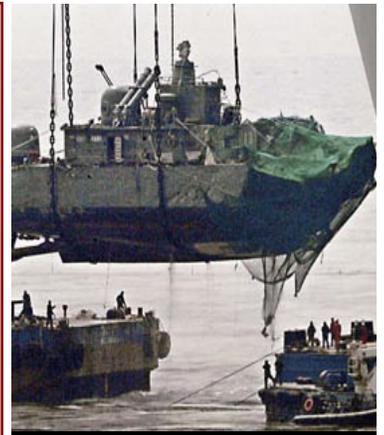




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South Korean corvette *Cheonan*

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In a Fortnight

BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA: CHINA'S GROWING Foothold IN LATIN AMERICA

By L.C. Russell Hsiao

On May 21, Norwegian oil company Statoil announced that it agreed to sell 40 percent stake (\$3 billion) of the Peregrino field located in the Campos basin offshore of Brazil to Chinese state-owned Sinochem Group. The Peregrino announcement closely follows the disclosure in March that another major Chinese state-owned oil company, China National Offshore Oil Company's (CNOOC), was acquiring 50 percent stake (\$3.1 billion) in a joint venture with Argentina's Bidas Energy Holdings Limited. While the two transactions are still subject to their respective governments' approval, these agreements highlight the renewed focus of Chinese activities on Latin America, markedly raising China's stakes and profile in the region. The apparent surge of Chinese interests in the region demonstrated by the raft of recent deals also laid bare Beijing's geopolitical strategy to assure a diversified energy supply and evolving strategic partnership with Latin America (*Global Times* [China], May 14).

In Brazil, according to the party-owned *Global Times*, China Development Bank (CDB), China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec) and Brazilian state-run energy giant *Petroleo Brasileiro SA* (Petrobras) signed an "oil-for-loan" agreement that stipulates that Petrobras will be committed to a 10-year oil supply (of roughly 200,000 barrels of oil per year) to Sinopec in exchange for \$10 billion worth of loans from the CDB within the next ten years (*Global Times*, May 26; *China Times* [Taiwan], May 26).

In Argentina, CNOOC President Yang Hua commented, "Bidas, with a world-

class oil and gas asset portfolio, is a very good beachhead for us [CNOOC] to enter Latin America. Through this transaction, we'll establish a fair presence in this region, which will further enable the Company's production and reserve growth in the future" (Oil Voice, March 14). Bridas also has exploration and production operations in Bolivia and Chile, and according to a CNOOC statement filed with Hong Kong's stock exchange, it owns 40 percent of Pan American Energy LLC, an affiliate of BP Plc. (Business Week, March 14).

In Venezuela, China recently agreed to extend \$20 billion of loans to Caracas, with the payment terms being \$10 billion and 70 billion yuan (\$10.25 billion). China and Venezuela will reportedly form a joint venture to operate the Junin-4 Block located in the Orinoco heavy oil belt, which is expected to yield 2.9 billion barrels of extra-heavy crude over the 25-year contract term (*Global Times*, April 20). According to Wang Peng, a Latin America researcher at the prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the significance of the loan is that, "The 70 billion yuan fund will be a trial to internationalize the yuan. Given the large oil reserves and oil potential, the settlement of the deal in yuan will raise the Chinese currency's position in oil trade" (*Global Times*, April 20).

Chinese leaders' sense of insecurity has grown as the country's dependency on foreign energy deepens. In order to reduce its vulnerability to high oil prices, China has intensified its courting of Latin America as one of its three major regional energy suppliers (e.g. Russia/Central Asia and the Middle East/Africa). While China's energy imports from Latin America lag in comparison to such imports from other regions, China's substantial commitments in Argentina, Brazil and other areas are strong indicators of the push to come.

As these recent cases also demonstrate, China's presence in Latin America is not confined to only securing access to markets and sources of primary products. It is also strategic. Given Brazil's and Argentina's relatively sophisticated level of development in several high-technology sectors, it is not surprising to see Brasilia and Buenos Aires emerge as hubs of China's push into the region. Progress in trade, investment and political and military cooperation are usually tied to cooperation in the energy sphere. Indeed, both Brazil and Argentina possess a vibrant nuclear industry, a robust aerospace industry and a telecommunication infrastructure, among others.

Against the backdrop of the global financial crisis, Chinese activities in Latin America have become notably more pronounced. The impact that the crisis has had on Western economies cannot be understated, and the depth of China's strategic partnership with countries in the region

is becoming clear as China becomes more confident and assertive in conducting its foreign policy. While it remains unknown at what cost to U.S. interests China's strategic partnerships with Latin America will have in the long-term, it behooves Washington to engage Latin America and maintain friendships throughout the region as the power gravity slowly shifts east.

L.C. Russell Hsiao is Editor of the Jamestown Foundation's China Brief.

Rising Social Malaise Beggars Hu's Reforms

By Willy Lam

Beijing authorities have raised the country's security alert to the highest level—the first time since the August 2008 Olympics Games—in the wake of a spate of killings in schools and kindergartens that left at least 27 dead and some 100 injured. Given the resources that the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), the Education Ministry and other administrative units have invested into promoting safety in school districts, it is probable that these heinous crimes will diminish over time. Yet, disturbing questions are being asked about the authorities' handling of the brutal incidents. The issues range from severe restrictions on media coverage to the efficacy of China's apparently seamless state-security apparatus. More significantly, the mishaps seem to demonstrate that even as socio-political contradictions are being exacerbated, members of disadvantaged classes have been denied avenues to vent their frustration, let alone have their injustice redressed.

According to official press reports, seven major incidents took place from March 23 to May 19 in kindergartens, schools and at least one college in the provinces of Fujian, Guangxi, Guangdong, Jiangsu, Shandong and Hainan (Reuters, May 20; *Wen Wei Po* [Hong Kong], May 20). Yet, according to the Hong Kong media, a few dozen smaller cases have gone unreported. Almost immediately after eight school kids were hacked to death in Nanping District in coastal Fujian Province in late March, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Propaganda Department asked all news outlets to tone down coverage of the slayings. A number of incidents in which the attackers were subdued before any fatal harm was done were not publicized. There were at least seven such instances in Beijing alone (*Ming Pao* [Hong Kong], May 13; *Apple Daily* [Hong Kong], May 18).

Moreover, relevant authorities have released very sketchy information about the felons. The killer in Fujian was said

to have been mentally deranged due to unemployment and a broken love affair. The Jiangsu government's response to the April 29 kindergarten mayhem in the city of Taixing, in which 31 children and teachers suffered injuries, caused the most ferocious uproar. Ten thousand residents protested outside the municipal government a day later because many parents were not allowed to visit their hospitalized kids. Most intriguingly, the culprit, Xu Yuyuan, was sentenced to death barely 16 days after his crime. His motivations were said to include frustration due to the failure of a small direct-selling business and "unjust dismissal" from an earlier job (*Ming Pao*, May 1; China News Service, May 15; *Wen Wei Po*, May 16).

Also called into question is the effectiveness of China's much-ballyhooed security establishment. Since 2008—the year of the Olympics and the Tibet riots—the leadership under President Hu Jintao has devoted unprecedented resources to hiring more police, state-security agents, anti-terrorist experts and para-military People's Armed Police (PAP). Several million volunteers have been recruited as vigilantes nationwide. *Wei-wen* ("uphold stability") expenditures this year are set at 514 billion yuan (\$75.26 billion), which is close to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) budget of 542 billion yuan (\$79.36 billion) (*Ming Pao*, March 6; *Southern Weekend* [Guangzhou], March 3). Yet, the apparently random acts of several individuals have plunged what could be the world's most redoubtable police network into disarray.

After the first couple of incidents, President Hu and Premier Wen Jiabao issued orders that all government units "take immediate steps to prevent the recurrence [of similar cases] and to safeguard social harmony and stability." Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) member in charge of security Zhou Yongkang told a televised conference of the nation's top police, prosecutors and judges that ensuring safety in schools had become "a major political task." State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Meng Jianzhu vowed that the police would construct a "wall of steel" to ensure a safe environment for schoolchildren everywhere. The media also reported that emergency security measures had reached *guojia gaodu*, or the "highest level of state" (*Beijing Evening Post*, May 5; Public Security Net, May 13; China News Service, May 15). Many cities have implemented a "one police in every school" policy. The capital city has mobilized 20,000 additional officers for this purpose. Chongqing Party Secretary Bo Xilai, who gained worldwide fame for cracking down on triads, has stationed 6,300 security personnel in the city's schools. A government spokesman in remote Tibet indicated that "we will make sure that a police officer can be seen in every school so that the hearts of parents, teachers and pupils will be put at ease." Law-enforcement personnel have also

been instructed to shoot to kill when handling what the party leadership calls "urban terrorist incidents involving [disgruntled] individuals" (*Nanfang Daily* [Guangzhou], May 14; China News Service, May 13; *New Beijing Post*, May 6).

Yet this high degree of nervousness has also betrayed chinks in the police apparatus's armor. In late April, the MPS dispatched 18 investigation teams around the country to check out loopholes and to tighten the security net. Moreover, PBSC member Zhou issued a nationwide directive asking local leaders in all cities, counties and villages to "be personally responsible" for safety in schools and campuses. "Top party and government cadres have to bear overall [political] responsibility while leaders with specific responsibility [for security] must take care of the concrete details," said Zhou (China News Service, May 14; Xinhua News Agency, May 3). As in the case of law-and-order lapses in Tibet and Xinjiang in recent years, police and state-security officials seem to be passively reacting to events instead of pre-empting them.

It is also clear that there are limits as to what security personnel can do to prevent society's desperadoes from taking out their frustration on innocent victims. Premier Wen Jiabao admitted that "deep-seated reasons" lay behind the chilling slayings. He indicated that apart from boosting patrols and other law-enforcement measures, different departments must "tackle a certain number of social contradictions, defuse conflicts and beef up reconciliation [mechanisms] at the grassroots." MPS spokesman Wu Heping also acknowledged that the serial attacks on school kids were symptomatic of socio-economic malaise. "Some contradictions have not been resolved in good time," he said. "These contradictions have been exacerbated. Civil conflicts have morphed into criminal cases, while criminal cases of a general nature have worsened into atrocious ones, including using extremist measures to retaliate against society" (*Guangzhou Daily* [Guangzhou], May 14; Reuters, May 13).

What are these "deep-seated contradictions"? Beijing-based sociologist Tang Jun said the killers had picked on children because "this will have the largest negative impact on society." He continued, "The attackers did not know their victims personally, so the assaults must be an expression of their dissatisfaction with society". Hu Xingdou, a well-known social critic at the Beijing University of Science and Technology, said the horrendous crimes reflected "the sense of hopelessness" among lower-class citizens "whose rights of petitioning [the authorities] and judicial redress have been denied." "These attackers know they can't [*sic*] reach the powers-that-be that ride roughshod over them—so [they] take retaliation [against society] by picking on

defenseless kids.” Professor Hu expressed fear that as the rich-poor gap yawned wider, such actions might become more frequent (The Globe and Mail [Toronto], May 12; *Ta Kung Pao* [Hong Kong], May 13).

There are signs that the Hu-led Politburo has become more aware of the time bomb ticking away. In his Government Work Report to the National People’s Congress (NPC) last March, Premier Wen pledged that “the [economic] pie will be divvied up in a more equitable fashion.” He also pledged to ensure that all Chinese “can live with dignity.” President Hu indicated in his May Day address that workers should be able to engage in *tianmian laodong*, or “dignified work.” Some solid steps have been taken to help those Chinese who have trouble eking out a living (Xinhua News Agency, March 5; China News Service, May 2). For example, the minimum wages of more than a dozen provinces and directly administered cities have been raised since the spring by up to 10 percent. Minimum monthly wage levels in Shanghai, Guangdong and Zhejiang have breached the 1,000 yuan (\$146.4) mark (CCTV Net, May 15; Xinhua News Agency, May 16). There is no denying, however, that socio-economic polarization is becoming more severe. Just-released figures showed that in the past 22 years, the wages of Chinese workers as a percentage of GDP had slipped by 20 percent. Another set of statistics indicated that the richest one percent of families held 41.4 percent of national wealth, making China one of the worst countries in terms of discrepancies between haves and have-nots (*China Youth Daily*, May 13; Xinhua News Agency, May 13; China News Service, May 21).

Moreover, channels for members of disadvantaged sectors to air their grievances have become less accessible. For example, regional and grassroots administrations have taken draconian steps to prevent apparent victims of social injustices from taking their petitions to top-level party and government departments in Beijing. In light of the politicization of the courts, citizens are not optimistic about seeking redresses through the judicial system (See “The CCP strengthens control over the judiciary,” *China Brief*, July 3, 2008). Apart from the killing spree in schools and kindergartens, social harmony has been disrupted by a plethora of labor incidents. Foremost among them is the serial suicides this year of 11 workers in the Shenzhen plant of Taiwan-owned Foxconn Technology Group, one of world’s largest manufacturers of consumer electronics. In addition, the suicide attempts of at least 20 other employees in the same factory have been foiled. Beijing officials have pinned the blame on the inadequate management style of Taiwanese business executives. In fact, however, frustration among laborers over issues such as exploitative working conditions and the ban on the formation of non-official trade unions has been on the rise nationwide (*Financial*

Times, May 24; *China Daily*, May 17; Bloomberg, May 17).

Beijing’s outdated and undemocratic institutions—which underpin the unjust social order—have adversely affected the nation’s quest for quasi-superpower status. According to a report on international competitiveness compiled by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China ranks last among the G20 countries in the area of “social management,” which includes law enforcement and law and order. The country’s rankings in “social system” and “public [administration] system” are respectively 13th and 14th among the 20 states (*Ming Pao*, April 27; Sina.com.cn [Beijing], April 27). It is understood that in the run-up to the pivotal 18th CCP Congress in 2012, the Hu leadership is reluctant to experiment with potentially destabilizing political and institutional reforms. This stubborn refusal to tinker with the status quo, however, carries huge social costs and risks that could undermine the country’s long-term modernization goal.

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All Eyes on China in Wake of Cheonan Sinking

By Jesse Karotkin

China’s longstanding relationship with North Korea has come under greater international scrutiny since the March 26 sinking of the 1300-ton South Korean corvette *Cheonan* near the de facto maritime boundary between North and South Korea. The apparent torpedo attack killed 46 of 104 sailors aboard *Cheonan* and prompted intense speculation and recrimination in Seoul as South Korea scrambled to investigate. The multinational investigation team reported on May 20 that, “evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that the torpedo was fired by a North Korean submarine. There is no other plausible explanation” [1]. The team displayed components of the North Korean torpedo discovered on the seabed. While Pyongyang adamantly denied culpability, even China, the North’s key economic benefactor, has not

challenged the investigation results.

Given China's role as both a permanent member on the UN Security Council and North Korea's most meaningful diplomatic partner, Beijing will play a pivotal role in any effort to punish the North Korean regime. With the investigation results now public, Seoul is seeking to marshal the international community, particularly China, to take tough action. Faced with compelling evidence, Beijing faces pressure to show that it will support international norms and that it is committed to checking Pyongyang's provocative behavior. At the same time, Beijing's interest in protecting the North Korean regime makes it wary of pushing Kim Jong-il into a more precarious position.

As China attempts to portray itself as a "responsible stakeholder" on a broad range of issues from anti-piracy to counter-proliferation, its historical relationship with North Korea has become a growing liability. Although the *Cheonan* incident could prompt some Chinese officials to take a harder look at the political costs of this special relationship, policy change is unlikely in the near term. The "Dear Leader's" recent visit to Beijing underscored the durability of this bilateral relationship (See "Kim Jong Il's Secret Visit to Beijing," *China Brief*, May 13). China's strategic interest in a stable North Korea is likely to trump its desire to demonstrate "responsibility" by backing tough international sanctions.

CAPABILITY AND MOTIVE

North Korea's motives for attacking the *Cheonan* are likely to remain a subject of speculation. Prior to taking office in early 2008, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak made clear his intent to take a harder line toward the North. Much to Pyongyang's displeasure, Lee reversed the so-called "sunshine policy" of predecessors Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun, which had provided North Korea with billions of dollars in aid while extracting few concessions from Pyongyang. Like many critics of the sunshine policy, Lee contended that the aid amounted to "unilateral appeasement" [2]. The sinking of the *Cheonan* could validate Lee's charge that unconditioned aid amounted to "peace for tribute."

North Korea might also have attacked the *Cheonan* to avenge a November 2009 skirmish between North and South Korean ships in the Yellow Sea. According to South Korean Navy officials, the encounter left a North Korean patrol boat "engulfed in flames" with an uncertain number of North Korean casualties. In contrast, the South Korean ship involved sustained only minor damage (*Korea Times*, November 16, 2009; *New York Times*, November 10, 2009). Denying South Korean assertions that the North

Korean patrol boat had crossed the Northern Limit Line boundary, Pyongyang called the November incident a "grave armed provocation" and (unsuccessfully) demanded an apology from the South.

Despite Pyongyang's protestations of innocence over the *Cheonan* incident, early media reports suggested that North Korean officials were privately touting the attack as a retaliatory victory. According to one South Korean report, a North Korean Worker's Party Secretary tacitly confirmed North Korean responsibility for the attack to an audience of fellow Party members, proclaiming, "The Korean People's Army has recently taken merciless revenge on its enemies. After our retaliation, South Korea has been so afraid of our military strength" (*Donga Ilbo* [South Korea], April 28). While it is difficult to confirm the truth of either the remark or the report, such comments point to a possible North Korean motive for the attack on the *Cheonan*.

ALL ROADS PASS THROUGH BEIJING

Calling for "resolute countermeasures" against North Korea, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak expressed his desire to deal with Pyongyang "through strong international cooperation" (*Christian Science Monitor*, May 20). Park Hyung-jun, the senior political affairs secretary to President Lee, underscored China's central role in any international response to the *Cheonan* incident. Park noted that "we will explain [the investigation results] to China in full, so that we can have China play its role in the issue." As a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, the host of the Six-Party Talks, and North Korea's principal benefactor, China will exercise immense influence over the type and severity of any punishment meted out against Pyongyang.

In response to the *Cheonan* report and Seoul's accompanying call for sanctions, North Korea's Central News Agency insisted this constitutes an "intolerable, grave provocation [and] a declaration of war" (KCNA, May 24). Characterizing the *Cheonan* incident as a "conspiratorial farce to harm and stifle the DPRK", Pyongyang pledged to "mete out a thousand-fold punishment to the puppet war thirsty forces" (KCNA, May 26). North Korea later indicated it would fire upon South Korea's loudspeakers that are slated to resume propaganda messaging along the demilitarized zone (*Seoul Hankyoreh*, May 26).

Beijing's vague official commentary and high-level diplomatic contact with North Korea in the wake of the sinking triggered significant concern in South Korea (*Yonhap* [South Korea], May 24). Beijing's guarded statements reflect an effort to appear impartial and focused

on preventing escalation rather than assigning blame or delivering justice. A PRC Foreign Ministry spokesperson called on all parties to “remain cool and exercise restraint” (Xinhua News Agency, May 7). China’s deputy foreign minister characterized the incident as “unfortunate” but refrained from blaming North Korea (*Global Times* [China], May 21). Meanwhile, the *Beijing Review* reiterated Beijing’s general opposition to economic sanctions against Pyongyang, suggesting they are politically ineffective and only cause the public to suffer (*Beijing Review*, May 17).

Of greater significance to South Korean observers, Hu welcomed Kim Jong-Il to Beijing on 20 April, just days after South Korean President Lee consulted with Chinese President Hu Jintao in Shanghai. South Korean commentators suggested that Beijing’s unexpected invitation to the North Korean leader was inappropriate and insulting given the cloud of suspicion hanging over the Kim regime (Yonhap, May 12 and 13; *JoongAng Ilbo* [South Korea], May 8).

South Korean media expressed concern that China’s strategic interest in North Korean stability will override any pressure to deal firmly with Pyongyang. The moderate *Korea Times* predicted that even the most damning evidence concerning North Korean involvement in the *Cheonan* sinking will not lead Beijing to change its stance on North Korea (*The Korea Times*, May 10). The more conservative *JoongAng Ilbo* called South Korea’s “strategic partnership” with Beijing “a delusion,” insisting that China will always embrace strategies that enable it to exercise influence over the Korean Peninsula (*JoongAng Ilbo*, May 8).

CHINA TO SHAPE RESPONSE OPTIONS

Most analysts downplay the likelihood of South Korea military retaliation, suggesting that the desire to avoid escalation will prompt Seoul to employ diplomatic and economic measures as it has done in the past. Seoul can pursue several punitive options short of military action. The most obvious first step involves further tightening the flow of international aid into North Korea and suspending remaining inter-Korean economic cooperation. China could limit this tactic’s effectiveness, however, by increasing its already-significant bilateral assistance.

Seoul is seeking United Nations action in tandem with economic pressure. Here, too, China will play a critical role as a permanent, veto-wielding member of the Security Council. Although Beijing supported U.N. Resolution 1874, which imposed political and economic sanctions on North Korea following Pyongyang’s 2009 nuclear test, it did so only after significantly weakening the initial language. Equally important, North Korea’s responsibility for the

nuclear test was beyond question. Absent an admission of guilt regarding the *Cheonan* incident, it will be difficult to prove North Korean involvement with absolute certainty. Even a shred of doubt may be used by the Chinese leadership to shape and water down proposed sanctions, regardless of how credible Beijing finds the investigation results.

Finally, Seoul could indefinitely suspend its participation in the stalled Six-Party Talks. Beijing could dilute the effect of this measure by persuading or pressing others of the six to proceed with talks. During meetings with Kim Jong-Il in early May, the Chinese elicited a pledge from Pyongyang to move toward a resumption of the Six-Party Talks (*South China Morning Post*, May 12; Kyodo World Service, May 13). Should South Korea remain on the sidelines indefinitely, it may run the risk of being marginalized as other participants engage North Korea on substantive issues.

THE GROWING COST OF SUPPORTING PYONGYANG

The economic and ideological divide between China and North Korea has grown exponentially since the late 1970s, when Beijing embarked on its path of “reform and opening.” Where China has become increasingly integrated with the international community and supportive of international norms, the impoverished and isolated North Korean leadership has shunned pressure from China and others to reform.

Beijing’s growing international engagement is motivated in part by a desire to bolster its international image. Over the past decade in particular, Beijing has sought to assure the world of its “peaceful development,” insisting that China will not destabilize the existing order as it becomes more powerful. Beijing has also seemingly embraced the U.S. formulation of becoming a “responsible stakeholder,” implying that it will more actively contribute to the global order from which it benefits. Beijing has curtailed its weapons proliferation, contributed naval forces to the multinational anti-piracy mission in the Gulf of Aden and leveraged its unique relationship with Pyongyang as an asset in the Six-Party Talks. The *Cheonan* incident illustrates the threat that Pyongyang can pose to Beijing’s desired narrative.

From the standpoint of China’s “image doctors,” it would be logical to conclude that China is paying a high price for its longstanding association with Pyongyang. Beijing’s critics cite the *Cheonan* incident as evidence of contradictory policies on the Korean Peninsula. A strident editorial in the Hong Kong-based *South China Morning Post* stated that Beijing is attempting to play “both sides,” insisting that the Chinese leadership “cannot both run with

the hare and hunt with the hounds” (*South China Morning Post*, May 12).

In recent weeks, mainland Chinese media has expressed unusually candid criticism of North Korea, characterizing the regime’s nuclear ambitions as “proud” and irresponsible. The *Global Times* asserted that Pyongyang is “playing a dangerous game with Northeastern powers while relying on its comparatively weak national strength” (*Global Times*, May 13). The *Guangming Ribao* critically noted that Pyongyang has “inflexibly chosen to tread a military first policy... to develop nuclear weapons, [and] stir up disturbances” while relying on China for foreign assistance (Guangming Wang, May 17). Meanwhile, *China Daily*, which serves as the official English-language mouthpiece, challenged foreign media assertions that China was “backing Pyongyang” in the wake of the *Cheonan* attack (*China Daily*, May 12). Chinese media tactfully referred to Kim Jong-Il’s visit as “unofficial,” adding that Pyongyang—not Beijing—chose the timing of the trip (Xinhua News Agency, May 7; *China Daily*, May 12).

NO MAJOR SHIFT IN THE NEAR TERM

While Mao Zedong famously called China and North Korea “as close as lips and teeth,” the ideological language of kinship has long since vanished from China’s official script. In the wake of the Cold War, the two countries have taken starkly different political and economic paths. Beijing values North Korea primarily as a buffer against U.S. forces in the South, sustaining North Korea for strategic rather than ideological reasons [3]. Chinese media characterized Hu’s visit with Kim Jong-Il as part of a longstanding effort to promote and maintain “stability” on the peninsula (*Beijing Review*, May 17; *China Daily*, May 12)

Should the North Korean regime implode, Beijing could face several undesirable consequences, including a flood of refugees into China, protracted war or chaos on the peninsula, or a successor regime that is antagonistic toward China. Beijing also worries that “precipitous reunification” with the South could leave U.S. forces stationed north of the 38th parallel [4]. This is particularly important as many Chinese scholars and commentators express the fear that the United States is pursuing a strategy to “encircle” China [5].

As the international community deals with the *Cheonan* incident, Beijing will be forced to balance its strategic interest in North Korean stability against its desire to project a benign and cooperative international image. If world opinion unifies behind levying serious penalties against Pyongyang, China will find itself in a corner, with pressure not to obstruct the process. At the same time,

Beijing sees a regime in Pyongyang that is very vulnerable, particularly given Kim Jong-Il’s failing health and the likelihood of a power transition in the coming years.

Despite the growing political and economic cost of supporting North Korea and the widening ideological divide between the regimes in Beijing and Pyongyang, China shows little sign that it has the appetite for tough sanctions such as those suggested by Ralph Cossa, president of the Pacific Forum Center for Strategic and International Studies. In an editorial carried by the *Korea Times*, Cossa asserted that simply levying additional sanctions is an inadequate response. Conceding that the appropriate penalty is not the likely path, Cossa argued that the U.N. Security Council should restrict North Korean submarines and torpedo boats to port, adding that units underway “should be deemed as legitimate targets for prosecution and destruction by the Seoul-based United Nations Command and ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC)” (*Korea Times*, May 4). Endorsing security sanctions that would almost certainly spark additional conflicts with the North or even precipitate regime instability would represent a strategic shift that China has been unwilling to undertake in the past.

CONCLUSION

The *Cheonan* incident may prompt some Chinese policymakers to reexamine the growing cost of China’s historical commitment to Pyongyang. Treatment of the North as an indispensable buffer zone has emboldened the Kim regime. Left unchecked, North Korea could damage China’s international image, or worse, precipitate a conflict that undermines China’s larger security interests.

China’s foreign policy community, which consistently favors strong U.N. authority, must also weigh the risk that impeding international efforts to punish North Korea may further undermine confidence in the United Nations as an appropriate and effective venue to handle security challenges. Beijing may not want to see the US, Japan, and South Korea resolve to address this problem independently of the United Nations.

In the near term, however, stability in North Korea will remain Beijing’s paramount priority. Given North Korea’s recent currency debacle and the likelihood of a North Korean power transition in the coming years, China will remain wary of any shocks that could undermine the Pyongyang regime. As it has done in the past, China will use its weight and position to water down sanctions, create loopholes for bilateral “humanitarian” aid and refocus international efforts toward resuming dialogue with the North. Beijing’s greatest challenge will be convincing skeptics that dialogue

with Pyongyang remains a profitable exercise.

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[The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Navy or Department of Defense.]

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Operational Changes in Taiwan's Han Kuang Military Exercises 2008-2010

By Fu S. Mei

The *Han Kuang* (Han glory; HK) joint-force exercises have been an established institution of the Taiwanese military since 1984. The annual military training regime is divided into two phases: command post exercise (CPX) and computer-simulated war gaming, followed by field training exercises (FTX). The FTX portion typically culminated in an impressive live-fire demonstration by elements of all three armed services, intended to reassure Taiwanese people of their democratic but diplomatically isolated island's defense capability. Such was the format for over two decades, until the election in 2008 of President Ma Ying-jeou, whose realignment of cross-Strait policies, with priority emphasis on lowering political tensions and improving and expanding exchanges with China, dictated new directions for Taiwan's defense strategy. The annual exercises (HK-24 to HK-26) have since begun to reflect many of the themes in Ma's defense policy platform, which calls for increased emphasis on *passive protection* measures and ground defense, rather than the more (air and naval-focused) *active defense* strategy favored by previous

administrations. President Ma has increasingly become a champion of the latest U.S.-suggested buzzwords for force modernization: innovation and asymmetry. Yet, the actual new focus for Taiwan's military may be moving toward disaster rescue/relief operations.

Long considered one of the most dangerous potential "flashpoints" in the world that could precipitate major power conflicts, military developments in the Taiwan Strait are closely monitored by all key players in the East Asian region, particularly the United States, based on legacy relationship with the island, its vibrant democracy, status as the world's 17th largest trading nation, and insurance to hedge against China becoming a hostile strategic competitor to core American interests in the region. The United States takes a keen interest in Taiwan's security and, despite the lack of a formal defense pact, works closely with the Taiwan military to assess (and help improve) the latter's capabilities. Military exercises like *Han Kuang* are an important venue for understanding Taiwan's defense capabilities and shifts in strategic thinking thereof.

HK-24: REDUCING LFX FOR PEACE OVERTURE

The first such exercise held after the Ma Administration took office, HK-24, took place in the summer through early-fall of 2008. The computer simulation/war gaming phase was conducted in late-June (June 23-27), using the Joint Theater Level Simulation (JTLS) system. Though planned before the change of government, the exercises evidently tried to incorporate at least some aspects of the defense concepts featured in Mr. Ma's campaign platform (e.g. greater emphasis on ground defense and passive force protection). While described as involving all the service branches, the 5-day FTX phase (completed September 26, 2008) clearly emphasized territorial defense and ground combat, with less extensive air and naval components than in previous years, even though air and naval assets did take part in live-fire joint interception exercises in early-September 2008 (Xinhua News Agency, September 8, 2008).

The HK-24 field exercises were conducted near simultaneously in all 5 regions of operations throughout Taiwan and the offshore islands, as well as cross-regional maneuvers. For example, one scenario called for a mechanized infantry brigade under the operational control of the 10th Army in central Taiwan to reinforce 6th Army units trying to contain an amphibious beachhead near Taoyuan area in northern Taiwan. This tested the Army's ability to move heavy units over significant distances (about 75 miles) while maintaining combat readiness, battlefield intelligence and planning to logistics and the mobilization of civilian resources. In a controversial experiment, a 64-

men advance reconnaissance team was transported via Taiwan's high-speed railway.

Greater emphasis was placed on dispersal and operating sophisticated platforms from remote sites, with mixed results. For example, the Taiwan Army successfully experimented with sheltering and operating an OH-58D armed scout helicopter from the densely built-up industrial areas of Taipei County. Similarly, the Taiwan Navy experimented with a sortie of its prototype *Kuang Hua-6* (KH-6), a missile boat from a Chiayi County fishing harbor in southern Taiwan.

As with all HK exercises, HK-24 involved calling up significant reserves, including nine mobilization brigades and 32 support elements (totaling over 20,000 reserve personnel), as well as over 1,500 civilian vehicles, heavy construction machinery, and fishing vessels (Central News Agency [Taiwan], September 30, 2008).

The information warfare (IW) portion of HK-24 was more limited in scope than prior years, which typically involved defense against simulated information attacks by the Red Force Tiger Team, as well as joint exercises with the Executive Yuan's National Information and Communication Security Taskforce. The electronic warfare (EW) aspects of HK-24 also were more focused compared to previous years, being heavily concentrated in the amphibious assault exercise, with emphasis on communications intelligence (COMINT), communications jamming and counter-countermeasures (NOWNews [Taiwan], March 25, 2008).

The most notable change to HK-24 was the scaling back of live-fire exercises (LFX). Some of these were combined with other regularly scheduled LFX at the unit or service level, while the public firepower demonstration originally scheduled for late-September, 2008 was canceled, ostensibly to allow the military units to focus on training that is more realistic and to save expenses. Yet, many in Taiwan believe the decision was made mainly out of the Ma Administration's desire to extend a peace gesture to Beijing (*China Times* [Taiwan], July 16, 2008).

HK-25: NO FTX PHASE

In 2009, the annual joint exercise (HK-25) was only limited to CPX/computer war gaming, with no FTX phase. The latter was postponed to 2010, when the Ministry of National Defense decided to extend the training cycle from every 12 months to every 18-24 months (NOWNews, December 18, 2008). The reason for this was given as the need to afford troops more time to absorb lessons learned from prior year's exercises, correct any deficiencies identified and implement training on new weapons/tactics.

Not all senior military leaders agree with this rationale, not least because an 18-month training cycle could result in the FTX phase taking place during a time of the year when the weather is ill suited for large-scale joint forces training.

Carried out during the first week of June, HK-25 was observed by U.S. officials and military officers. For the first time, MND decided not to declare a "winner" in the computer war game, to avoid possible political fallout from a "defeat" of the defending Blue Force. Instead, the war game was designed to provide a highly stressful threat scenario, with the attacking Red Force mounting an invasion with 200,000 troops, to test if Taiwan's forces, command and control, and logistics were capable of effectively carrying out the island's war plan.

In addition to the traditional themes of air control, sea control and counter-invasion, the exercise placed particular emphasis on force preservation and ground combat operations, again highlighting two of the main themes championed by President Ma. The HK-25 scenarios, set in 2012, postulated such future capabilities as China's aircraft carrier and Taiwan's P-3C maritime patrol aircraft (*China Times*, June 1, 2009). Anti-carrier attack missions using new weapons (e.g. HF-3 supersonic anti-ship cruise missiles) and innovative tactics (night sorties by stealthy, high-speed surface combatants) were tested during computer war gaming.

Incidentally, similar recommendations for a "hedgehog" (passive protection + ground defense) strategy were also advocated by Commander William S. Murray (USN, Retired) in his Naval War College Review (Summer, 2008), article entitled "*Re-Visiting Taiwan's Defense Strategy*," which Mr. Ma had instructed the defense establishment to study in the second half of 2008, but the recommendations were largely rejected as impractical for achieving the military objectives desired by Taiwan. The defense leadership and even top Army officers disagreed that a defense strategy based largely on ground forces and passive defenses could possibly defeat (or deter) a Chinese invasion (*Liberty Times*, December 2, 2008).

Even though HK-25 contained no FTX, the Taiwan military did get an opportunity in 2009 to stress test its operational responsiveness to major contingencies, as a result of the massive disaster rescue and relief operation following the deadly Typhoon Morakot that struck the island in early-August, killing more than 600 people and causing widespread destruction. Taiwan's military undertook some 560,000 personnel tasks, employing UH-1H and CH-47 helicopters, AAV7A1 amphibious assault vehicles, V150S armored vehicles, combat engineering vehicles and rubber

boats in thousands of sorties, often in remote, difficult terrain [1].

HK-26: TOWARD HADR

This year's HK-26 took up the rather unusual format of conducting the field exercise phase first, in late-April (April 26-30), and not conducting the CPX exercise until the July/August period. The FTX portion of *Han Kuang* is normally conducted after completing the CPX/computer war gaming phase. This is to avoid having forces, equipment and command and control (C2) energies committed to maneuvers during the rainy typhoon season (May-October), when these assets are more likely to be needed for disaster rescue/relief operations (*China Times*, February 10). Rapid responses to and effectively dealing with such contingencies have become one of the highest priorities for Taiwan's government, not only for humanitarian reasons but also out of concern for potentially serious political consequences, as evidenced by the Typhoon Morakot experience.

The HK-26 joint field exercises involved fully-equipped regular units from all three service branches, as well as mobilization of reserve units. Again, no munitions were fired during the exercises, and no public live-fire demonstration event held. Yet, LFX continues to be conducted at unit and service levels.

Force preservation continues to be a major theme, as HK-26 included the dispersal and redeployment of 45 Mirage 2000 fighters from Hsinchu air force base (AFB) to the hardened facility at Chiashan AFB in eastern Taiwan. The number of aircraft available for this exercise indicated significantly improved material readiness of the Mirage fleet, which had suffered from chronic shortage of parts (*Apple Daily* [Taiwan], April 27). The Navy practiced dispersal and forward deployment of its new KH-6 missile boats to a fishing port in northern Taiwan.

Taiwan demonstrated its rapid runway repair capability at Chiashan AFB. Even though runway vulnerability to Chinese ballistic missile attacks has been frequently cited as a critical vulnerability to the island's ability to maintain viable air defense, Taiwan is today arguably one of the countries in the region best prepared to meet such a threat, through a combination of hardening, rapid repair capabilities and deployment/acquisition of missile defense systems. Having acquired more than 300 Rapid Runway Repair (RRR) kits over the past few years, together with dedicated heavy construction equipment and engineering personnel, the Taiwan military has trained regularly in restoring battle-damaged airfield runways and taxiways to operations [2].

HK-26 was, as usual, combined with an amphibious landing exercise, this time at Chialutang, and an airborne assault/counter-airborne operations exercise, held at Changlung Farm, both in Pingtung County in southern Taiwan. The airborne landing exercise featured deployment of an advance team by HALO (High Altitude-Low Opening) parachute insertion (Military News Agency, April 29). The exercise also featured the customary counter-attack scenarios, executed by ground forces at Taichung Harbor, Hualien and Taichung County, with a marine brigade deploying from Taipei County to reinforce units defending Taichung. A separate exercise involved helicopter-borne special operations forces reinforcing friendly forces some 70 miles away.

Some of the more interesting HK-26 components included an NBC decontamination exercise by a mechanized infantry battalion in Hualien, where a reserve alpine company (manned by mountain-dwelling locals) defended mountain passes against infantry attack. The Army also employed newly introduced forward area refueling systems to improve turn-around time and sortie generation for its AH-1W attack helicopters (*United Daily News* [Taiwan], April 30).

A deadly landslide near Taipei on April 25 provided an added opportunity to test the emergency response capability of Taiwan's armed forces just as they were ready to launch the HK-26 FTX. Personnel and heavy equipment were promptly dispatched and arrived on scene within 75 minutes of receiving alerts (Military News Agency, April 25). Additional troops and equipment were committed to the rescue/excavation effort over the next 9 days, demonstrating the military's capacity for rapid mobilization and sustained operations in HADR (humanitarian and disaster relief) contingencies.

HK-26 was the first annual joint exercise since Taiwan's new C4ISR system became operational. The \$1.4 billion *Po Sheng* C4ISR program, officially completed in late-2009, provides for a national command and control (C2) system integrated with (Link-16-based) tactical data links that can distribute near real-time common tactical picture, improve situational awareness, reduce target engagement cycle time, and help optimize layered defense [3]. Link-16 terminals are integrated with C2 systems at Heng Shan Combined Operations Center (COC) as well as respective operations centers of the service branches, Patriot SAM batteries, and select air and naval platforms. All the operations centers and some of the *Po Sheng*-equipped platforms took part in the FTX.

HK-26 was also the first annual joint exercise planned and executed after the release of Taiwan's first Quadrennial

Defense Review (QDR), which is intended to serve as a roadmap for longer-term (5- and 10-year) force modernization planning. None of the future capabilities discussed in the QDR appeared in any of the FTX scenarios, although elements of these may be included in the CPX/computer war gaming phase scheduled for this summer. Moreover, it is understood that disaster rescue and relief operations will feature prominently in the HK-26 CPX, which means that the war gaming results will probably be validated in field exercises to be conducted next year.

Finally, it is perhaps worth noting that President Ma only attended the HK-25 military exercise's computer simulation since taking office, whereas all his predecessors had inspected the annual maneuvers and/or attended the live-fire demonstrations (*Taipei Times*, June 6, 2009). While this conspicuous absence has been officially attributed to various reasons (weather, overseas visit, natural disaster), many view it as yet another goodwill offering in hope of moderating cross-strait military tensions. Yet, together with cutbacks in joint LFX and reduction in FTX frequency, this has not helped Mr. Ma's already frigid relations with the military. These have been strained by his defense agenda of significant force cuts, transition to voluntary military service system, reduction in real defense spending, and adoption of a passive defense posture, in addition to (up until quite recently) President Ma's repeated public criticism of the military's discipline and corruption issues.

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NOTES

1. "President Expects Disaster Prevention Exercises Before Next Rainy Season", Executive Yuan Website, December 10, 2009, http://88flood.www.gov.tw/news_content_detail.php?nc_id=4038.
2. *Air Power Balance in the Taiwan Strait*, (Roslyn, VA: U.S.-Taiwan Business Council, May 2010).
3. Edward W. Ross, *Improving Taiwan's Military Capabilities, C4ISR Integration*, (Charlottesville, VA: U.S.-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference, September 2009), pp. 10.

Chinese Analyses of Soviet Failure: Humanitarian Socialism

By Arthur Waldron

[The second of an occasional series on how China views the collapse of the Soviet Union]

The first essay in this occasional series showed the extent to which official Chinese explanations of the disintegration of the Soviet Union stress the failure of the Communist party there to maintain a comprehensive dictatorship. The assumption behind this argument is that if the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) avoids the sorts of attempts at change made by Nikita Khrushchev (1894-1971) and Mikhail Gorbachev (1931-) and adheres more to the wrongly-maligned model of dictatorship of Joseph Stalin (1878-1953), then its rule can be secured indefinitely. In particular, we noted that official Chinese analysts reject the idea that deeper social causes had anything to do with the Soviet disintegration. The official Chinese position is that the Soviet system was fundamentally stable, but that the Soviet president brought it down by making ultimately fatal changes in an attempt to make the system "humane." What lesson does official China then draw? Do not let a Gorbachev into power (See "Chinese Analyses of Soviet Failure: The Party," *China Brief*, November 19, 2009).

Indeed, the rumored heir to power in China, Vice President Xi Jinping (1953-), demonstrated that he was no Gorbachev in a speech delivered March 1 at the Central Party School—the highest institution to train CCP officials. The speech, now published as *Strive to Master the Marxist Position, Viewpoints, and Methodology*, "requests the Party officials to 'intentionally apply the ideological weapon of dialectical materialism and historical materialism to transform both the objective world and the subjective world,' and 'truly unite most of the masses around the Party and the government'" [1].

Such words might reassure hard-liners in China, were it not for the fact Gorbachev was a believing communist who had joined the party 30 years before he was elected general secretary (Xi joined the party in 1974). Something went wrong with Gorbachev after his promising start, something that Chinese analysts have devoted much effort to explaining. The consensus is that Gorbachev was beguiled by the siren song of "humanitarian socialism" (*rendao de, minzhu de shehuizhuyi*) [2].

Although regularly persecuted, the idea that socialism is more humane than capitalism, and that once in place it will win universal and un-coerced support, is a core argument of Marxism. Karl Marx (1818-1883) did not envision a society

and economy ruled by an indispensable, relentless and iron dictatorship, but rather a utopia of equality and freedom, which he expected to come into being spontaneously as the historical laws of human development worked over time.

Subsequent thinkers have asked how communism might be saved from dictatorship—Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) was criticized for ruling as a dictator. Eduard Bernstein (1850-1932) early on stressed the moral basis of socialism, and throughout the 20th century, rumblings never ceased within the international communist movement over how Nikolai Bukharin (1888-1938) might have created a less vicious regime than did Stalin [3].

Such ideas form part of the background for Khrushchev's celebrated speech, "On the Personality Cult and Its Consequences," confirming the crimes of Stalin, delivered at the 20th Party Congress in Moscow in 1956 that quickly became known as "the secret speech" [4]. It was a seismic shock. Stalin had previously enjoyed almost god-like status of infallibility, while loyalty to him was the touchstone of communist orthodoxy.

According to an authoritative Chinese text, *Historical Lessons of Changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern European Countries*, prepared by the Institute of Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, at People's University, and the Chinese Central Communist Party School, both in Beijing, and edited by Zhou Xincheng and Guan Xueliang, the speech marked the beginning of the end:

"This Khrushchev, who had called Stalin 'my very own father,' and 'the greatest genius of humanity, teacher and leader,' and in order to accommodate the demands of certain unreliable people, made an all-out attack on Stalin in front of a party meeting, calling him 'a murderer,' 'a bandit,' 'a criminal,' 'a professional gambler,' 'an autocrat,' 'a dictator,' 'a bloody fool,' 'an idiot' and so forth [*hun dan*—that's how Liang Shiqiu (1902-1987), the man who put Shakespeare into Chinese translates it, but it is far worse, more like 'bastard'] [5]. The effect was to negate the whole period of Stalin's rule ... Because of this there arose worldwide anti-socialist and anti-communist movements; within the socialist camp, mass revolts were crushed by tanks in Poland and Hungary [both in 1956]. Within capitalist countries, one third of communist party members resigned, which led to a severe crisis in the world communist movement. But at that moment, the Chinese communist party, under the leadership of Mao Zedong (1893-1976) stood up, and powerfully refuted these demented

words, seriously criticizing Khrushchev's mistakes, thus protecting the whole enterprise of world communism. The lessons of that period of history are still fresh in our memories" [6].

The late French historian François Furet (1927-1997) observes that "when the secret report became public, the Communist world lost its bearings rather than entering a new epoch ... In his own rather primitive manner, the First Secretary had put his finger on the principal contradiction of Bolshevism ... How could 'socialist' society and the absolute power of one person, founded on the police and on terror, be conceived of together?" [7].

A dozen years after the "secret speech" came the "Prague Spring" of 1968 in which the pro-Brezhnev (1906-1982) leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party were deposed by Alexander Dubcek (1921-1992) and other dissidents, who for the first half of 1968 put into place a program of "socialism with a human face": reform, democratization and recognition of the rights of nationalities. This ended abruptly on August 21, 1968 when Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia, taking Dubcek and others to Moscow as prisoners. Reforming movements nevertheless developed wherever Moscow (or Mao) was not directly in charge. Thus, for a while the liberal "Euro-communism" of Roger Garaudy (1913-) and his associates in France was all the rage.

In the words of Stephen Kotkin, "[A] humanist vision of reform emerged in the post-Stalin years, under Nikita Khrushchev, and it stamped an entire generation—a generation led by Mikhail Gorbachev, that lamented the crushing of the 1968 Prague Spring, and that came to power in Moscow in 1985. They believed the planned economy could be reformed essentially without introducing full private property or market prices. They believed relaxing censorship would increase the population's allegiance to socialism. They believed the Communist Party could be democratized."

Gorbachev repeated these "errors." As Xu Xin and Chen Lianbi point out, in a volume published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences that they edited, in 1988 Gorbachev was advocating the mistaken idea of "humanistic and democratic socialism," and thus poised on the slippery slope leading to social democracy. This led to the disastrous theoretical error of *perestroika* [chuanxin]. From that, in turn, came the idea of division of power and the catastrophic decision to allow a multi-party system in the Soviet Union. The result was that when the party released its grip on society, all sorts of conflicts and disorders arose [11].

According to Zhou and Guan, “The disorders of the 1980s and 1990s in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe all have a conspicuous characteristic, which is that they were all set in motion by negation of and attacks on ‘the Stalin model’” [12]. Such attacks “opened the way for the humanitarian democratic faction of the party, and provided ammunition for the opposition to attack the communist party and the socialist system ... The lesson of the collapse of the Soviet communist party and the Soviet Union is a very sad one. The sudden and fundamental political change was started by criticizing the Stalin model, thereby giving the practice of socialism a bad name” [13].

Mao’s identification with Stalin and his role in protecting his memory mean that in China saying anything negative about Stalin can very easily be understood as criticism of Mao. Even today, Stalin has never been criticized in China. One can still buy his portrait there and walk down streets named for him.

No comparable criticism of either Stalin or Mao has ever been permitted in China. Like the former Soviet Union, however, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has a concealed history. An important question for China today is when and how it will be officially acknowledged, and with what consequences?

The Chinese equivalent of the Prague Spring is the Tiananmen massacre of June 4, 1989, a thoroughly documented event, the history of which need not be repeated here. Worth noting, however, is that Gorbachev’s reforms and those like them across Eastern Europe were not initially attacked by the Chinese party or media. They were viewed favorably by some; as interesting by others; as a danger probably by only a minority. It was only after Li Peng (1928-) became premier in April 1988 that the tenor of official coverage began to change [14].

For more than 20 years, the Chinese regime has managed to expunge from history both the democracy movement and the massacre that followed. For more than 30 years, Mao has been largely extolled in official media. Can such long-term management of the historical record succeed? The experience of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe suggests not. Political generations succeed one another. Gorbachev, who was born in 1931, was in his early 20s when Stalin died. His immediate predecessors General Secretary Yuri Andropov (1914-1984) and Konstantin Chernenko (1911-1985) were of a different political generation, the one that came to its maturity at the height of Stalin’s power. When the last of them passed from the scene, no one was left to prevent the expression of new ideas long repressed.

In Hu Jintao (1942-) we have the last Chinese leader

personally hand picked by patriarch Deng Xiaoping (1904-1907). We may also have the last of a certain breed of Chinese leaders, whose passing may diminish resistance to truth-telling about history and political change.

Mao is already the subject of public criticism. In spite of reported attempts by the Chinese government to censor him, televised lectures by history teacher Yuan Tengfei on earlier periods of Chinese history have been enormously popular. Yuan’s recently released 110 minute teaching video about the Cultural Revolution, already viewed by millions online, in which he observes, as officially reported in the tabloid *Global Times* (published by the *People’s Daily*): “You can go to the mausoleum to see Chairman Mao Zedong, but don’t forget it is China’s Yasukuni Shrine [referring to the Japanese Shinto shrine in Tokyo where World War II dead, including convicted war criminals, are venerated—a regular target of official criticism from China], where a butcher with people’s blood on his hands is worshipped”, and, “The only correct thing Mao Zedong did after 1949 was die.” He has also criticized Chinese history textbooks as less accurate than their Japanese counterparts, and spoken of the 30 million who perished in Mao’s Great Leap Forward (*Korea Times*, May 8). That an official newspaper should report such sentiments is noteworthy, as will be the way officialdom deals with them. For Mao is China’s Stalin; discrediting him undermines the founding myths of the party and the state.

Soviet experience has shown that eventually facts will be faced. We do not know that Xi Jinping will become top leader after Hu Jintao, but it is worth remembering that he is the son of Xi Zhongxun (1913-2002), one of the more open minded of his generation, who suffered under Mao. The younger Xi was born after the party had taken power; his formative experiences were of the Cultural Revolution. About this, he once said on state television: “... it was emotional. It was a mood. And when the ideals of the Cultural Revolution could not be realized, it proved an illusion...” (*The Guardian*, October 26, 2007).

In his speech at the Central Party School, Xi may have been sharing his innermost thoughts. On the other hand, he may have been seeking to reassure other leaders that he is no Gorbachev. It is a good bet, however, that someone in his generation of leadership will make a Chinese “secret speech” and turn to the ideas of humanity in socialism, even though they are today officially excoriated in analyses of the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

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books in English and Chinese.

NOTES

1. This is the website for theoretical discussion maintained by the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China. Consulted May 10, 2010. My thanks to Professor Victor Mair for calling this essay to my attention.
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2. Xu Xin, Chen Lianbi, et al. *Chaoji daguo de bengkui: (Sulian jieti yuyin tansuo)* (Beijing: Shehuikexue wenxian chubanshe, March 1999): ch. 1.
3. For example, Stephen F. Cohen *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Political Biography, 1888-1938* (New York: Vintage, 1975).
4. The speech was delivered on the night of 24-25 February, 1956. It was obtained from the Yugoslavs and published for the first time by the United States State Department on 4 June 1956. See François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*. Translated by Deborah Furet (1995. English edition Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 555, note 12
5. *New Practical Chinese-English Dictionary* (Taipei: Far East Book Company, 1972) s.v.
6. Xincheng Zhou and Guan Xueliang, *Sulian Dongou Guojia de Yanbian ji Lishi Jiaoxun* (Hefei: Anhui People's Publishing House, 2000), p. 39.
7. Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion* p. 451.
8. Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 3.
9. Xu and Chen, Chapter 2, p. 1.
10. *Ibid.*, Chapter 2, pp. 3-4.
11. *Ibid.*, Chapter 7, p. 4.
12. Zhou and Guan, p. 40.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.
14. Arthur Waldron, "The Soviet Disease Spreads to China" *Far Eastern Economic Review* 172.8 (October 2009): 24-27.
