literature, art, and intellectuals were overturned. The year 1978 proved a crucial one for the reformers. Differences among the two competing factions--that headed by Hua Guofeng (soon to be branded as a leftist) and that led by Deng and the more moderate figures--became readily apparent by the time the Fifth National People's Congress was held in February and March 1978. Serious disputes arose over the apparently disproportionate development of the national economy, the Hua forces calling for still more large-scale projects that China could ill afford. In the face of substantive losses in leadership positions and policy decisions, the leftists sought to counterattack with calls for strict adherence to Mao Zedong Thought and the party line of class struggle. Rehabilitations of Deng's associates and others sympathetic to his reform plans were stepped up. Not only were many of those purged during the Cultural Revolution returned to power, but individuals who had fallen from favor as early as the mid-1950s were rehabilitated. It was a time of increased political activism by students, whose big-character posters attacking Deng's opponents--and even Mao himself--appeared with regularity.

## China and the Four Modernizations, 1979-82

The culmination of Deng Xiaoping's re-ascent to power and the start in earnest of political, economic, social, and cultural reforms were achieved at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh National Party Congress Central Committee in December 1978. The Third Plenum is considered a major turning point in modern Chinese political history. "Left" mistakes committed before and during the Cultural Revolution were "corrected," and the "two whatevers" (兩圖凡是) policy ("support whatever policy decisions Chairman Mao made and follow whatever instructions Chairman Mao gave") was repudiated. The classic party line calling for protracted class struggle was officially exchanged for one promoting the Four Modernizations. In the future, the attainment of economic goals would be the measure of the success or failure of policies and individual leadership; in other words, economics, not politics, was in command. To effect such a broad policy redirection, Deng placed key allies on the Political Bureau (including Chen Yun 陳雲 as an additional vice chairman and Hu Yaobang as a member) while positioning Hu Yaobang as secretary general of the CCP and head of the party's Propaganda Department. Although assessments of the Cultural Revolution and Mao were deferred, a decision was announced on "historical questions left over from an earlier period." The 1976 Tiananmen Square incident, the 1959 removal of Peng Dehuai (彭德懷), and other now infamous political machinations were reversed in favor of the new leadership. New agricultural policies intended to loosen political restrictions on peasants and allow them to produce more on their own initiative were approved.

Rapid change occurred in the subsequent months and years. The year 1979 witnessed the formal exchange of diplomatic recognition between the People's Republic and the United States, a border war between China and Vietnam, the fledgling "democracy movement" (which had begun in earnest in November 1978), and the determination not to extend the thirty-year-old Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union. All these events led to some criticism of Deng Xiaoping, who had to alter his strategy temporarily while directing his own political warfare against Hua Guofeng and the leftist elements in the party and government. As part of this campaign, a major document was presented at the September 1979 Fourth Plenum of the Eleventh National Party Congress Central Committee, giving a "preliminary assessment" of the entire thirty-year period of Communist rule. At the plenum, party Vice Chairman Ye Jianying pointed out the achievements of the CCP while admitting that the leadership had made serious political errors affecting the people. Furthermore, Ye declared the Cultural Revolution "an appalling catastrophe" and "the most severe setback to [the] socialist cause since [1949]." Although Mao was not specifically blamed, there was no doubt about his share of responsibility. The plenum also marked official acceptance of a new ideological line that called for "seeking truth from facts" and of other elements of Deng Xiaoping's thinking. A further setback for Hua was the approval of the resignations of other leftists from leading party and state posts. In the months following the plenum, a party rectification campaign ensued, replete with a purge of party members whose political credentials were largely achieved as a result of the Cultural Revolution. The campaign went beyond the civilian ranks of the CCP, extending to party members in the PLA as well.

Economic advances and political achievements had strengthened the position of the Deng reformists enough that by February 1980 they were able to call the Fifth Plenum of the Eleventh National Party Congress Central Committee. One major effect of the plenum was the resignation of the members of the "Little Gang of Four" (an allusion to the original Gang of Four, Mao's allies)--Hua's closest collaborators and the backbone of opposition to Deng. Wang Dongxing, Wu De, Ji Dengkui, and Chen Xilian were charged with "grave [but unspecified] errors" in the struggle against the Gang of Four and demoted from the Political Bureau to mere Central Committee membership. In turn, the Central Committee elevated Deng's proteges Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang (趙紫陽) to the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau and the newly restored party Secretariat. Under the title of secretary general, Hu Yaobang took over day-to-day running of the party. Especially poignant was the posthumous rehabilitation of the late president and one-time successor to Mao, Liu Shaoqi (劉少奇), at the Fifth Plenum. Finally, at the Fifth National People's Congress session in August and September that year, Deng's preeminence in government was consolidated when he gave up his vice premiership and Hua Guofeng resigned as premier in favor of Zhao Ziyang.

One of the more spectacular political events of modern Chinese history was the month-long trial of the Gang of Four and six of Lin Biao's (林彪) closest associates. A 35-judge special court was convened in November 1980 and issued a 20,000-word indictment against the defendants. The indictment came more than four years after the arrest of Jiang Qing (江青) and her associates and more than nine years after the arrests of the Lin Biao group. Beyond the trial of ten political pariahs, it appeared that the intimate involvement of Mao Zedong, current party chairman Hua Guofeng, and the CCP itself were on trial. The prosecution wisely separated political errors from actual crimes. Among the latter were the usurpation of state power and party leadership; the persecution of some 750,000 people, 34,375 of whom died during the period 1966-76; and, in the case of the Lin Biao defendants, the plotting of the assassination of Mao. In January 1981 the court rendered guilty verdicts against the ten. Jiang Qing, despite her spirited self-vindication and defense of her late husband, received a death sentence with a two-year suspension; later, Jiang Qing's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. So enduring was Mao's legacy that Jiang Qing appeared to be protected by it from execution. The same sentence was given to Zhang Chunqiao, while Wang Hongwen was given life and Yao Wenyuan twenty years. Chen Boda and the other Lin Biao faction members were given sentences of between sixteen and eighteen years. The net effect of the trial was a further erosion of Mao's prestige and the system he created. In pre-trial meetings, the party Central Committee posthumously expelled CCP vice chairman Kang Sheng and Political Bureau member Xie Fuzhi from the party because of their participation in the "counterrevolutionary plots" of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing. The memorial speeches delivered at their funerals were also rescinded. There was enough adverse pre-trial testimony that Hua Guofeng reportedly offered to resign the chairmanship before the trial started. In June 1981 the Sixth Plenum of the Eleventh National Party Congress Central Committee marked a major milestone in the passing of the Maoist era. The Central Committee accepted Hua's resignation from the chairmanship and granted him the face-saving position of vice chairman. In his place, CCP secretary general Hu Yaobang became chairman. Hua also gave up his position as chairman of the party's Central



Military Commission in favor of Deng Xiaoping. The plenum adopted the 35,000-word "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China." The resolution reviewed the sixty years since the founding of the CCP, emphasizing party activities since 1949. A major part of the document condemned the ten-year Cultural Revolution and assessed Mao Zedong's role in it. "Chief responsibility for the grave 'Left' error of the 'cultural revolution,' an error comprehensive in magnitude and protracted in duration, does indeed lie with Comrade Mao Zedong . . . [and] far from making a correct analysis of many problems, he confused right and wrong and the people with the enemy. . . . Herein lies his tragedy." At the same time, Mao was praised for seeking to correct personal and party shortcomings throughout his life, for leading the effort that brought the demise of Lin Biao, and for having criticized Jiang Qing and her cohort. Hua too was recognized for his contributions in defeating the Gang of Four but was branded a "whateverist." Hua also was criticized for his anti-Deng Xiaoping posture in the period 1976-77.

Several days after the closing of the plenum, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of the CCP, new party chairman Hu Yaobang declared that "although Comrade Mao Zedong made grave mistakes in his later years, it is clear that if we consider his life work, his contributions to the Chinese revolution far outweigh his errors. . . . His immense contributions are immortal." These remarks may have been offered in an effort to repair the extensive damage done to the Maoist legacy and by extension to the party itself. Hu went on, however, to praise the contributions of Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Peng Dehuai, and a score of other erstwhile enemies of the late chairman. Thus the new party hierarchy sought to assess, and thus close the books on, the Maoist era and move on to the era of the Four Modernizations. The culmination of Deng's drive to consolidate his power and ensure the continuity of his reformist policies among his successors was the calling of the Twelfth National Party Congress in September 1982 and the Fifth Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in December 1982.

# The People's Republic Of China: V

## Reforms, 1980-88

*Note: The following section is actually the introduction of the Army Area Handbook, but it contains a lot of information about China in the 80's, so I have placed it here.*

**Reform - dubbed China's "Second Revolution"**--was one of the most common terms in China's political vocabulary in the 1980s. Reform of the Chinese Communist Party and its political activities, reform of government organization, reform of the economy, military reforms, cultural and artistic reforms, indeed, China's post-Mao Zedong leaders called for reform of every part of Chinese society. The leaders of the People's Republic of China saw reform as the way to realize the broad goal of the Four Modernizations (announced by Premier Zhou Enlai in 1975: the modernization of industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defense) and to bring China into the community of advanced industrial nations by the start of the new millennium. The reform movement had antecedents in Chinese history in the Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), Song (960-1279), and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, when concerted efforts were made to bring about fundamental changes in administrative methods while keeping the overall institutional framework intact. Thus, the reform movement of the 1980s--which has been attributed largely to the insights and determination of Deng Xiaoping, the most important figure in the post-Mao Zedong leadership--took its place in the broad spectrum of Chinese history. As with previous reform movements, history will measure this one's success.

Late twentieth-century Chinese society has developed out of some 3,300 years of recorded history and, as archaeological finds indicate, several millennia of prehistoric civilization. For thousands of years, the Middle Kingdom (Zhongguo--the Chinese name for China) was marked by organizational and cultural continuity, which were reaffirmed in a cyclic rise, flourishing, and decline of imperial dynasties. Short-lived, vibrant, but often tyrannical dynasties frequently were followed by long periods of stability and benevolent rule that were built on the best features of the preceding era and that discarded or modified more authoritarian ideas. An ethical system of relations--governed by rules of propriety attributed to the School of Literati (also known as the Confucian school)--carefully defined each person's place in society. In this system, harmony of social relations rather than the rights of the individual was the ideal. The highest social status was held by scholar-officials, the literati who provided the interpretations needed for maintaining harmony in a slowly evolving world. Hard-working farmers, the providers of sustenance to society, also occupied an important place in the societal structure.

China's development was influenced by the alien peoples on the frontiers of Chinese civilization, who were sinicized into the Chinese polity. Occasionally, groups arose among alien border peoples that were strong enough to conquer China itself. These groups established their own dynasties, only to be absorbed into an age-old system of governance. The importation of Buddhism, too, in the first century A.D. and its gradual assimilation had a fundamental impact on China. Early contacts with the premodern

Western world brought a variety of exchanges. The Chinese contributed silk, printing, gunpowder, and porcelain. Staple foodstuffs from Africa and the Americas were assimilated by China, as was the Western-style chair. In later centuries, Chinese scholars studied Western astronomy, mathematics, and other branches of science. Westerners arrived in China in the nineteenth century, during the decline of the Qing dynasty, in search of trade and colonial empires. Through force of arms the Westerners imposed unequal treaties compelling China to accept humiliating compromises to its traditional system of society and government.

China reacted to intrusions from the West--and from a newly modernized Japan (to which China lost a war in 1895)--in a variety of ways, sometimes maintaining the traditional status quo, adapting Western functions to Chinese substance, or rejecting Chinese tradition in favor of Western substance and form. As the Qing dynasty declined, reforms came too late and did too little. The unsuccessful reform efforts were followed by revolution. Still burdened with the legacy of thousands of years of imperial rule and nearly a century of humiliations at foreign hands, China saw the establishment of a republic in 1911. But warlord rule and civil war continued for nearly forty more years, accompanied in 1937-45 by war with Japan.

The Chinese civil war of 1945-49 was won by the Chinese Communist Party, the current ruling party of China, led by its chairman and chief ideologist, Mao Zedong. The Communists moved quickly to consolidate their victory and integrate all Chinese society into a People's Republic. Except for the island of Taiwan (which became the home of the exiled Guomindang under Chiang Kai-shek and his successors), the new government unified the nation and achieved a stability China had not experienced for generations. Eagerness on the part of some Communist leaders to achieve even faster results engendered the Great Leap Forward (1958-60), a program that attempted rapid economic modernization but proved disastrous. Political reaction to the Great Leap Forward brought only a temporary respite before a counterreaction occurred in the form of the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), a period of radical experimentation and political chaos that brought the educational system to a halt and severely disrupted attempts at rational economic planning. When Mao Zedong died in 1976, the Cultural Revolution era effectively came to an end.

Eager to make up for lost time and wasted resources, China's leaders initiated China's "second revolution"--a comprehensive economic modernization and organizational reform program. Deng Xiaoping and his associates mobilized the Chinese people in new ways to make China a world power. Starting with the Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party's Eleventh National Party Congress in December 1978, Deng reaffirmed the aims of the Four Modernizations, placing economic progress above the Maoist goals of class struggle and permanent revolution. Profit incentives and bonuses took the place of ideological slogans and red banners as China's leaders experimented with ways to modernize the economy. Mao's legendary people's communes were dismantled and replaced by a responsibility system, in which peasant households were given greater decision-making power over agricultural production and distribution. Farm families were allowed to lease land and grow crops of their own choosing. In the urban

sector, factory managers were granted the flexibility to negotiate with both domestic and foreign counterparts over matters that previously had been handled by central planners in Beijing. Exploitation of China's rich natural resources advanced significantly in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. As China's industrial sector advanced, there was increasing movement of the population to urban areas. China's population itself had surpassed 1 billion people by 1982 and was experiencing an annual rate of increase of 1.4 percent. As in times past, foreign specialists were invited to assist in the modernization process, and joint ventures with foreign capitalists and multinational conglomerates proliferated. Increasing numbers of Chinese students went abroad to pursue advanced degrees in a wide range of scientific and technical fields.

All this change was not without cost--both political and monetary. Efforts at fundamental transformation of economic, governmental, and political organizations caused discontent among some people and in some institutions and were resisted by those who clung to the "iron rice bowl" of guaranteed lifetime job tenure. Beijing's reform leaders made repeated calls for party members and government bureaucrats to reform their "ossified thinking" and to adopt modern methods. Older and inappropriately trained bureaucrats retired in great numbers as a younger and more technically oriented generation took over. In the ongoing debate between those who emphasized ideological correctness and those who stressed the need for technical competence--"reds" versus "experts"--the technocrats again emerged predominant. But developing and successfully applying technological expertise--the very essence of the Four Modernizations--cost vast sums of money and required special effort on the part of the Chinese people. In a rejection of the time-honored concept of "self-reliance," China entered into the milieu of international bank loans, joint ventures, and a whole panoply of once-abhorred capitalist economic practices.

As politics and the economy continued to respond to and change each other, China's reformers had to balance contending forces within and against their reform efforts while maintaining the momentum of the Four Modernizations program. In doing so, Deng Xiaoping and his associates were faced with several unenviable tasks. One was to create unity and support for the scope and pace of the reform program among party members. There was also a necessity to deliver material results to the broad masses of people amid economic experiments and mounting inflation. Failure to achieve these balances and to make mid-course corrections could prove disastrous for the reform leadership.

A sound ideological basis was needed to ensure the support of the party for the reform program. Deng's political idioms, such as "seeking truth from facts" and "socialism with Chinese characteristics," were reminiscent of reformist formulations of centuries past and had underlying practical ramifications. The supporters of Deng held that theory and practice must be fully integrated if success is to be hoped for, and they articulated the position that the Marxist-Leninist creed is not only valid but is adaptable to China's special--if not unique--situation. The ideological conviction that China was still in the "initial stage of socialism"--a viewpoint reaffirmed at the Thirteenth National Party Congress in October and November 1987--provided a still broader ideological basis for continuing the development of the Deng's reform program in the late 1980s and early

1990s. This ideological pronouncement also emphasized reformers' fundamental tenet that since the end of the "period of socialist transformation" (turning over private ownership of the means of production to the state) in 1956, there had been numerous "leftist" errors made in the party's ideological line. Mistakes such as the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution had produced setbacks in achieving "socialist modernization" and had kept China from emerging from the initial stage of socialism. It was, perhaps, the very failure of these leftist campaigns that had paved the way for the reforms of the 1980s.

Political confrontation over the reforms was pervasive and, to many foreign observers, confusing. In simplistic terms, the "conservatives" in the reform debate were members of the post-Mao "left," while the "liberals" were the pro-Deng "right." Being conservative in China in the 1980s variously meant adhering to the less radical aspects of Maoist orthodoxy (not all of which had been discredited) or accepting the goals of reform but rejecting the pace, scope, or certain methods of the Deng program. Thus, there were both conservative opponents to reform and conservative reformers. While many reform opponents had been swept away into "retirement," conservative reformers until the late 1980s served as members of China's highest ruling body and locus of power, the Standing Committee of the party's Political Bureau. Such leaders as Standing Committee member Chen Yun, one of the principal architects of economic reform, objected to the "bourgeois liberalization" of the modernization process that came with infusions of foreign, especially Western, culture. In the conservative reform view, the application of Chinese values to Western technology (reminiscent of the traditional *tiyong* [substance versus form] formulation evoked in the late-nineteenth-century reform period) would serve the People's Republic in good stead.

In the 1980s China's intellectuals and students frequently tested the limits of official tolerance in calls for freer artistic and literary expression, demands for more democratic processes, and even criticisms of the party. These confrontations reached their apex in late 1986, when thousands of students throughout the nation took to the streets to make their views known. In the resulting crackdown, some prominent intellectuals were demoted or expelled from the party. Even its highest official was not invulnerable: General Secretary Hu Yaobang was demoted in January 1987 for having dealt unsuccessfully with public activism and criticism of the party. Hu's ouster paved the way for the chief implementer of the Deng reforms, Zhao Ziyang, premier of the State Council, to assume command of the party and more firmly establish Deng's ideology as the status quo of reform. At the time of the writing of this book, it remained to be seen what degree of success the conservative reform elements would have in effecting a compromise, having placed their own representatives in the Political Bureau Standing Committee and the State Council's highest offices in late 1987.

Self-proclaimed successes of the reforms of the 1980s included improvements in both rural and urban life, adjustment of the structures of ownership, diversification of methods of operation, and introduction of more people into the decision-making process. As market mechanisms became an important part of the newly reformed planning system, products circulated more freely and the commodity market was rapidly improved. The

government sought to rationalize prices, revamp the wage structure, and reform the financial and taxation systems. The policy of opening up to the outside world (the Chinese eschew the term open door, with its legacy of imperialist impositions) brought a significant expansion of economic, technological, and trade relations with other countries. Reforms of the scientific, technological, and educational institutions rounded out the successes of the Deng-inspired reforms. For the first time in modern Chinese history, the reforms also were being placed on the firm basis of a rational body of law and a carefully codified judicial system. Although reform and liberalization left the once more-strictly regimented society open to abuses, the new system of laws and judicial organizations continued to foster the stable domestic environment and favorable investment climate that China needed to realize its modernization goals.

Amid these successes, the authorities admitted that there were difficulties in attempting simultaneously to change the basic economic structure and to avoid the disruptions and declines in production that had marked the ill-conceived "leftist experiments" of the previous thirty years. China's size and increasing economic development rendered central economic planning ineffective, and the absence of markets and a modern banking system left the central authorities few tools with which to manage the economy. A realistic pricing system that reflected accurately levels of supply and demand and the value of scarce resources had yet to be implemented. The tremendous pent-up demand for consumer goods and the lack of effective controls on investment and capital grants to local factories unleashed inflationary pressures that the government found difficult to contain. Efforts to transform lethargic state factories into efficient enterprises responsible for their own profits and losses were hampered by shortages of qualified managers and by the lack of both a legal framework for contracts and a consistent and predictable taxation system. The goals of economic reform were clear, but their implementation was slowed by practical and political obstacles. National leaders responded by reaffirming support for reform in general terms and by publicizing the successes of those cities that had been permitted to experiment with managerial responsibility, markets for raw materials, and fundraising through the sale of corporate bonds.

National security has been a key determinant of Chinese planning since 1949. Although national defense has been the lowest priority of the Four Modernizations, it has not been neglected. China has had a perennial concern with being surrounded by enemies--the Soviets to the north and west, the Vietnamese to the south, and the Indians to the southwest--and has sought increasingly to project itself as a regional power. In response to this concern and power projection, in the 1970s China moved to augment "people's war" tactics with combined-arms tactics; to develop intercontinental ballistic missiles, nuclear submarines, and other strategic forces; and to acquire sophisticated foreign technologies with military applications. In the international arena, China in the 1980s increasingly used improved bilateral relations and a variety of international forums to project its "independent foreign policy of peace" while opening up to the outside world.

From October 25 to November 1, 1987, the Chinese Communist Party held its Thirteenth National Party Congress. Dozens of veteran party leaders retired from active front-line positions. Not least among the changes was the alteration of the Standing Committee of

the party Political Bureau--the very apex of power in China--both in personnel and in stated purpose. Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, and Li Xiannian stepped down, and Hu Yaobang's demotion to mere Political Bureau membership was confirmed. Only one incumbent--Zhao Ziyang--was left on the Standing Committee. In place of the party elders and Hu Yaobang, a group of mostly younger, more technologically oriented individuals were seated. The Political Bureau's Standing Committee comprised Deng's protégé, sixty-eight-year-old Zhao Ziyang (who relinquished his position as head of government to become general secretary of the party); Li Peng, a sixty-year-old, Soviet-educated engineer, who became acting premier of the State Council in Zhao's place (he was confirmed as premier in spring 1988); Qiao Shi, a sixty-four-year-old expert in party affairs, government administration, and legal matters; Hu Qili, a fifty-eight-year-old party Secretariat member in charge of ideological education, theoretical research, and propaganda; and veteran economic planner and conservative reform architect Yao Yilin, the new party elder at age seventy-one. In regard to function, the Political Bureau no longer was conceived of as a group of influential individuals but as a consensual decision-making organization. The party constitution was amended to make the party Secretariat a staff arm of the Political Bureau and its Standing Committee, rather than the somewhat autonomous body it had been since 1982. By mid-1988, the Chinese Communist Party announced that its increasingly well educated membership had risen to 47 million, an all-time high.

The retirees were not left without a voice. Deng, eighty-three and still China's de facto leader, retained his positions as chairman of the party and state Central Military Commissions, the latter of which designated him as commander-in-chief of the Chinese armed forces. (Zhao Ziyang was appointed first vice chairman of the party and state Central Military Commissions, giving him military credentials and paving the way for him to succeed Deng.) Eighty-two-year-old Chen Yun gave up his position as first secretary of the party Central Commission for Discipline Inspection but replaced Deng as chairman of the party's Central Advisory Commission, a significant forum for party elders. Li Xiannian who relinquished his position as head of state, or president, to another party elder--eighty-one-year-old Yang Shangkun--to become chairman of the Seventh Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in spring 1988, was left without a leading party position. Hu Yaobang, far from being totally disgraced after his January 1987 debacle, retained membership on the Political Bureau and enjoyed a fair amount of popular support at the Thirteenth National Party Congress and afterward.

Below the national level, numerous leadership changes also took place following the Thirteenth National Party Congress. More than 600 younger and better educated leaders of provincial-level congresses and governments had been elected in China's twenty-nine provinces, autonomous regions, and special municipalities.

The Seventh National People's Congress was held from March 25 to April 13, 1988. This congress, along with the Seventh Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, held from March 24 to April 10, 1988, was marked by a new openness and tolerance of debate and dissent. The opening ceremony of the National People's Congress was televised live, and meetings and panel discussions were recorded and broadcast the same

day. Chinese and foreign journalists were permitted to attend the panel discussions and question the deputies in press conferences. Dissenting statements and dissenting votes were widely publicized in the domestic press. A spirit of reform prevailed as laws and constitutional amendments were ratified to legitimize private business and land sales and to encourage foreign investment. The State Council was restructured and streamlined. Fourteen ministries and commissions were dissolved and ten new ones--the State Planning Commission and ministries of personnel, labor, materials, transportation, energy, construction, aeronautics and astronautics industry, water resources, and machine building and electronics industry--were established. Many of the ministries that were dissolved were converted into business enterprises responsible for their own profits and losses.

Li Peng was elected premier of the State Council, as expected, and Yao Yilin and fifty-nine-year-old financial expert Tian Jiyun were re-elected as vice premiers. Sixty-six-year-old former Minister of Foreign Affairs Wu Xueqian also was elected vice premier. State councillors, all technocrats chosen for their professional expertise, were reduced in number from eleven to nine. All state councillors except Beijing mayor Chen Xitong and Secretary General of the State Council Chen Junsheng served concurrently as heads of national-level commissions or ministries. Although seven of the nine were new state councillors, only Li Guixian, the newly appointed governor of the People's Bank of China, was new to national politics. On a move that seemed to bode well for reform efforts, long-time Deng ally and political moderate Wan Li was selected to replace Peng Zhen as chairman of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress. The conservative Peng had been considered instrumental in blocking or delaying many important pieces of reformist legislation. It also was decided at the Seventh National People's Congress to elevate Hainan Island, formerly part of Guangdong Province, to provincial status and to designate it as a special economic zone.

In September and October 1987 and again in March 1988, riots erupted in the streets of Lhasa, the capital of Xizang Autonomous Region (Tibet). Calls for "independence for Tibet" and expressions of support for the exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, were made amid violence that claimed the lives of at least six people in 1987 and at least nine more (including policemen) in 1988. Many more were reported to have been badly injured. Although Chinese authorities condemned the riots, their initial response was restrained in comparison with actions they had taken against earlier anti-Chinese demonstrations in Xizang. In addition, the authorities accompanied their censure of the Lhasa riots with a plethora of publicity on advances made by the inhabitants of Xizang in recent years and a lifting of travel restrictions on foreign correspondents. The March 1988 rioting spread to neighboring Qinghai Province, where there is a sizable Tibetan (Zang) minority. This time the authorities resorted to sterner measures, such as military force and numerous arrests, but only after offering lenient treatment to rioters who turned themselves in voluntarily. By mid-1988, it appeared that both the Dalai Lama, concerned that violence and bloodshed in his homeland was out of control, and the Chinese government, worried about instability in a strategic border area, were displaying greater flexibility in their respective positions.



The January 1988 death of Taiwan's leader, Chiang Ching-kuo, brought expressions of sympathy from Zhao Ziyang and other Chinese Communist Party leaders and renewed calls for the reunification of China under the slogan "one country, two systems." Implicit in the mainland's discussion of the transfer of power to a new generation of leaders--Taiwan-born Li Teng-hui succeeded Chiang--was regret that the opportunity had been lost for reaching a rapprochement with the last ruling member of the Chiang family. Beijing appealed to the patriotism of the people in Taiwan and called for unity with the mainland but, at the same time, kept a close watch for any sentiments that might lead to independence for Taiwan.

In foreign affairs, Beijing continued to balance its concern for security with its desire for an independent foreign policy. China reacted cautiously to the signing of a nuclear arms treaty by the Soviet Union and the United States and refused to hold its own summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Despite a lessening of tensions between Beijing and Moscow and greatly improved Chinese relations with the governments and ruling parties throughout Eastern Europe, China continued to insist that the Soviet Union would have to end its support for Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia, withdraw all of its troops from Afghanistan, and significantly reduce Soviet forces deployed on the Sino-Soviet border and in the Mongolian People's Republic before relations between the Chinese and Soviet governments and parties could improve. By mid-1988 there were indications that the Soviet Union was taking steps to remove these "three obstacles" to improved Sino-Soviet relations. As early as the fall of 1986, the Soviet Union announced the pullback of a significant number of troops from Mongolia and the Sino-Soviet border. In May 1988 Moscow began withdrawing troops from Afghanistan with the goal of evacuating its forces from that country by early 1989. But China remained skeptical of Vietnamese government announcements that it would withdraw 50,000 troops from Cambodia by the end of 1988, and China's leaders continued to pressure the Soviet Union to exert more influence on Vietnam to secure an early withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. Already strained Sino-Vietnamese relations were exacerbated when Chinese and Vietnamese naval forces clashed in March 1988 over several small islands in the strategically located Nansha (Spratly) archipelago.

In Sino-American relations, disputes over trade and technology transfer in 1987 were further clouded by United States concern over reported Chinese Silkworm missile sales to Iran, sales of Dongfeng-3 intermediate range missiles to Saudi Arabia, and disclosures that Israel allegedly assisted China in the development of the missile system later sold to the Saudis. Another concern was China's protest over an October 1987 United States Senate resolution on the "Tibetan question" that focused on alleged human rights violations in Xizang. A visit to Washington, by then Minister of Foreign Affairs Wu Xueqian in March 1988, however, had salutary effects on bilateral relations: China made assurances that it would cease Silkworm missile sales to Iran and the United States pledged to continue to make desired technologies available to China. The perennial Taiwan issue and problems in Xizang apparently were subsumed by larger national interests.

In February 1988 Beijing China achieved its long-sought goal of establishing diplomatic relations with Uruguay, one of the few nations that still had state-to-state ties with Taipei. With this accomplishment China increased its diplomatic exchanges to 134 countries, while Taiwan's official representations were reduced to 22.

The dynamism of China's domestic activities and international relations will continue the new millennium approaches. Developments in the all-encompassing reform program and their resulting impact on Chinese society, particularly the efforts of China's leaders to bring increasing prosperity to the more than 1 billion Chinese people, and China's growing participation and influence in the international community will remain of interest to observers throughout the world.