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CHINESE NATIONALITY POLICY IN SINKIANG,

1950-1960

by

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## P R E F A C E

The Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region, with its vast expanse peopled by thirteen different national minorities, probably is the most suitable area in which to test, examine and evaluate the Nationality Policy of the Chinese People's Republic. In treating this multinational borderland, we must raise and attempt to answer a number of questions which may explain or clarify Peking's relations and policies in this overwhelmingly non-Chinese area. In so doing, it will become clear that the purposes and objectives of the central regime's "Nationality Policy" are inextricably linked to, and consequently must be considered with, the aims and goals of the regime itself. We shall also see that the nationality policy of a regime determined to effect radical, rapid social-economic-political changes throughout the entire nation must drastically differ from that of an emerging nationalist-oriented state. The latter might be primarily concerned with establishing the conditions for the self-determination of a previously oppressed nationality or nation. The nationality policy of the former is simply a means to an end, a flexible programme which is always subservient and servicable to other preconceived goals which are considered to be by definition superior. Thus, though we shall explore various stages, experiments and ramifications of Peking's nationality policy in Sinkiang, I believe we must keep in mind certain constants, in this case ideological compulsions if you will, which serve to direct and guide this policy in the attainment of ends deemed desirable and necessary by the Centre.



Before we discuss the constants and variables of Peking's Policy, I would observe that there are two points of view regarding any alleged "solution of the Nationalities problem". There is the solution desired by the majority group or that national group which actually wields power in the state (and oftentimes identifies itself with the nationstate) and there is the solution acceptable and demanded by the minority groups -- which often differs sharply from the desiderata of the majority. I would venture to submit and later illustrate the proposition that a Communist regime composed of, based on, and deriving support from the dominant or majority group cannot solve the nationality question to the liking of the minorities as long as these latter groups retain any considerable conscious self-identification and self-assertiveness or are not thoroughly Communised. When this last stage has been reached, the nationalities will no longer give any priority to the preservation of their distinct peculiarities and particularities, but will be concerned only with building a communist society whose goal is the elimination of significant differences among men. Aside from the fact that Communists tend to regard the nationalities problem as a secondary and troublesome consideration which they cannot completely ignore in the quest and consolidation of power, there is another factor which operates to perpetuate minority resistance to their rule. This is the Leninist-Stalinist interpretation of "historical development" which drawn to its logical conclusion tends to foster "great power chauvinism" and its concomitant or subsequent reaction -- "bourgeois" or "local" nationalism.



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**P A R T   I**

**THE REVOLUTION DEVELOPS**

**First Three Phases of National Minority Policy in Sinkiang**



Since the Socialist-Communist state theoretically succeeds the capitalist-imperialist state in historical development, it must inherit a society characterised by all the ills, iniquities and inequities of the previous bourgeois state of the exploit. ... Not the least of the evils passed on is national oppression -- often the result of the ancien regime's imperial expansion. Theory, however, declared that this is historically determined and objectively progressive and Stalin was emphatic in branding any attempt to secede on the part of admittedly oppressed nationalities as profoundly counterrevolutionary.<sup>1</sup> Since solution of national inequality by means of separation is excluded by theory and Russian and Chinese practice (though the right to do so is constitutionally guaranteed by Article 17 in the USSR<sup>2</sup>), Communists believe that national antagonisms will be eliminated by the democracy inherent in the Socialist state. This democracy and the regional autonomy which flows from it, Lenin thought, would eradicate the psychological basis of nationalism and would prevent the minorities from invoking the right of self-determination for political separation.<sup>3</sup> In addition, it was definitely established at the twelfth Russian Party Congress that this right was subordinate to the right of the proletarian to dictatorship.<sup>4</sup>

The result of such a theory is obvious. The former national dictatorship is replaced by class dictatorship. But since a proletarian is embryonic (if it exists at all) in the minority areas the effect is the dictatorship of a foreign class over all the minority classes. In the Chinese People's Republic it is the dictatorship of Chinese and the Chinese Communist Party over the national minorities of Sinkiang.



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Thus from the minorities' point of view it is the familiar Chinese political domination only this time accompanied by a design for total socio-economic revolution. The very fact that this severe and radical transformation is conceived and directed and engineered by alien Chinese, themselves not immune to nationalism or traditional ethnocentrism, gives rise to minority charges that the Hans (Chinese) are trying to destroy their cultures, impose Chinese development patterns and accelerate assimilation.<sup>5</sup> The nationalism (or chauvinism) of the Hans and the nationalism of the minorities which to a large degree is a reaction to Peking's policies in the region will be discussed more thoroughly later, but it is helpful to recognise straightaway some of the prominent problems the central regime must face in the attempted application of its nationality policy.

We shall shortly discover that Chinese Communist policy towards its minorities falls into several periods with varying emphases on particular problems. However, a statement by Ulanfu, Chairman of the Nationalities Affairs Commission of the State Council and head of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, will throw light on the basic premises of this policy:

Concerning the nationalities question within our country, Comrade Mao Tse-Tung has one consistent and most fundamental thought, that is, uniting with all nationalities to wage a revolutionary struggle in common under the leadership of the Communist Party building a unified big family of the motherland, and within this big family of the motherland, enforcing complete equality of nationalities and regional autonomy of nationalities, and calling for the activity of all nationalities to build socialism and communism in common. (Italics

mine)<sup>6</sup>



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It is this constant injunction to unity of the motherland in constructing socialism-communism pervading all writing on the minority question in China which is so consistent with both Bolshevik philosophy and traditional Chinese nationalism. It will become more apparent that the three hallmarks of Peking's foreign policy, i. e. it is Chinese, Communist and Cautious<sup>7</sup>, also characterise minority policy. In reference to Sinkiang, the marriage of both Chinese and Communist elements is vividly demonstrated by the tone of the following report of a Sinkiang Party Committee meeting in 1958:

The meeting pointed out that our great Fatherland must be united, and that otherwise it would be a retrogression and reaction of history. Sinkiang has always been an inseparable part of the territory of our Fatherland, but the parochial nationalists now deliberately put Sinkiang in a position opposite to the Fatherland, and consider it an 'independent state'. This is a reactionary idea that goes contrary to history, to reality, to the Fatherland, to the people as well as to socialism.<sup>8</sup>

The very motives for instituting regional autonomy for the nationalities instead of a Soviet type federal structure are a curious mixture of Chinese and Communist rationales. China has preserved the single unitary state concept allegedly to strengthen and develop economic and cultural ties among all the nationalities since Chinese comprise 93.94% of the population and occupy only 40% of the land area.<sup>9</sup> A further consideration is that the populations of most areas are diverse and diffuse -- a circumstance militating against fragmentation into national constituent republics. This point, however, cannot be argued too well regarding Sinkiang. Lenin, a reliable deus ex machina is cited as always having favoured a monolithic form of state on the basis of democratic centralism and not a loose union which, after all, is only a "form



of organisation" in the transition to a socialist monolithic system. China, it is argued, has long had a monolithic form and there is no need to undo this progressive development. The Soviet Union, it is claimed, adopted its form to reunite the secession states, but "according to the historical conditions of the Chinese revolution and in accordance with the relations of the nationalities in China and China's economic situation, the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao Tse-Tung have adopted the policy of regional autonomy for the nationalities, creating yet another form of state organisation."<sup>10</sup>

Though the right of self-determination and principle of regional autonomy had been established as long ago as the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the Central Committee in 1936, the circumstances of the Chinese road to power in conjunction with China's traditional concern for her indisputable suzerainty in the border areas operated to restrict further this emasculated right. The right of political secession (which Stalin said was absolutely necessary for self-determination not to be proven a sham<sup>11</sup>) has not been included in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. It has been said that "the Chinese Communist Party decided that national separatism would only lead to a strengthening of foreign imperialism in any seceding borderland since the majority of the minority peoples did not have sufficiently organised forces to stand up against the pressure of imperialist enslavers."<sup>12</sup> This argumentation tries to demonstrate that the granting of secession rights to borderlands (after the success of the revolution) would weaken the forces of the popular democratic revolution, but it merely provides a quasi-Marxist rationale for the centuries old Chinese conception of the inalienability of any part of the Chinese Empire. The facts are that during the long war of



liberation the secession slogan was raised to encourage centrifugal forces which might aid the Communists in their struggle with the central authorities. This same tactic was used with great skill by the Bolsheviks in their pre-revolutionary agitation in Russia. But since the Russian Revolution came first from above and was only consolidated after a civil war, it was necessary to keep the attractive right of secession plus a less centralised federal structure to attract the former constituent parts of the Russian Empire. Federalism now became a centripetal force. But the Chinese situation was different. The revolution from below culminated in the seizure of the central state apparatus only after the country was almost entirely secured. The Chinese then had no reason to, nor any intentions of, taking a step backward in following the Russian example and allowing the right of separation -- even though this right is under the complete control of the Russian Communist Party and has been a dead letter since 1923.<sup>13</sup>

Though Marxism could provide the reason for a differing form for the state, I would submit it provides no basis for the inalienability of one inch of any Socialist country. Article 2 of the Programme for Enforcement of Regional Autonomy passed at the 125th Government Affairs Commission (G A C) meeting (22/2/52) and ratified at the 18th Central People's Government (CPG) Council meeting (8/8/52) which declared the inseparability of autonomous districts had only Chinese Imperial History as its precedent.<sup>14</sup> Sinkiang was never to be granted juridical basis for leaving the Chinese State -- even if it wanted to join another socialist country. Replying to American rumours of Soviet Russian intrigue in the area, Burhan Shahidi, then Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Peoples Government, proclaimed his fealty to Peking as early



as January 1950:

Today on behalf of the 5,300,000 people of 14 nationalities in Sinkiang, I declare that Sinkiang is an inseparable part of the territory of the People's Republic of China. We people of various nationalities in the entire province will unite firmly and closely with our brothers, the people throughout the country, to strive for the construction of an independent democratic, peaceful, unified, strong, and prosperous People's Republic of China under the leadership of the Central People's Government and our great and wise leader, Chairman Mao Tse-Tung.<sup>15</sup> (*Italics mine*)

The relative caution in Chinese policy will become apparent when we proceed to the actual application of policy in Sinkiang. We shall also observe an intensification of both Chinese (Chauvinist) and Communist elements.

In early January of 1950, the Nationalities Affairs Commission (NAC) received a telegram from the Mohammedan Culture Promotion Association stating that "the 200,000 Mohammedans in Sinkiang pledge sincere support to the policy toward nationalities stipulated in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and pledge to exert efforts to accomplish the revolution of constructing the new China."<sup>16</sup> Though a previous Peking report had noted 2.5 million Muslims in the area,<sup>17</sup> it would seem that the programme toward the minorities was being consciously designed to enlist their support in reorganising the traditional society. Until the regime could thoroughly organise its power in the minority areas, this goal could best be achieved by united front type People's Representatives Conferences of all Circles, democratic coalition governments and other front organisations to attract local personages and leaders. The purposes of these conferences were to "discuss the central task of the locality, to propagate the national policy of unity and cooperation . . .



... (and) to arrive at a unanimous opinion."<sup>18</sup> It was quite obvious that these organs were to provide the stamp of mass approval to legitimacy for and the means of acquainting the minorities with, policies determined in the national Centre. One such group, the Sinkiang People's Democratic League (reorganised from the pre-1949 Sinkiang League for Defence of Peace and Democracy) was to have as constituent members cultural associations of Uighurs, Kazakhs, Khalkhas, Muslims (Hui), Uzbeks, Tatars, Mongols, Russians, Sibos, and Solons.<sup>19</sup> Such a large and diffuse organ could not be more than a listening body and any actual governmental work was done by its fifteen man executive committee headed by the Communist, Saifudin. The rules governing local governments made them quite clearly subordinate in every way to the "higher levels".<sup>20</sup> Though progressive elements might be absorbed into the administration, people's democratic dictatorship based on the leadership of the working class was to prevail.

The first phase of nationalities policy called for these coalition type groups to assist The Central Government in effectuating democratic reform in the area. Agrarian Kuomintang (KMT) agents, bandits, rural despots (in other words, opposition groups) had been eliminated and interest on land had been reduced. Only after reform could there be elections to the People's Congresses.<sup>21</sup> Typical of early events, the first People's Conference of all Circles in Kashgar passed a rash of resolutions on reform and created a seventeen People's Consultative Committee as the highest organ in the city. It is noteworthy that of the 259 members of the conference, though 77% were Uighurs, a rather disproportion. to 18.5% were Han Chinese.<sup>22</sup> This small detail serves to highlight two of the central government's main needs in effecting its



policies -- Communist cadres and Han Chinese (the two are often identical on higher levels). We shall later comment on the thousands of Hans brought into Sinkiang since 1949, but the pressing need at the time was for cadres and Communists. In February 1950 Saifudin, then Vice Chairman of the Sinkiang People's Provincial Government, and ten other "finest sons of the various nationalities of Sinkiang who have for years taken part in the revolutionary struggle of the Sinkiang peoples under the influence of Communist ideology" were admitted to the Party.<sup>23</sup> This honour for the Uighur Saifudin was no doubt in part merited by his abilities at the bargaining table displayed a month earlier in Moscow when he was a member of the Chinese delegation.<sup>24</sup> By May, 225 more government workers were admitted, as were 289 New China Democratic Youth and applications reputedly kept coming in.<sup>25</sup> Though a Russian source claims that cooperation in its lowest forms began in 1950 and that by 1952 reform throughout the region was carried out<sup>26</sup>, this was not the case. Thoroughgoing reform had to be delayed until cadres were recruited -- thus caution and care was the order of the day for both reform and instituting regional autonomy.<sup>27</sup>

Much fanfare was made of the policy to train minority cadres and to admit them in large numbers into the Party. The reasons behind the vigorous campaign were not simply a lack of any kind of personnel or a love of the nationalities. A hint was given by Ma Wen-jui, director of the Organisation Department of the Northwest Party Bureau, when he complained that in some administrative organs in the Northwest as much as 70% were old retrained personnel and young intellectuals.<sup>28</sup> This



staff was highly undesirable because, being mainly of "bourgeois" origin, they were not steeled by the revolution and were unwilling to serve the people the way the Party required. They were imbued with "liberalism" and the "concept of hired." Hsi Chung-hsun, 1st Secretary of the Northwest Party Bureau, outlined a programme of intensive training with top priority for the working class, then young intellectuals who join the revolutionary work, active peasant elements, old personnel, and all persons willing to cooperate -- in that order. The same drive appears to have taken place throughout Sinkiang. Non-Communists in government agencies found themselves slighted by their Communist co-workers.<sup>29</sup> Of course, the sudden influx into the Party also disrupted plans -- because of the inexperience of the new cadres (these were 90% of the manpower in some local activities) and the "bureaucratism" and "commandism" of the veterans who could not adjust to the post revolutionary situation.<sup>30</sup> Instances of fraud, corruption, waste and mismanagement occurred with staggering losses to the State. Reports could not be trusted -- the cadres either made them pessimistic to shirk work or unduly optimistic to obtain commendation. "Indiscriminate" beatings, scoldings, threats, punishments and arrests were the excesses of tax collecting agencies as well as undue pressure against the well-to-do. Officials had to remind these agencies that only security and law-enforcement organs had the power to arrest. This anti-bureaucratic campaign which began in the Northwest and swept the entire country, culminated in a great Party reform or "purifying" to check the influx of careerists. From 21 September (1951) for two and one-half months there was to be education on Communism and the Party, followed by forty days (from 6 December) of registration, examination and approval of Party



members' qualifications, and last a thirty day period (from 16 January 1952) at branch organ reform.<sup>31</sup> All of these events could not help but arrest the proposed agrarian reform supposedly underway in Sinkiang. Radical change demanded a large corps of reliable minority cadres to persuade, by one method or another, the masses to alter their habitual way of life. The People's Liberation Army was busy enough fighting rebel groups. The PLA had allegedly annihilated 5,000 of Osman Bator's forces in April 1950,<sup>32</sup> before over 13,000 men of nine Kazakh tribes "who had joined in error" and 46 White Russians surrendered.<sup>33</sup> Armed resistance on this scale suggests that an important segment of the population was only persuaded with the greatest difficulty.

Unable to effect successfully large scale reorganization of the production relations, the Second All Sinkiang Party Congress belatedly criticised the policy that led to an "adventurous advance" instead of a cautious advance.<sup>34</sup> Not until the winter of that year (1952) and the spring of the next would peasant land ownership be established and the landlord system eliminated. The nationalities in the pastoral areas, for reasons which shall be later discussed, were to get an even longer breathing spell while bandits were cleaned up and counterrevolutionaries suppressed. There was no class distinction made here, no struggle with hardowners or distribution of their property -- "feudal prerogatives" of landowners were to be eliminated only step by step with no adventurist or radical measures. The stock must be saved at all costs -- including doctrine. Though agrarian reform was postponed, it was accompanied by a vigorous political campaign to correct mistakes in the nationalities work. The QAC, after promulgation of measures on instituting local national democratic coalition governments



and guarantees of equality to scattered minorities, ordered these provisions, Ulanfu's report on the minority work, and a People's Daily editorial of 14 August to be studied intently in the minority areas.<sup>35</sup> Cadres of a "higher cultural and political level" (undoubtedly Hans) were also to read the Marxist-Leninist theories and Mao's prescriptions on the nationality problem -- a project which was to be completed "according to local conditions" by December 1952. The result of this "check" into minority work was a scathing campaign throughout the year on pan-Hanism such like the anti-Great Russian Chauvinism fulminations which reverberated at every Soviet Communist Party Congress up to 1939.

I believe the main reason for this campaign was the imminence of the first five-year plan. The minority areas like Sinkiang were expected to provide more than their share of raw materials, labour, and productivity to this mammoth undertaking. To obtain these, more central control was demanded. This meant enlisting legions of dedicated minority Communists. Unfortunately for Peking, the areas of compact minority settlement were opposed to widespread Han domination and immigration. This produced conflict. The resistance to centre-planned reforms and the presence of Han Chinese in leadership posts heightened the tension. This time, by analysing the situation "in the present stage" objectively, a whipping boy in Han Chauvinism was discovered. The leadership most likely reasoned that by conducting a campaign against the Han-cadres, they would gain more confidence among the nationalities, achieve native cadres through the campaign to nationalise (nativise) autonomous organs, and point out the glaring administrative deficiencies which were impeding the Plan's groundwork. Whenever possible, cadres had to adopt national styles in their work.<sup>36</sup>



To be sure, Han Chauvinism did exist, but it was not a result of residual bourgeois thinking. It was fated to occur when the "superior" Han proletariat was entrusted with carrying out a Han-type revolution in the countryside which was largely non-Han and politically backward. It is reasonable to assume that the traditional leaders and their followers would feel the effect of "great power chauvinism" as their authority was undermined and their society transformed. Many Chinese cadres seem sincerely to have attempted to rid themselves of centuries-old attitudes toward the smaller peoples but in so large an enterprise involving so many inexperienced persons political, economic and social "chauvinism" was destined to abound.

The nation-wide investigations revealed general disrespect for religious beliefs, customs, habits and minority languages.<sup>37</sup> For example in Kweichow and Honan the native languages were forbidden and women had to wear Han costume. Inferior land was allotted to the nationalities; in some areas credits or relief funds earmarked for the minorities by the Central Government were held back (Kwangsi held back 38% of its minority education allotment) and reforms were rashly attempted when "conditions were lacking" or by "mechanically" applying Han experience. So many instances of rank injustice against the nationalities were discovered that no mere bureaucratic perversion such as "commandism" could possibly explain the aberrations. A more basic reason had to be found -- the pernicious and "serious existence of the Pan-Hanist ideology" which had become "the major danger". This was the first great deviation in minority areas and it had to be fought to insure the successful execution of the five year plan. This was not explicitly stated nor was the plan publicised for two more years, but a clue was provided by NAC Chairman Li



Wei-han at that body's third Enlarged Conference in the fall of 1953. Whereas before, domestic work in minority areas was political, he explained, the general trend would be gradually changed and equal attention would be given to political work as well as economic and cultural construction -- "particularly the improvement and development of production."<sup>38</sup> The meaning is unequivocal. With the advent of the battle for production in earnest -- a concomitant of the five-year plans in Soviet Russia -- the political struggle for authority and allegiance in minority areas would combine with intense economic revolution in the countryside to secure food and raw materials.

The natural resistance of the people to these new economic pressures could best be tackled, it seems, by an indirect assault on it by the anti-Pan-Hanism campaign. The minorities' discomforts were explained not by the calculated policy of social transformation and eventual total regimentation to the plans of the central authorities, but by the irresponsibility and chauvinism of individual Chinese cadres. At the same time there was a concentrated effort to continue the recruitment of nationality cadres. They would not only be more efficient, closer to the masses, and acquainted with national psychology, but they would also divert the mounting anti-Chinese sentiment in many areas. The regime by promoting "nationalisation" of autonomous organs in conjunction with its attack on Chinese Chauvinism would certainly appear as the defender of the minorities and this would facilitate execution of central policies and directives. Two years later it was claimed that in Sinkiang agrarian reform had been carried out in rural areas with a mostly Uighur population of 3.5 million and that 36,000 ~~minority~~ cadres had been recently trained and promoted.<sup>39</sup> In the five autonomous chou and



six autonomous hais by that time established, 84.6% of the 266 government council members were minority nationals -- "thus basically meeting the demand for nationalising the autonomous organs."<sup>40</sup> Some of the consequences of this early flood of minority cadres into the state and Party apparatus later manifested themselves when the area was drenched in a sea of local nationalism and when a wave of bourgeois nationalism swept through the Party ranks. The events of 1957-59 were no accident and one of their causes can be found right here in the first period of agrarian reform and the five year plan.

While the Party ostensibly took the side of the nationalities against Han cadres, it was quick to point out that the minorities would actually have to give more than they would receive in the ensuing agricultural reorganisation. Besides fighting the prime deviation consisting in "lack of concern" for the sufferings of the minorities and insufficient attention in developing their cultural and economic enterprises, the Party combatted a deviation of the "blind demand for excessive results."<sup>41</sup> This was caused by the failure to realise that the country had only just begun economic construction so that "during a long period of time to come" the state would not be able to devote large resources to assist the minorities in the rapid development of their economic and cultural enterprises. Since Sinkiang was scheduled to become an industrial construction base for the motherland,<sup>42</sup> this admonition implied large scale sacrifices from the population with small scale returns. Nevertheless, to overshadow these portents and allay minority fears and opposition, Peking continued to press for the good will and support of its minorities by recommending, in a People's Daily editorial that days should be set aside for fraternisation between nationalities and Party



committees. In addition to these suggestions, the government organs should be guided by "quality not quantity" in assigning Hans to minority areas and should provide them with 10 days to half a month rotation courses in nationality policy training.<sup>43</sup>

After completion of the basic democratic-agrarian reform phase (though it lasted through February 1957 in Yunnan<sup>44</sup>) and the initial anti-chauvinism campaign ancillary to the five year plan, a new stage or emphasis appears in national minority policy. Peking's energies were now devoted to the cooperativisation movement which it claimed was sorely lagging in minority areas. This accrued from the ideological mistake of a "go slow" policy regarding cooperativisation in "complex, backward and scattered" mountain or multinational areas.<sup>44</sup> Cooperatives were needed and desired by the masses. It seems, however, that Party organs in Sinkiang had become discouraged after initial difficulties with them. The article went on to explain that it had been a gross mistake prematurely to force well-to-do peasants into the cooperatives instead of starting with poor and middle peasants who would welcome them. This article, as the majority do from this point on, stresses class divisions in the peasantry and the necessity of correctly dealing with and exploiting the subsequent contradictions. We thus can see Peking's strategy unfolding. Confronted with close-knit national groups, mostly without sharp class divisions, the regime utilizes its agrarian reform to break down the traditional patriarchal-tribal authority structure whose antagonisms are along clan and not class lines. This pattern was especially noticeable in Russian Central Asia among the same minority



peoples which inhabit much of Sinkiang.<sup>45</sup> The Bolsheviks effectively used agrarian reform to promote the "October Revolution in Central Asia" in the twenties and to destroy "the very social and economic institutions which undergirded traditional Moslem Society."<sup>46</sup> Controlled reform after 1924 in this region not only introduced class struggle into the Muslim countryside,<sup>47</sup> developed class consciousness in newly created poor peasants,<sup>48</sup> but also increased the proportion of small holders incapable of self-support.<sup>49</sup> I believe that the Chinese Communists followed much the same pattern, though much less ruthlessly, when faced with the same problem -- preparing these Muslim communities for eventual collectivisation.

Agrarian reform started the process and collectivisation was to exploit the situation. I believe that by a jolting but inequitable reform the regime could create the conditions for the next stage and then "stage" it. Perhaps a comment on the conduct of the land reform in Yunnan may provide a clue:

Since completion of land reform in areas with a population of 1.4 million of the minority nationalities on the Yunnan frontiers, the peasants have each been given land with an annual output of from 400 to 900 catties. Their productivity has been released and their production enthusiasm has been greatly raised. But the backward state of social productivity resulting from historical factors has not yet been basically changed, means of production still insufficient, and poor peasants in many areas are still finding it difficult to maintain their livelihood. Thus the development of production to change the state of property has become a common aspiration.<sup>50</sup> (Italics mine)

It is a strong possibility that concrete conditions giving rise to this "common aspiration" were consciously created as part of the policy to



to turn the nationality problem into a class problem.

The Party's strength in Sinkiang has increased sufficiently by 1955 to start an ambitious cooperativisation drive. In 1953, Kazakh, Kalkas, Hui, Mongol, Tajik, Sibe national autonomous areas (later termed Chou) and hsien were created attesting to its growth and influence.<sup>51</sup> By the time the new stage was well underway, Sinkiang had become the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region<sup>52</sup> with Sailudin as Chairman, and Wang En-mao still First Secretary of the renamed and reorganised SUAR Committee of the CPC.<sup>53</sup> At the same time, the clearly suspect claim to self-sufficiency was made, but I am convinced this was simply to advertise and exaggerate the efficiency and desirability of the mushrooming cooperatives.<sup>54</sup> In Kashgar alone, sixteen state and cooperative shops made their appearance alongside their 2,600 private counterparts while 14% of the handicraftsmen "with the help of the People's Government" were in producers cooperatives or groups.<sup>55</sup> The first "concrete response" to Mao's call for production increase and austerity had produced one of the first collectives in Urumchi with 1,300 Hans, Hui, Uighurs, Kazakhs, Sibos and Russians on 1,200 mow of land in early 1952.<sup>56</sup> One report claimed that the PLA had turned over this land - farm buildings, machinery, horses and all - gratis to the 430 families who were formerly landless peasants or Urumchi poor on 12 February.<sup>57</sup> By June 1955, 66.38% of peasant households were reputedly organised.<sup>58</sup> Most of these, it can be assumed, were mutual aid teams, since it was admitted that the majority of the 1,796 new APC's in southern Sinkiang were federations of mutual aid teams and permanent mutual aid teams "under the leadership of Party branches in rural villages."<sup>59</sup> By these measures, 73% of the first phase of cooperativisation planned for the



October '55 - March '56 period had been accomplished and the second phase had commenced in some areas. The only difficulties admitted at the time were in the pastoral regions.<sup>60</sup> It was not until 1957, that 60% of the cattle raisers could be coralled into cooperatives.<sup>61</sup>

The rapid growth of cooperatives became a nation-wide phenomenon after Mao's speech of 31 July and the Central Committee's resolution of 11 October 1955. High and low level cooperatives became main features of the new period of intensive socialist transformation.<sup>62</sup> The relative gradualness of the Democratic revolution was giving way to the high-tension speed of Socialist Construction. All previous plans were revised and stepped up. Sinkiang and many other minority populated areas proved no exception. The new stress on cooperativisation was also accompanied by a further heightening of the class war. We have noted, that in the previous reforms and first attempts at collectivisation, mainly landless peasants and poor (hired hands etc.) had been entreated and solicited to join. But now "in the present stage of the Socialist Revolution" it was found that not only the poor but the lower strata of the new middle peasants in addition to the old middle peasants -- constituting 60 to 70% of the rural populations -- "are comparatively more ready to accept socialism, and their socialist awakening is more easily roused."<sup>63</sup> These semi-socialist APC's were theoretically designed to appeal to the "socialist" and private interests of the peasants. In this way the enthusiasm of the peasants for individual economy could be led and diverted toward enthusiasm for socialism. It was feared that the middle peasants profiting from basic reforms would develop into a strong capitalist class in the countryside if they were not collectivised. Peking was determined to allow no time for groups



analogous to NEPmen, or kulaks to spring up and threaten Communist control and direction of rural economic construction along lines desired by the Centre. It was thought that the ideological unsteadiness and misgivings of the higher middle peasants would disappear if the cooperative movement was successful enough to attract them. The growth of APC's from 300 at the end of 1951 to some 650,000 by the end of 1955 was considered an index of their popularity. The Communist compulsion to collectivise demanded that this number be increased since it was evident that the sector of agriculture under direct control was far too small to guarantee uniform, speedy, and efficient application of central directives aimed at transforming the economic base of society. The Revolution which had liberated the small and created the middle peasants was now turned against them in the name of the socialist state.

Third Secretary Bulfadin relayed the resolutions and spirit of the Sixth Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee, making it clear that a full-scale reorganisation of SUAR's agriculture must greet the scheduled convocation of the Eighth National Party Congress.<sup>64</sup> Accordingly, the plan for Sinkiang was revised, now calling for 976 more APC's (11,216 in all) by 1957 embracing 360,000 peasant household (40.38% of the total). By 1958, a year earlier than scheduled, the region was to be "basically cooperativised" and there were to be 18,000 agricultural-producer cooperatives with 814,000 households (92%) by 1959. These were, indeed, very ambitious projects more easily planned than executed. The enthusiasm of the planners was so high that the SUAR Party Committee, Party Committees in South Sinkiang and 111 districts, and local CP committees in North Sinkiang had "each to



establish on a trial basis a high stage agricultural-producer cooperative of a completely socialist nature."<sup>65</sup> The opposition and difficulties engendered by such an accelerated programme were widespread and serious. These will be later dealt with when we study the anti-rightist and anti-nationalist campaign. An allusion to the problem involved in this rapid transformation of the minority area was made by Ulanfu at the Eighth Party Congress almost a year later as he reprimanded Party cadres: "they lost sight of the necessity for adopting work steps, work methods, and concrete policies based on the actually prevailing conditions of each nationality."<sup>66</sup> He further rather ingenuously added, "a minority nationality should decide for itself when and how to carry out democratic reforms and socialist transformation."<sup>67</sup> It is very difficult to imagine the feasibility of the last injunction in view of the fact that basic policy pronouncements on reform and construction are decreed from the Centre and must be carried out by all branches of the Party with only tactical variations on delays.

The tempo of reorganisation, far from decreasing, surged radically ahead. The reason becomes more apparent when we discover that Sinkiang was to become "an ideal industrial zone of the Fatherland" in the second five year plan.<sup>68</sup> This meant that agriculture had to be well in hand to provide raw materials (cotton etc.) and food for an increased urban population. With this in mind, no doubt, the Sinkiang Party committee decided that "the whole region will advance by one year the basic realisation of the semi-socialist sector of agriculture."<sup>69</sup> The same directive enjoined local authorities to prepare the conditions for realising complete socialist cooperativisation in the Spring of 1957. Though lower-type APC's reputedly numbered only 10,286 and contained 50% of



peasant households, this 28 January directive demanded that the northern half of Sinkiang increase the number of families in APC's to 80% and the southern half to 70% by the spring plowing. In just 3 short months, the original plan calling for basic cooperativisation of Sinkiang by 1959 had been revised twice: once to 1958 and now to the Spring of 1957. It was to be an incredible undertaking that could not but profoundly uproot and dislocate the native peoples. The already beleaguered peasants could not even escape joining on the ground that they could not afford it. It was later claimed that "during the high tide of cooperativisation in 1956, the banks . . . also issued more than 16 million yuan in cooperative-fund loans to poor peasants which provided more than 350,000 households and poor peasants with capital shares to join cooperatives."<sup>70</sup> These measures (and violence later admitted) enabled Saifudin to claim in October 1956 that 92% cooperativisation of peasant households (scheduled for 1959 in the second revised plan of December 1955) had already been achieved.<sup>71</sup>

I am inclined to believe even more strongly that the rapid cooperativisation in Sinkiang was spurred on with an eye toward future exploitation of its industrial potential for two other reasons. They are 1) the presence of a large number of Soviet industrial experts and projects and 2) a comparison with policies in other minority areas. Sinkiang had been a region of Soviet economic activity before 1949 and Russian technicians had discovered untapped resources for industrial development of the area.<sup>72</sup> In the ten years since the signing of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty many of the 10,800 Russian experts in China have "helped" Sinkiang, according to the Secretary General of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association.<sup>73</sup> In mid 1950, Hurhan said that the Sino-Soviet Stock companies developing oil and nonferrous metals in the area



would make Sinkiang "a heavy industry center for China."<sup>74</sup> We have already noted that Saifudin was in Moscow for a few months in early 1950 as part of the Chinese delegation and he certainly was there to discuss the future industrial development of Sinkiang.<sup>75</sup> The Chinese press has contained many articles on the encouraging findings of Soviet scientific expeditions. Burhan notes that Soviet geologists in the Jungaria and Tarim basins had trained 100 prospecting squads which discovered minerals and oil deposits. He also points to modern industrial plants like the October Motor Repair Works and Urumchi Thermo Power Plant - built before 1955 - which are all equipped with modern Soviet machinery and were constructed with the aid of Soviet experts.<sup>76</sup> All these data, I believe, confirm the region's special role as an industrial base and thus necessitated a swift resolution of the agricultural problem.

If we look at another area, for example Yunnan, the situation is quite different. This is a province which does not offer attractive industrial prospects and thus permits the pursuance of a cautious policy for transforming nationality areas. It is also true that the minority settlements here are in a sensitive position vis-a-vis China's neighbours. Events here reverberate throughout Southeastern Asia, and Peking has studiously geared its policies to this consideration. At the very time when Sinkiang was racing ahead with collectivisation, the emphasis in Yunnan was on agrarian reform through peaceful consultations.<sup>77</sup> Cadres were to take into account the lack of experience in frontier areas in effecting cooperativisation. The comrades were exhorted to oppose rigid application of inland experience while the rate of cooperativisation should not be too high. Circumspect and steady advance was the theme. Before building APC's in groups, experience should be acquired from "trial



operation". The development figure was kept within 5% during the first year! Throughout the effort, patience was exhorted while "subjectivism and great powerism in the frontier areas" was guarded against. In an area with a population of 1,420,000 less than one thousand APC's were built -- and then only on trial. Reports from Yunnan stand in marked contrast to the feverish pitch of development planned for Sinkiang during the same period of time.

But we shall see that even the relatively moderate line pursued in Yunnan evoked strong opposition from the minority ranks. The many instances of Chinese coercion and disregard for the feelings and desires of the minorities were deeply resented by these peoples and as soon as opportunity presented itself they gave voice to their objections most vociferously. Resistance had been mounting from the very beginning of Chinese Communist operations on the local level. During the <sup>1</sup>initial stages of revolution in the countryside, all resistance had been officially attributed to Han Chauvinism or outright counterrevolution. However, this policy was reversed soon after the "blooming and contending" period in the spring of 1956. The hostile attitudes and actions manifested in this brief lull before the storm, gave Peking to realise that it would have to clamp down and extirpate a new source of opposition to its political, economic and social objectives. This new heresy was local or bourgeois nationalism and it threatened to discredit and destroy all that the regime was trying to accomplish. The danger as the Central Authorities saw it was all the more acute with respect to Sinkiang because of its tradition of relatively autonomous self-government -- mainly by satraps sent from the Centre but barely recognising its authority.<sup>78</sup> To prevent any semblance of autarchy -- which might have developed if the



Party minority leadership were affected -- the disease had to be given its real name and combatted mercilessly. It is this battle which characterises the next two stages we shall review.

## PART II

### THE OF CRISIS

1

Reaction to the Centre's Policies and the Suppression of  
Local Nationalism



## PART II

### TIME OF TROUBLES

1

#### Reaction to the Centre's Policies and the Suppression of Local Nationalism



The setting for the most publicised outburst against the Government's measures for developing China which led to the anti-rightist and anti-rightist and anti-local nationalism campaigns was provided by Mao Tse-Tung's celebrated "Hundred Flowers" speech in early 1956. During this time when the regime seemed genuinely interested in hearing new ideas, minority leaders as well as intellectuals in general were urged to bloom and contend. It is most likely that the spirit of the XX CPSU Congress in addition to the Polish and Hungarian ferments charged the air and emboldened many a person to speak out. It has been suggested that the Party may have decided to maintain its "bloom and contend" policy not only to give people a chance to air their grievances in the open but also to provide a starting point for a rectification campaign to strengthen the Party itself ideologically (it had grown to an unprecedented eleven million).<sup>79</sup> To elicit more criticism, Mao delivered his speech on "Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" on, 27 February 1957 (not published in full until June), which stated that contradictions could be prevented from becoming antagonisms through open public discussion. Meanwhile, the CC issued a directive for a nationwide rectification campaign against bureaucracy, sectarianism and subjectivism on 27 April.<sup>80</sup> Fairly soon, the prodding produced the desired effects and criticisms came flowing in.

The Sinkiang Party Committee invited democratic personalities to criticise the Party and help in its rectification.<sup>81</sup> The response was immediate. The minority chief of the grain department complained of pan-Hanism, the deficiency of nationality cadres and the low political and



moral qualities of the Han cadres. Another personage revealed that the Sinkiang CPPCC committee did not heed the people's demands and that it was impossible to communicate with the United Front department of the Party. In the same report, another minority leader declared that nationality leadership was a sham due to the dearth of minority cadres. The "commanders in name" had to delegate work to chauvinistic Hans who would not perform their tasks. The minority leaders are afraid to speak of this situation because it is "not convenient". Not only was the personnel department at fault in not assigning minority cadres but other departments were not providing the proper training. Obviously Han cadres were at a disadvantage in field work because they were ignorant of the local languages. This deplorable situation had been recognised as early as January in Peking, and it was emphasised that Hans could not replace minorities in cultural work since they had no blood ties or connexion with the nationalities' culture.<sup>82</sup> Resolutions had been made to improve this condition.<sup>83</sup>

The early complaints appeared in the press with little comment. The Party in Sinkiang just busied itself in preparing for a rectification of its "working style".<sup>84</sup> Wang En-mao, did note that "quite a few contradictions have sprung up between cadres and members of the cooperatives" but Sinkiang might put off the campaign so as not to worsen them and bring in a bad harvest.<sup>85</sup> Mao's speech on contradictions could meanwhile be discussed and explained to the masses.<sup>86</sup> The Sinkiang students at the Central Institute for Nationalities in Peking began to complain of discrimination, pan-Hanism, lack of respect for minority languages, customs and diets and criticise strongly the leadership cadres of the Nationality



Affairs Commissions for being "unapproachable".<sup>87</sup> Even in Yunnan there were found serious contradictions which were said to be deepened by the "bureaucratism, sectarianism, and subjectivism" of the Han cadres.<sup>88</sup>

Many of these same complaints had been attacked by Ulanfu as short comings and deficiencies in work methods at the VIII Party Congress in 1956.<sup>89</sup> He recognised that in some areas, minorities in leading Party positions had not increased in years. Han chauvinism was treated lengthily as the major dangerous tendency. Local nationalism was simply mentioned as an overemphasis on national peculiarities and an unwillingness to accept the beneficial experience of other peoples (notably Han Chinese). It seemed that the "numerous mistakes" were the result of wrong techniques or analyses - overemphasising or underestimating difficulties and the like. Saifudin agreed that the 6500 Party members in the area (3400 since 1950 with 81.8% representing local nationalities) and the 100,000 cadres (50,000 minority workers) simply were not enough. The 2500 basic level Party organs could not take care of the vast programme planned for the SUAR. The source of many difficulties still was Han chauvinism, though Saifudin also urged opposing any dominant-nationality chauvinism of the Uighurs in relation to the other minorities.

In the latter half of 1957, there was a significant shift. After the scathing criticisms which hit the Party all over the People's Republic, the regime staged a counter offensive. The scope of discontent evidently surprised and startled Peking and it was decided to keep silent no longer. After June, the Party converted its rectification campaign into a means of



attacking its "rightist" detractors. This did not get under way immediately in minority areas, for in August Peking was still admitting that Han cadres still held a monopoly of decision making<sup>90</sup> or that insufficient consideration had been given to the needs and characteristics of the minorities in socialist construction and transformation.<sup>91</sup> By November, however, Wang Feng declared that parochial nationalism had spread among many nationalities "to a dangerous point" and that it was now necessary to oppose it.<sup>92</sup> The central leadership had already sent a directive prescribing that an anti-rightist struggle be conducted among the nationalities. Within a few days conferences of nationalities cadres were called and the attack on local nationalism was in high gear. In Urumchi, the intellectuals were said to have succumbed to the poison in particular. The Director of Public Security declared that for "several" years they had fomented this ideology by demanding national independence, formation of an "Eastern Turkistan", the establishment of a "nationalities Party" and the exclusion of Han cadres and people.<sup>93</sup> The people calling for revival of the old Russian sponsored 1944-9 East Turkistan Republic might indeed have been active during the flourishing of the Republic though in the main the old leaders either emigrated, were killed or were purged.<sup>94</sup> I must hasten to point out, however, that not all of the alleged nationalist activity was really separatist-motivated. So much that was simply the age-old phenomenon of the periphery striving against the Centre for more freedom of action was unfortunately labeled local nationalism. In this way the distinction between dangerous political movements and valid but "fraternal" criticism became blurred and the campaign became more furious. A nationalist seemed to be lurking behind every tree.

The same phenomenon occurred in Kashgar. Earlier in the month



(November), the city cadres had simply emphasized the need of socialist education to counter the rightist minority intellectuals who were anti-socialist and therefore anti-Party.<sup>95</sup> It was hoped that a more rectification of Party working style would effectively raise the socialist ideological consciousness of the people. A small trend toward nationalism was noted but was viewed as part of the general right deviation and was not emphasized. The situation changed, though, after the Central directive on nationalities struggle. This time, a local nationalist tendency of two year's standing was suddenly discovered! This was supposedly utilised by some bourgeois elements and landlords posing as minority chauvinists, to agitate the masses and slander the Party and Socialism during the "bloom and contending" period. The main complaint of this group was about the large number of newly arrived Hans, who disproportionately held leadership positions. This seems <sup>1</sup>a genuine and understandable fear since Chinese had been pouring into Sinkiang ever since it had been decided to develop the region intensively. In June 1956 40,000 peasants from Honan alone had been reported going to 20 mechanised farms in Sinkiang.<sup>96</sup> With the development of the oil industry in Sinkiang, the government noted that scores of skilled labourers from all over China had been transferred to Karamai. The enthusiasm reported for this "voluntary" migration (volunteers often remained without their families for a while) is illustrated by one reaction: "when the news that young Communist Party member Wang Heun-hai volunteered for the transfer reached his lover, she immediately started to wash his beddings and get his winter clothes ready."<sup>97</sup> The native peoples had just cause to worry about being flooded with Chinese especially as they watched their neighbours in Kazakhstan being submerged in a sea of Russians.



Sinkiang newspapers began to report arrests of counterrevolutionaries who either had founded a "China Peasant Party" to seize arms and loot the cooperatives with the aid of convicts in "labour for reform" work,<sup>98</sup> had incited peasant disturbances<sup>99</sup>, or had agitated the people.<sup>100</sup> These scanty reports shed some light on one of the main causes of minority disaffection. The peasants were the major problem and their attempts to sabotage the regime's cooperativisation effort was at the root of much of the talk about local nationalism. This is quite natural, for in opposing the attempted collectivisation, the Uighur peasant was stating his preference for the traditional - but national in the eyes of the Han Chinese way of life. In view of the very rapid nature of the cooperativisation, the mistreatment by Chinese officials, the inevitable enmity aroused, it is logical that resentment would take on a national flavour. In spite of all pronouncements to the contrary, the process of modernisation and cooperativisation was often looked upon as one more attempt by the Chinese to oppress and dominate the minorities. Many of the older leaders, therefore, found it easy to stir up national feelings in defence of their peoples. In opposing collectivisation, the minority peoples stressed their desire to keep to their traditional ways. The Party, however, interpreted this not only as tantamount to choosing the capitalist road but also as narrow nationalism. Minority leaders in the Party itself fell victim to this charge if they tried to slow down the rate of mobilisation. They often realized that the temper of the populace at certain times would make execution of the agricultural policies very difficult or would yield adverse results. The Centre, however, had decided to maximise the exploitation of the region resources<sup>101</sup> and objections to this policy constituted a serious deviation.



The Party found it difficult to answer the charge that cooperativisation was being used by the Hans to destroy the national characteristics of the various peoples. The peoples feared their indiscriminate levelling in a common mass society with an overwhelmingly Chinese configuration if Han-devised socialism were effected. The Party met these fears of "disappearance" either with charges of hypernationalism or by proposing ambiguous and nebulous safeguards. For instance, one weak reply stated:

"... (A)s the historical conditions of the national minorities are different and their circumstances are complicated, it is necessary to take fully into consideration when carrying out social reforms and launching the cooperativisation movement, the special features of the development of the national minorities and their customs and practices. To adopt suitable methods and measures, to combine better the basic principles of socialism with the actual circumstances of the nationalities and to unify the generalities with the peculiarities, so as to develop work more effectively and promote the forward progress of the economic and cultural development of the national minorities."<sup>102</sup>

Such a vague statement could not offer protection to the distinctive customs of the Sinkiang peoples especially when the same statement emphasised that only customs favourable to "progress" would be respected. The real danger to the nationalities is apparent even in the first statement. It is obvious that if all customs and national traditions are the product of historical-economic forces (as the Communists continually declare), as Peking consciously and deliberately moves the clock ahead, she shall just as consciously and deliberately try to strip the historically "backward" customs from the minorities. This is the logical implication of the Chinese theory.

The spectre of nationality obliteration not only affected the people at large but also had a deleterious influence on trusted minority



cadres. Complaints were made of attempted fusion and the only reply was that the Party opposes forcible fusion whereas natural fusion is a progressive trend of history. In particular,

The gradual fusion of the various nationalities on the basis of equality is the natural law governing social development. However, the fusion of the nationalities will certainly not be accomplished within a short time, but will need a long historical process. . . certain signs of fusion have appeared among the nationalities. This is not undesirable, on the contrary, it is desirable.<sup>103</sup> (*Italics mine*)

It might be true that there is a "natural law" favouring assimilation but what bothered the minorities was that if history were not allowed to unfold "naturally" because the highly self-conscious party of the proletariat was rapidly remaking the country, this "natural" law might also be speeded up along with the general historical process under the Party's deliberate and calculated direction. This fear was of course bolstered by many statements by Han Chinese and by their predominance in Party organs. A natural reaction to this state of affairs was an attempt to give the Party a "nationalist" character.<sup>104</sup> But worst of all, local nationalism was not only a problem among the cadres but it had reached the leadership.<sup>105</sup>

An enlarged conference of the Sinkiang Party Committee (spring and summer 1958) was called to fight the rightists and nationalists inside the Party. Zhya Sainati, director of the region's Cultural Department, secretary of its Party branch and chairman of the Writers League was expelled along with Ibrahim Turdi, Party Secretary and director of the Civil Affairs Department, Abdurahim Aissa, deputy head of the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou, Ah Said, mayor of Urunchi, and Abdul-kisak Kari, deputy director of the region's Commerce department.<sup>106</sup> These men and



others were accused of attacking assimilation, forming anti-Party cliques, demanding an independent republic, a federal republic, "East Turkestan", "Uighurstan" etc. in order to solve the nationality problem. The conference was ruthless in its condemnation of those elements who wanted to stop the cooperativisation to protect the "so-called" traditions and characteristics of the nationalities. If the criticisms are reliable it seems the dissenters hoped that international tension or a "Hungarian-type" incident would facilitate independence. The condemnation contains many questionable allegations but it appears that the main crimes of the deviationists consisted in opposing collectivisation, criticising the use of troops in production and construction as causing "contradictions between armed and unarmed peasants", condoning protest riots as "justifications taken by the people" and attempting to nativise state business and scholastic organs ("assigning landlords, rich peasants, bad elements and Counterrevolutionaries").

As the purge gathered momentum more opposition and even more revealing denunciations were disclosed. A group sanctioning the popular uprisings as not being counterrevolutionary and which had "grasped for" Party leadership positions was summarily dealt with.<sup>107</sup> The leader of an anti-Communist national salvation army was discovered and armed attacks were reported in Chekiang.<sup>108</sup> Intellectuals were particularly hard hit and the Kashgar committee which had been among the first to attack the rightist intellectuals underwent a thorough cleansing. The opposition of the intellectuals was of course attributed to their bourgeois background and their having been long out of touch with the masses. But we have seen that it was precisely the masses who were resisting the policies of the Party and their resistance was often echoed by their higher



placed spokesman. Saimati had declared that "Sinkiang does not need the Han people, and Sinkiang should belong to us; if we do not have enough people, we can call back the Uighurs and the Kazakhs from the Soviet Union."<sup>109</sup> While this statement might have been distorted, there are indications that many others supported its spirit.

Many of the purgers themselves were later found unreliable and were caught up in the general housecleaning. The Governor and President of the People's Court in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou had supported the rectification and anti-nationalism campaign in late 1957.<sup>110</sup> Less than a year later they and their cohorts were purged for anti-party activities.<sup>111</sup> The rightist purge came to resemble a regular Party cleansing operation similar to that pattern already established in the Soviet Union. No longer was it confined to a small group inside or outside the apparatus, for increasing numbers of cadres, leaders, and ordinary peasants became involved. There had been revolts in Khotan in December 1954 and March 1956 but these had been merely "counterrevolutionary."<sup>112</sup> Many of the culprits accused of killing and injuring scores had been released when, after "education", they exposed their organisation and accomplices. All opposition hereafter, however, became an ideological deviation and could not be treated so lightly. Henceforth there would be "severe ideological criticism and lenient disciplinary action."<sup>113</sup> The leniency did not exclude expulsion but it probably did preclude stiff criminal prosecution. Centrifugal resistance to Peking's programme has continued, however, and Burhan's 1951 claim that all hearts were centred on Chairman Mao and on the capital in which he lives<sup>114</sup> seems to have been a little less than accurate.



### **PART III**

#### **THE REVOLUTION RESURGENT**

##### **The Centre attempts total transformation**



The first two stages of policy toward the nationalities, we have seen were empirical, cautious, almost a "feeling-out" of the situation and an attempt to lay the groundwork for the mammoth reorganization of society. As if shocked and shamed by this initial gradual and not too revolutionary approach, the regime seemed to chide itself for its seemingly pragmatic approach and initiated a third stage, featuring a rapid revolution designed drastically to change the face of the Sinkiang countryside. Because this prospect indicated the demise of traditional Muslim culture with grave implications for the continued existence of the minorities as identifiable groups, and also because there chance to occur a short period of relatively free criticism, the ever growing resistance to Peking's pressures erupted in the turbulent fourth period of strident criticism, armed rebellion and dangerous separatism. We have also seen how the regime attempted to meet the challenge. Before long a vigorous counter offensive on the ideological front marked the prelude for the bold big leap forward on the economic front which usher in the fifth and sixth stages. It is not until the State had been jolted from its self-assuredness during the fourth phase of its treating with the minorities that I find a long preserved moderation in three areas begins to flag. I believe it was at this time that treatment toward religion, the upper strata and the herdsmen was re-evaluated and new policy measures determined. It is the reappraisal in this sector that begins to gnaw away at that caution to which I alluded in the opening pages of this paper. However, I believe we will observe how even this revision of tactics was done "cautiously", so to speak.

If it has been difficult for a new, vigorous, politically suc-



cessful, anticlerical regime to achieve a modus vivendi with its largely religiously oriented and clerical-minded citizenry in the West of the last couple of centuries, we can imagine the magnitude of the task awaiting a newly installed Communist government. In Sinkiang we have a situation in which a revolutionary regime dedicated to a dogmatic militant atheism must somehow enlist in its design for total transformation the support of a strongly religious, near-feudal, tribe and kinship conscious, industrially backward, in part nomadic population. Not only is religion strongly entrenched but this particular faith — the Islamic — is a highly institutionalized and social religion embracing the whole community and reaching into its everyday activities on almost every level. Not only is this religion a strong social phenomenon but it is also a term of national self-identification. The attack by Russian Communists on other Russians believing in the Orthodox faith did not constitute national oppression but only suppression of religious freedom. Attacks by Chinese atheists on the religious practices of Uighurs, Tajiks, Kazakhs, Tatars, Hui etc. — practices considered by these peoples as less religious but traditional or national habits — become, in effect, national or racial discrimination and oppression. The Communists themselves realised this and while they vigorously persecuted Christians and Taoists and to some extent Buddhists, they stayed their hand in regard to the Muslim masses. Religion was put to good use. Mullahs and religious leaders in Sinkiang were invited to take part in the government and 3500 mullahs and believers from 46 Tihua (Urumchi) mosques had been utilised to demonstrate against aggressive war in 1951.<sup>115</sup> Indeed a China Institute of Islamic Theology was established in November 1955 not only to train imams but to educate young Muslims in "the spirit of patriotism." A year later it was decided



to expand this by adding a research centre which would study questions such as the life of Muslims and the situation of religion in China as compared with other countries.<sup>116</sup> A better way for instilling loyalty in the clergy has not been invented -- unless crypto-Communists or sympathetic figureheads are planted in religious organisations. I have reason to believe the latter tactic has also been employed to considerable advantage.

As I have intimated, the religious problem in Sinkiang is complicated not only by the nature of the Islamic religion itself but by the social and economic structure of the society. Religious leaders are very often tribal, clan or national leaders. An open attack on the leading lights of the minority groups would not only lead to violent and costly opposition but would result in a great deal of anarchy, once traditional symbols of authority were eliminated. While a determined and self-conscious political party is better equipped to cope with anarchical situations produced by the social pulverisation and atomisation attendant on a radical revolutionary upheaval, in this instance the CPC was seriously limited by paucity of members and alien composition. It was far more practical to utilise the existing leaders -- the "upper strata" -- who while not actually wielding ultimate political power were guided by impulses emanating from the Centre and interpreted by emissaries of the Centre in the region. Granting the practicality of ruling vicariously for a period of time -- especially granting the availability of adequate and ultimately persuasive restraints on the authority of the native leadership, -- the policy pursued by Party and State toward the upper strata, religious leaders and nomadic chieftains is not astonishing. From the beginning, the major function of the united front was



to utilise and neutralise the old minority prestige corps. At the VIII Party Congress Ulanfu reaffirmed that "long-term unity, cooperation and negotiations with the upper circles of the national minorities should be maintained in carrying out reforms."<sup>117</sup> He recognised that certain concessions would be required of the Communists but this was entirely correct if they were beneficial to the work of reconstruction. Burhan went further to say that because of the policies of the united front, the religious circles, Uighur upper strata and democratic personages of other nationalities and circles had been "generally united" in Sinkiang.<sup>118</sup> The pattern for dealing with the upper strata was similar to the strategy used with the national bourgeoisie -- the "buying out" policy -- and was spelled out in detail in a report on its progress in Yunnan.<sup>119</sup> Arrangements were made for the "political status" of the upper circles and care was taken of their "livelihood." After land reform the consultative organs were expanded to include more of the native leaders -- more than 100% in Yunnan. These leaders actually possessed little more than ceremonial power but they were "consulted", "informed" and acquainted with state policy and were made to feel they participated in the administration of their regions. Those who had met with difficulty as a result of "giving up exploitation" after the reforms, the state actually subsidised for definite periods. Even those who did not take part in work were given the same amount of land as that allotted to the peasants who did.

After the anti-government outburst which led to the anti-local nationalism campaign the largely generous policy to those leaders who survived the early armed clashes was somewhat revised. It was decided to strike back at those religious and tribal leaders who had rebelled but at the same time circumspection was enjoined. While it was admitted that



some of the upper strata were against socialism, they were said to be "fundamentally different from the rightists" and merely "contradictions within the ranks of the people" were involved.<sup>120</sup> They were criticised but the united front was maintained. There was evidently a leftist opposition to the front and religious freedom as long-term policies because the contrasting views of "some people" were discredited at length. Even two years after the 1957 campaign, it was stated that the majority of the upper strata religious circles was patriotic and law-abiding, engaged in self-reform, took part in productive labour and supported Party policies. The erring ones could be "educated" it was felt, and the principle of "severe ideological criticism and lenient disciplinary action" was the order of the day. Through criticism and self-criticism in Sinkiang, the vast majority thus dealt with were reputedly "genuinely convinced."<sup>121</sup> Of course, matters on religion were not always looked upon so leniently. Earlier a request for Arabic as the national language of the Hui autonomous Chou at Changchi was scorned as being impractical and of purely Church use.<sup>122</sup> Religious practices in Sinkiang and Kansu have often been criticised and the study of Arabic was eliminated from Hopei secondary schools allegedly to separate Church and State.<sup>123</sup>

Subsequent measures against religious leaders became apparent after the winter of 1958 when 21 counterrevolutionaries, "top men" of the Kansu Islamic Association, were expelled while other "rightists" were removed from positions of responsibility.<sup>124</sup> The same group "unanimously" approved the decision to abolish feudal religious prerogatives and the rule of exploitation and oppression within the Muslim world. The committee went to great lengths to deny that this action abridged freedom of religion in any way. What was under attack was feudal exploitation



under the guise of religion which "shattered production power and retarded nationalities." They went even so far as to say that this action would strengthen freedom of religion since the right to disbelieve is implicit in that freedom. By removing the coercive "feudal" power from the religious leaders they would make it possible to disbelieve in religion if they so desired without punishment from the local lords. This interpretation was inflated and converted into a large campaign to enlist the support of the masses in this "abolition" movement. The Chinese Communists had learned what the Bolsheviks discovered before them. No other institutionalised organisation demanding total commitment of its adherents could be left untrammelled -- especially its legitimate leadership. The Muslim religious leader by virtue of his prestige and position in the community and his authority and sovereignty in religious matters is a political danger and inconvenience who must be neutralised, utilised, supervised and finally excised. Having learned its lesson well, the Party chose to attack the religious leaders from a political and of course economic point of view -- hence the misleading "anti-feudal" campaign. The language employed was usually moderate although the remark that "if anyone wishes to oppose the laws of historical development, to continue to employ religion to preserve feudal privilege and religious exploitation, even to shattering and impeding reforms, he will receive the hatred of the labouring people and will be crushed by the times,"<sup>125</sup> is noteworthy. The hatred will be the Party's and the crushing will be done by the State.

Evidently the programme virtually to anesthetise the religious figures who had proved recalcitrant or not amenable to self-reform was successful. It was reported that after the anti-feudal struggle, all remnants of the feudal social order and other class foundations were



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destroyed.<sup>126</sup> The method of trying to remove potential political power from religious leaders through the very united front that was ostensibly designed to inject them into the political process was carried on in Sinkiang right through 1959. To evade the power of religion over the people it was found necessary to separate the feudal prerogatives from religion and resolutely abolish the former. The note of caution was provided by Wang Peng when he stressed it was important to distinguish between lawful religious practices, patriotic personages in religious circles, and counterrevolutionaries hiding behind the cloak of religion.<sup>127</sup> The all out war on religion and religious leaders had not yet started and the Chinese Communists must have felt that the conditions were not objectively propitious. Since religion was greatly a matter of national identification and thus a very sensitive point among the peoples of Sinkiang, the regime evidently decided to be prudent. The first desideratum was to isolate the religious leaders under the class-structure taint and divest them of tangible political control by reducing their economic and social status in the community. Once they have been successfully neutralized in this fashion, at the proper time they can, according to Stalin's famous dictum, "be squeezed like a lemon and thrown away." I feel this next stage is "fatally inevitable" because the demands of the Communist state for total ideological allegiance directly clash with the equally exclusive demands of Islam for psychological and theological commitment.

One other application of policy which is characterized by its



caution and gradualness is the handling of the pastoral nomads. A Soviet source indicates that large holdings had really not been converted into state-private farm (more probably like ranches) to any large degree until 1958 for by June of that year they were a mere 118 in number.<sup>128</sup> The shareholders in these farms received dividends in addition to a salary for specific work done. In addition, 10% of their former cattle remained in their private possession. The author alludes to the deliberateness of this treatment by concluding: "The exemplary application of such a redemption principle to the large herdowners - representatives of the feudal-clan upper strata (leaders) of the nomads - comprises the characteristic feature of socialist reconstruction of the economy in cattle breeding regions of the CPR."<sup>129</sup> Even more advantageous, he cites the abnormally low tax on livestock in nomad lands: 2.4% of the stock subject to tax was taxed in 1952, 1.7% was taxed in 1954, the poorest pay no tax at all while no nomad pays tax on cubs or thoroughbred stock.<sup>130</sup> The Russian author, though admitting occasional open struggle resulting in imprisonment or execution of landowners, remarked that in many minority herd raising areas land was not confiscated during the agrarian reform -- in marked contrast to the less slow and less cautious measures in Han areas. It is explained that drastic measures applied to the upper circles of the cattle breeders would have caused the annihilation of a large quantity of cattle and the destruction of the "productive forces in the cattle breeding areas." The export of cattle was to pay for the importation of machinery and implements necessary for China's industrialization. It is for this consideration rather than to strengthen "the unity and friendship of the country's nationalities" that there were no campaigns for class differentiation or "open struggle of the masses against



feudal elements." Instead of creating organisations of toilers akin to peasant unions (the ill fated Kesbchi?), the authorities only "regulated" the relations between shepherds and owners, taxes, and pasture committees which they controlled.<sup>131</sup>

It must not be forgotten that the Party's strength in the pastoral regions -- in terms of native sympathisers -- was certainly weak in the extreme. Very few of the nomadic tribes which had led a fairly uncontrolled existence for generations, who despised the sedentary life of the peasant Uighurs, would hardly be attracted by the Communist message of industrial revolution which augured the end of their autonomous conduct. It was publicly admitted in 1955 that (Communist) leadership among the nomad peoples was notoriously weak, and that the administration and management of state ranches was much below par.<sup>132</sup>

With such handicaps the government could risk no daring measures. As a result, the 600,000 Kazakhs, Tajiks, Mongols, and Kolkos on the pastoral prairies (17.6% of the total area of the SUAR) profited from the respite provided by "the mutual benefit to herdsmen and herdowners" policy. They are reported to have gotten stock-protection loans, relief funds to buy breeds, in addition to new strains contributed by the Soviet Union or services of Soviet Sheep experts and veterinaries.<sup>133</sup> The extra care brought results: 17,000,000 head of cattle were counted at the end of 1954, the sheep wool collected in 1949-55 had been exchanged for 3100 Stalin no. 80 tractors, and livestock products had been exchanged for motor plant equipment, hydroelectric, thermal power, and other machines.<sup>134</sup> The successes in animal husbandry have helped to keep the government's policies more moderate although in 1956 Saifudin called for the completion of the first stage of the socialist transformation of livestock



breeding in 1958.<sup>135</sup> A few weeks before, however, Ulanfu at the Party Congress stated that the policies which had proved effective for many years should be continued.

I believe Peking does not want to make the mistakes and sustain the egregious losses which the young Bolshevik regime suffered for a lack of sophisticated policy or astute handling of the upper circles of the minorities or the nomads. From a non-Communist point of view the settling of nomads has been rather forced and not exceedingly gradual. However if Russian Communists, reflecting on the violent and swift settling of Kazakhs and Kirghis in the early thirties, read that thousands of Kazakhs are still "voluntarily" settling down<sup>136</sup> -- after more than a decade of Communist Power -- they would probably think that Peking had been napping. It is an indicator of Chinese versatility that at a time when the rest of the nation is feeling the full brunt<sup>1</sup> of communisation, it can still be said that for a special group in the country:

.....Our party and government also favor peaceful reform, in order as far as possible to escape destroying local productivity and social wealth, in order to further racial amity while at the same time, taking care of our party's long-continued relations with the minorities' elite on the united front. This is to say that democratic reforms in such areas need not employ the form of violent struggle, but rather peaceful consultation . . . and peaceful struggle is just a special form of class struggle under China's concrete conditions.<sup>136</sup> (Italics mine)

Of course the statement goes on to affirm that the peace policy depends also on the exploiting class and elite's ability to accept the "desire of the people" but the fact remains that this policy is still being executed and propagandised.



The fifth phase of the Revolution in which the upper strata, religious circles and pastoral peoples were confronted with a more vigorous policy gave way to a final sixth period in which communisation and increased industrialisation brought total class war to Sinkiang. In 1959, Wang Feng stated that the nationalities problem was in essence, though not in all its complexities, a class problem.<sup>138</sup> Throughout 1959 and 1960 the emphasis was placed on class struggle between capitalism and socialism, and the theme of "strengthening the nationalities' unity" was only briefly touched upon.<sup>139</sup> The big leap, rectification and "overhauling the communes" drives had as their antagonists the "wait and see" group. Any go-slow policy in the matter of recreating the Autonomous Region had to be scrapped. Agriculture was the prime target but industrialisation was a very close second. Even the herdsmen were now enlisted in the drive to communise agriculture. Over 80% of the Kazakhs in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou had reputedly settled down and 140 communes and 85 state-private farms had mushroomed by mid 1959.<sup>140</sup> In Altai, 20,000 Kazakhs were reported to have moved into 150 new or expanded resettlement villages.<sup>141</sup> One reason for settling the herdsmen in communes was to utilise their labour power in the many "industrial" units which were attached to each commune. The other advantages were brought out in an article which spoke of former disputes between herding cooperatives and agricultural cooperatives over water supplies, limits of grazing grounds and land reclamation.<sup>142</sup> A solution was reached in 1958 when three communes in Urunchi hsien were formed. They comprised herd-tending Kazakhs, Khalkhas and other Mongols on one hand and settled Hui, Uighur



and Han peasants. The theory was that a unified plan for agriculture and animal husbandry could be drawn up. Manure could be collected for agriculture and the herdsmen could help with water conservancy projects. The peasants would grow grain and fodder and help the herdsmen -- causing the latter to have more funds with which to "open up mineral deposits." These permanent settlements would provide the erstwhile nomads with space, water, and above all communications -- facilitating their control and direction. Once settled with peasants, the regime could insure the availability of veterinary stations with technicians to safeguard the State's animals, schools to educate the youth of the State in patriotism and socialist internationalism, and draught animals for the peasants to use in harvesting the State's crop. All these benefits accrue to the State while "Socialist education" informs the people that all this is done for them alone.

As in 1956, the banks were again busy providing agricultural and advanced purchase loans to insure membership and they also "actively devised ways of helping communes initiate multi-productive activities, and increase income. Finally, the energetically assisted the consolidation of communes and the development of production."<sup>143</sup> Agriculture was always the priority -- or so those who had claimed this sector was being neglected because of the increased industrialisation were told. Though the last quarter of 1958 had seen an emphasis on steel and iron refining and 1959 saw more strength expended on industry, the comrades were now told to put their main efforts in agricultural leadership. Evidently the "violent right winds blowing among the cadres" in June and July of 1959 referred to a party controversy over the relative weight to be given agriculture and industry. Party Secretary Lin Po-min told Sinkiang Youth



Leaguers that these latter-day rightists wanted to change the general line -- though there was a difference between this and the 1957 struggle. However the warning was given that this contradiction among the people could develop into one "between us and the enemy." Reasserting the general line, the press echoed that not only were industry and agriculture to be coordinated but also industry was to be "imbued with the thought of serving agriculture and animal husbandry production."<sup>145</sup> The papers report that a majority of the 100,000 "or more" young people who came to the new frontierland were assigned to agricultural work. From the figures I have noticed in the press during the ten year period, it seems that a substantial number of the 1,250,000 Chinese in the Northwest<sup>146</sup>, are in Sinkiang and, what is more, large numbers are going into industry. Agriculture is stressed but one notices industry's rapid progress in 1958 -- 70.13% higher than the 1957 output versus agriculture's 24.5% increase.

The most important opposition in the central government's view in this crucial stage of all-out revolution came from within the Party in the person of those more Orthodox Marxists -- dogmatists if you will -- who were hesitant to march along in step with the general line. Perhaps the already apparent miscalculations had discouraged them or maybe their own "concrete analysis of objective conditions" did not coincide with the leadership's. In any event the ideological basis for the Party's ambitious programme was again restated at the end of 1960:

We are advocates of continuous revolution and of the development of production by stages. When production relations impede the development of productive forces, we must change the production relations in order to promote the development of productive forces; after the change, when the production relations are in harmony with the development



of the productive forces, we must consolidate and stabilise the new production forces.

Only in this way can the production forces develop further. After a considerably long period when production forces will have developed to a new higher level and when conditions are ripe, it is necessary and possible to change the production's development. (*Italics mine*)<sup>147</sup>

We shall not go into all the factors on the Chinese scene which induced the selection of this theory of permanent revolution, but its constant affirmation was dictated by the increasing number of hardships the government was encountering in enforcing its policies.

As the Revolution was to be permanent, it also became all-inclusive. The drive in the winter of 1959 "to overhaul the communes" became a mass movement in a life or death battle between Socialism and Capitalism. Socialist education was mandatory for all agricultural and pastoral areas and in one short editorial the phrase "with <sup>1</sup>central emphasis given to (the carrying out of the struggle between the two roads and) Socialist education" was repeated no less than eight times.<sup>148</sup>

The Revolution had broadened because there now took place a basic struggle with the well-off middle peasants and a number of people "belonging to other social strata". The spirit of the VIII Plenum of the VIII CC had dictated a thorough mass indoctrination in the general line of big leap forward and people's commune. We will recall how in earlier stages of the Revolution the poor and "lower middle" peasants were singled out as targets for cooperativisation while at the same time the upper strata were treated with studied circumspection. Now the line was to align with and depend on the poor and "lower middle" peasants in a mass line against the upper, more well-to-do peasants. Quite unusually, not a word was mentioned about taking care of the upper



strata. On the contrary the 451 communes and 30,000 mass halls were mobilised to attack the waverers in strictly class fashion. Firstly, those with erroneous views on the communes were to receive "positive persuasive education". Secondly, those well-off peasants who had "viciously" criticised the movement were to be criticised "selectively". But, those landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries and criminals who sabotaged the Party's effort were to be dealt with as enemies and punished severely according to law if their crimes proved grave. Nationality friction is hardly mentioned through this period. On the contrary, all enemies are pictured in class terms and the language is more couched in traditional Marxian categories. The Bolshevik fear of "relaxing vigilance" and enemies engaged in "wrecking" appears more frequently in articles.<sup>149</sup> The style and phraseology is so reminiscent of Soviet writing of the thirties that one wonders if it has been consciously imitated.

The vigorous drive to "tidy up" the communes would appear to be a sign of serious failings in the communisation efforts. Wang En-mao made no mention of serious resistance but he still felt it necessary toward the close of 1959 to send 470 urban cadres from Party, Government, public and military district organs to the countryside after five days of study.<sup>150</sup> He declared that since the middle peasants represent capitalism in the countryside, the cadres must rely on the poor and "lower middle" peasants and unite themselves with the broad masses to crush the anti-Socialist well-to-do peasants and right opportunists. A word of caution was given to beware of allowing the struggle to interfere with production since the over present central task was to raise the productivity of agriculture. But the tasks before the comrades as defined by



the Party Centre was to build the region into "an industrial base, as well as a cotton growing base, for iron and steel, petroleum, coal, non-ferrous metal, machine-building, textile and sugar industries."<sup>151</sup> To cope with this simultaneous stress on industrialisation the party workers were subjected to an intensive political and ideological training.

Theoretically the hsien and chou first secretaries were to visit communes at least two months a year to guide and study the work. Leadership cadres were enjoined, in accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, to spend four months a year deep in commune and factory production brigades in addition to one month of compulsory manual labour.

The results of this unprecedented mobilisation were prodigious if reports can be relied upon. Electrification output for 1959 supposedly surpassed 1949's figure by 228.7% (or 2.8 times that of 1957) while the number of large and small power stations soared to 170.<sup>152</sup>

The 15 communes in Chotan's seven hsien activated 50,000 young people in an expeditionary force for the reclamation of Gobi land, and they reportedly reactivated 600,000 sou by March 1960.<sup>153</sup> The same source proudly declared that Kashgar's communes had mobilised over 300,000 civilian workers to harness five rivers in the district in almost four months — a job, it is said that would have required ten years in the old days. The Party leaders seemed to believe that "as long as the Party committee insists on the assumption of command by politics, arms the cadres and people with the spirit of the general line, and brings into full play human activity, it is possible to solve the difficulties that are in our way."<sup>154</sup> The communes also set up 17,000 workshops of all kinds (averaging 36 each) to produce more than 1,000 different industrial products.<sup>155</sup> Yet there was still talk of overcoming rightist and negative



ideologies and instilling the doctrine of "uninterrupted revolution."

The fears of the rightist seemed to have been borne out by 1960 campaign "to make economic use of grain and other consumer goods which are not in ample supply." If the situation was as good as claimed<sup>156</sup> why was it necessary to curtail consumption? The answers offered did not tell the complete story. The four reasons were: 1) to store up more grain for the State, 2) to supply more grain to the new industrial and mining cities along the railroad, 3) to prevent agricultural industrial production from being deprived of much needed cars which would be used for grain transport, and 4) to abolish the waste in consumption, producing, storing and processing rampant in some areas. It would seem that a fifth reason could be given -- the production of grain had not reached its expected level with the advent of the "walking on two legs" period. In the two-pronged assault on agriculture and industry, the former gave a poor showing. As a result mess halls and communal kitchens provided an efficient means of controlling the eating habits of the region -- if it would only work! Elaborate schemes were devised: meal coupons based on the number of mouths to be fed were issued; solid food alternated with porridge; coarse grain was mixed with fine; delicate dishes used coarser grains; planned feeding was instituted and the slogan "keep the cities supplied with grain even more satisfactorily" was propagated.<sup>157</sup> Now, if a mess hall approached the State for more grain, it was said to constitute "a violation of law in contravention of the Party directive which calls on us to build up the nation and to run our households with industry and thrift." The Party directive released had been recently passed and set up regulations concerning the use of grain, supply of cooked foods and pastries by coupons,



the planned supply of cotton cloth, and improvements of industrial and business tax systems in the SUAR.<sup>158</sup> What has happened is obvious. The agricultural worker was being subordinated to and sacrificed for the urban proletariat and the great god industrialisation. The Chinese Revolution in Sinkiang began to look more like the Soviet proletarian revolution. China was rapidly trying to disengage from her traditional peasant burden and orientation -- a very perplexing situation for orthodox Marxists.

Saifudin's speech at the second session of the National People's Congress glowed with the achievements of Sinkiang's new industrial revolution. "The situation in 1960 is excellent in the SUAR", he beamed.<sup>159</sup> The figures he listed for industry's accomplishments were bright and impressive. Agriculture fared not as well, but because of the communes, "the broad masses of the herdsmen in the main began to settle down" and many cities and towns had sprung up on the grass plain. "Questions concerning the people of various nationalities have also been solved in the main" we learn, and we are furnished with many instances of "Communist friendship" (no longer just solidarity) among the minorities. Those mass migrations by Hans to Sinkiang, which we recall came under fire in 1957, are obliquely referred to as "extensive cultural exchanges between the Han people and the national minorities." Of course, the minorities all clamour for scripts based on the new phoneticisation and the SUAR Governor announces that all technical terms and expressions will be "borrowed" from the Han language for "enrichment". We are told of the further concentration on heavy, medium and light industries for Sinkiang which has aggravated the region's manpower shortage in executing large-



scale socialist construction. I infer that Sinkiang can expect an ever increasing Han deluge, for Saifudin remarks that a solution of the problem has been "begun" by the CC and the fraternal provinces. The Sinkiang portrayed was so prosperous that you would not believe it was the same region we have been discussing. A "weak link" was discovered in transportation and communication but this will be optimistically overcome by the use of native and modern methods -- "the small native mass" and the "small modern mass" railroad systems -- neither of which have been explained. The really sobering note is the statement (found nine times in two small paragraphs) that there is a campaign for the cadres to study "The Thought of Chairman Mao". In view of other revelations on the situation in the region, I interpret this oft-repeated phrase as indicating that difficulties had beset many of the cadres and Chairman Mao's sacred writings were being scrutinised to find a way out of their troubles.

Under the slogan of "taking politics to the mass halls and sending cadres to the kitchens", six thousand cadres from the communes, administrative areas and production brigades of the whole region took meals at the halls and "made arrangements for grain and fuel supply".<sup>160</sup> The slogan which masks a blatant lack of purchasable food in the area is as misleading as another one used earlier to rally an attack on the upper middle peasants: "A grain of rat excrement can spoil a whole pot of soup". In Tach'eng Special District, scores of high level cadres had to be shipped to the communes and messhalls to "strengthen work leadership". Propaganda and education were carried out to give the people "traits of thrift and simple living". Sheds have been set up to renew old clothing and Yu-Fien Hsien commune restored 310,000 items of winter



clothing -- shoes, boots, quilts etc., which I suppose is the world's record. With "economy" being practised everywhere it seems hard to agree with Saifudin's rosy portrayal of the SUAR. Animal husbandry evidently has not suffered too much since before the winter of 1960 more than 3000 fine farming horses were sent from Sinkiang to help other calamity-ridden provinces and another batch of 5000 were scheduled for delivery to Shantung, Hopei, Honan, Shansi and Liaoning in Spring 1961.<sup>161</sup> Judging by the severe food shortages we have observed and also by a New York Times report in April 1961 of an increase in the Soviet Kazakh border guards (most likely to curtail illegal flow of hungry Uighurs and Kazakhs into Kazakhstan) it would appear to me that the peoples of Sinkiang are still smarting a bit.<sup>162</sup>

The sixth stage of Revolution which is witnessing the total reconstruction of the old Sinkiang and the extension of Party control right to the dining table has not yet provoked strident nationalistic outbursts from the minorities. I do not believe that dissent on national grounds has already become a thing of the past. Doubtless, at any moment when criticism on the periphery is too extreme Peking may decide to launch an anti-bourgeois nationalism drive as has been the practice in the Soviet Union. When this resistance is simply from the people it will not, I believe necessitate a full scale ideological campaign. These deviations can be handled within the class struggle framework now that it has been definitely established. Unless the nationalism were really



sizeable, the government would most likely deem it unprofitable to open up a sensitive area to an unmerited virulent attack. The first decade of national minority policy saw shifts and turns permeating a steadily unfolding pattern. The minority policy had to shape itself around the grand design of the Chinese Revolution and thus its general outline can be gauged -- if the course of the Revolution itself can ever be precisely predicted. Because this particular policy, though subordinate to the general "class question", is designed to be especially empirical or pragmatic in order to attract the formerly oppressed people, perhaps it is more difficult to predict its "concrete" application to given situations. We have briefly seen the differences in approach in other areas of China, and we shall probably see more. Each minority might present special problems either because of the internal make-up, their geographical location, or the kinship with external groups beyond the national borders. In Sinkiang, I would think the basic steps toward drawing the nationalities into the Chinese Revolution have been taken. The Revolution is now going through its "total" phase -- total industrialisation, total communisation, total commitment to the goals of the regime. The success or failure of the National Minority Policy, from Peking's point of view, will depend on the success or failure of the totalitarian Revolution.



## PART IV

### THE TWO REVOLUTIONS

#### **An Historical Overview of Soviet Federalism and Chinese Regional Autonomy**



The attempt to establish a multinational state in Russia not only necessitated a revision of the traditional Bolshevik stand on federalism but also augured alteration of some of orthodox Marxian theory's assumptions respecting the relation and interaction between society's economic base and political superstructure. On the one hand there is seemingly a retreat from the concept of a strongly centralized state (which concept one might presume to be the inevitable outcome of the strong Bolshevik predisposition for unified possession, direction, and planning of the state's productive forces). Again, on the other hand, there is envisaged the amalgamation of disparate and diverse peoples -- albeit at different levels of historical development, in different stages of class division and differentiation, in widely divergent socio-economic categories -- into one polity, into one system of government which, according to theory, should reflect the actual economic situation and class relationships underpinning the society.

Lenin, with the majority of his comrades, saw the formation of strong nation states as the decisive historical tendency in Europe's evolution and believed federalism per se to be economically retrogressive. He considered that the choice of a loose federated union over a progressive central authority would be a profoundly reactionary step save in exceptional cases. Even cultural autonomy was viewed by many pre-revolutionary Marxists as tending to divide the international proletariat.<sup>163</sup> Lenin, however, soon grasped that the circumstances of the Russian Revolution from above and subsequent consolidation from below in civil war



provided such an exceptional case. The nationalist aspirations of Russia's minorities could be utilised to fragment the crumbling old Empire. A multinational state could then be rebuilt which would be so democratic as to guarantee the constituent nationalities the right of self-determination. This right, however, was subject to varied interpretations. On 12 December 1917, Stalin spoke of self-determination as the province of the toilers alone and envisioned this right as a weapon in the class struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.<sup>164</sup> It became obvious that such a narrow interpretation would be of little use to those nations which, lacked a working class or, more to the point, those areas of Russia where the embryonic proletariat represented the formerly oppressing minority. In March 1919 however, the VIII Party Congress worked out a more flexible "historical class viewpoint."<sup>165</sup> The question of which class expressed the will of the nation, under consideration would be determined by the stage of social development attained. Thus, in a country emerging from feudalism to bourgeois democracy, the bourgeoisie would represent the wave of the future, the historical will of the nation.

In the circumstances of revolution and civil war, the practical application of this qualified self-determination -- i. e. a federation with the Bolshevik Party the decisive interpreter of the national will -- became a centripetal force where before it had been a powerful centrifugal force tearing away at the old imperial structure. With a dictatorship of the proletariat -- i. e. the Bolshevik Party -- there was no hope of political equality for the federating units. In fact, it was



the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (CEC) either alone or with RSFSR Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom) which established seventeen autonomous regions and republics between 1920 and 1923.<sup>166</sup> The examples of Bashkiria and Turkestan show that where there flickered a semblance of political parity, it was soon extinguished. The February 1919 agreement reached between the RSFSR government and the Bashkir nationalists was unilaterally abrogated just fifteen months later by a new constitution ordered by the former. Though the Turkestan Soviet Republic was the first autonomous national unit, actually in being, to receive recognition by the central government (22 April 1918) formal admission to the federation was withheld until agreement could be reached between Moscow and Tashkent on a division of power.<sup>167</sup> There seems to have been a rather large gulf between Tashkent's draught constitution submitted in midsummer 1918 and Moscow's desiderata.<sup>1</sup> This was bridged, however, when the IX Regional Congress of Soviets (September 1920) adopted a constitution conforming to Moscow's idea of autonomy and Turkestan was proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic on 11 April 1921 by the All-Russian CEC.<sup>168</sup>

Stalin had said autonomy does not mean separation but rather union; and given the limited competence of autonomous organs and their de facto subordination to the Bolshevik Party, which in turn was directed by the Central Committee, federalism became instrumental in the consolidation of Bolshevik power throughout the former Empire. Neither Lenin nor Stalin had reason to fear the loss of unified centralised authority. A Western scholar has succinctly commented on the origin of the resultant Soviet federalism and autonomy:



"It was merely a recognition that local peculiarities prevented a standardized application of the policies, administrative regimen, and legal norms of the center to all peoples and that these should be altered, insofar as was consistent with the accomplishment of their purpose, to fit local conditions. But the alteration of central legislation and administrative procedures was not a matter for local decision; this was within the province of a federal agency, the People's Commissariat for National Affairs.<sup>169</sup>

The People's Commissariat for Nationality Affairs, Narkomnats, (NAN), became the real instrument of federalisation between 1920 and 1924 when, under Stalin's guidance, it gained greater and greater political and administrative control over the minority areas which constituted the bulk of the old Russian Empire. It assumed jurisdiction over all autonomous agencies attached to the All-Russian CEC; its branches were attached to all autonomous regional and republican CEC's; no political or economic measure of the Soviet government could be made for the borderlands without its approval; all minority political organisations could deal with the central government only through their agencies in Narkomnats; by December 1920, Narkomnats branches could participate in the activities of regional and republican CEC's; and by the summer of 1922, NAN claimed the right to supervise other Commissariats of the NSRSK insofar as they concerned national minorities.<sup>170</sup> This Stalinist agency also represented autonomous republics in all budgetary matters and it alone directed the education of non-Russian Party and State cadres. It was thus no wonder that by April 1924 the executive officers of Narkomnats and the chairmen of autonomous regional and republican delegations became the Council of Nationalities -- the second chamber of the Federal Central Executive Committee.



The accretion of so much power and authority to a central organ concerned with working out the federal structure and later national delimitation in the National Minority areas could not but conflict with the federalist schemes of local leaders in Central Asia, albeit Communists, to protect the interests of the minority peoples whom they represented and from whom they had sprung. Cultural unity and emerging pan-nationalist movements based on the common Muslim faith and Islamic law and custom would certainly have aided and abetted the very separatism which had been utilised to topple the Tsarist power but which was now viewed as inimical to the vital interests of the reborn Russian Soviet State.<sup>171</sup>

These tendencies had become more manifest among Muslim intellectuals ever since the territorialist faction (favoring regional autonomy) of the All-Russian Muslim Congress had defeated the centralist faction (wanting only cultural autonomy) 7 May 1917.<sup>172</sup> With such sentiments gaining in popularity amongst the minority intelligentsia, it was no accident that the first person to think up plans for a national demarcation in Central Asia was the native Chairman of the Turkestan CEC, Ryskulov.<sup>173</sup> These ideas were swiftly rejected by the Turkestan Commission, with the approval of Lenin, because they envisioned not a Russia-centred alignment but rather a grouping of national states within a Turkic federation. Sultan-Galiev (Mirsaid Soltan-Gali), the high-ranking Tatar Communist in Narkomnats who was later expelled from the Party in 1923 for his ideological deviations and fractionalism, also desired a Muslim state or federation which would step by step bring Communism to the non-Soviet Muslim East.<sup>174</sup> His three-stage plan called for the establishment of a Turanian Republic



to embrace Idel-Ural (Tatarstan and Bashkiria), Kazakhstan and Central Asia and the Muslim portion of the Caucasus; later Muslim countries such as Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and the Arab regions would be converted to free oppressed and colonial peoples from the industrialised European Powers (including Russia).<sup>175</sup>

Such rank separatist and anti-Russian Muslim federations designed to forge unity amongst the Turkic Muslims of the former Empire and later the entire East, with a view toward ultimate political domination over their metropolitan rulers, could hardly have been viewed in Moscow as anything but deleterious to the new Sovietised Russian State embattled as it was from both within and without. It was again no accident, that when the Party did come around to considering some form of national delimitation in January of 1924,<sup>176</sup> or determined to divide Turkestan into tribal States<sup>177</sup> in an attempt to destroy the common Turkistani Muslim culture<sup>178</sup> as some have averred, the architect was one of those Russianised Bolsheviks whom Lenin had characterised as more chauvinistic than the Great Russians, Josef Visarionovich Dzhugashvili (Stalin).

An objective evaluation of the problems and difficulties faced by the young Soviet government at the time is indispensable for even a partial explanation of the multinational and multi-republican demarcation in Central Asia.<sup>179</sup> It could be noted, for example, that internal frictions (hitherto exploited by the Tsarist administration) could now be utilised by the local bourgeoisie, Khans, emirs and foreign imperialists alike to destroy Soviet rule. It is possible that the Soviet government felt unable to establish norms of social development and administrative



procedure at that time because the social economic, customary and religious differentiations between the various peoples were more real than apparent. Demarcation by national republics and regions might also somewhat satisfy demands for local autonomy while at the same time aiding in the elimination of "banditry". In addition, national republics formed by and dependent upon the Centre, as opposed to an autonomous Muslim federation within a larger Soviet confederation, paradoxically brought the advantages of centralism to the national minorities who, it was asserted, needed the protection of the Soviet State to prevent their falling prey to predatory foreign powers. The lack of native Bolsheviks or revolutionary heritage coupled with the paucity of the intelligentsia only doubled the need for central supervision and control through government agencies (the hierarchy of soviets, the federal administrative system, Narkomnats, Turkkommissia), the Party (local organs, Central Asiatic Bureau, Komsomol, Muslim Bureau of the CC), and mass organizations (Trades unions, Keshchi):

Centralism, the argument ran, eliminated contradictions between individual parts of the state, unified all the parts in the accomplishment of common tasks and the satisfaction of common interests, and permitted as well the development of local initiative in the solution of local problems. Hence it opened the way to the most expeditious political, economic, and social development of the Soviet Union and its individual parts.<sup>180</sup>

Thus in the summer of 1924, Moscow effected the demarcation of five Central Asian Republics which counterposes both the hierarchical operations of the Executive-Legislative Soviet structure and disciplined centralism of the indivisible Bolshevik Party, to possible separatist tendencies, encouraged either by the federation or incipient local nationalism.



One feature of the federal development of the Soviet Union which warrants attention is the special status briefly accorded the three Soviet People's Republics of Bukhara, Khorezm, and the Far East. The virtual independence of the last was necessitated by diplomatic considerations but the first two cases are different.<sup>181</sup> In old Khiva and Bukhara, there were no Russian administrative apparatus, railroad workers or Russian colonists to be used as instruments of the Russian proletarian revolution.<sup>182</sup> Thus, these regions were able to retain for a time a vestige of their unique status under Tsarism--internal autonomy--after they had experienced a Bolshevik-aided revolution and had become "People's Republics." Economic and military ties proving insufficient, their Parties were united to the Russian Communist Party and after Party and government purges, Khorezm and Bukhara finally proclaimed themselves Soviet Socialist Republics. Before the final political unification of these republics following the 1924 demarcation, they each went through identical stages of military, economic, diplomatic, and broader economic unification. These stages, however, did not of themselves necessitate the transition from "People's Republic" to "Socialist" Republic because the transformation merely expressed political reshuffling in the capitals of these states. No socialised agriculture arose to change the economic base, traditional institutions acquired no new forms, no industrial working-class emerged--in short, the economic and social structure remained unperturbed. What did take place in these as well as in other emerging state formations after 1924 was essentially what had taken place in Petersburg in 1917--Bolshevik acquisition of monopoly power and subsequent proclamation of a "Socialist" Republic.



Once the Russian Bolsheviks had resolved on their political dictatorship, it seems to me that their solution of the national question would necessarily fall within this context. Consideration could be given to some national peculiarities within the system, but those outside would inevitably be regarded as hostile to the proletarian power and at best be tolerated for a time. The inherent and insistent centralism of the Bolshevik Party, which was based in the Great Russian central regions and which was determined alone to set the policies of the Soviet Federal Union, was bound to vitiate genuine nationality autonomy in the political sphere. What is more, it was bound to strengthen the Great Russian chauvinism which was so much decried at the I Party Congress in 1921,<sup>184</sup> and in so doing provoke "bourgeois nationalism" -- as many instances of borderland resistance began to be called -- the latter becoming more strident after the XII Party Congress in 1923. The Party and state apparatus in the minority areas were overwhelmingly staffed by Russians, some of them former Tsarist officials unable to appreciate or understand Lenin's exhortation to extraordinary caution, courtesy and complaisance. Lenin's late realisation that "it is better to stretch too far in the direction of complaisance and softness toward the national minorities, than too little"<sup>185</sup> was decidedly rejected at the XII Party Congress by that Great Russian in Georgian clothing, Stalin, who declared that the class principle should prevail over the national question. Stalin declared war on, but at the same time, invited local nationalism when he explained that the political foundation of the dictatorship of the proletariat was constituted first and chiefly by the industrial central regions not by the peasant minority borderlands.<sup>186</sup> He would not lean too far toward these borderlands at the expense of the proletarian



regions, affirming that in politics it is not good to stretch too far or too little.<sup>187</sup> Henceforward the efforts of non-Russian leaders to preserve and protect their populations from political, economic and cultural encroachments by Moscow were generally branded as local nationalism. Oftentimes these manifestations were naught but the political tug of war between Centre and periphery and their nationalist content was negligible. The very Georgian crisis in the Party which drove Lenin to renew the attack on Great Russian chauvinism -- at the same time bending over backwards to the minorities -- was basically caused by the very centralism of which he was the exponent par excellence.<sup>188</sup> The increasing concentration of decision making in the capital, the preponderance of Great Russians in crucial security, banking, economic planning and judicial agencies; industrial development irrespective of the needs or interests of the local populations; the paucity of political checks on the power of the central government combined with the lack of effective constitutional measures safeguarding the interests of the smaller peoples;<sup>189</sup> the emergence of Soviet patriotism which was often a camouflage for Great Russian nationalism<sup>190</sup> -- all these and more factors led to the virtual nullification of rights supposedly guaranteed by the federal structure and the Leninist solution of the National Question. The outcome has been described as a "narrowly circumscribed cultural autonomy with a limited sphere of national initiative whose essence is the dissociation of politics from nationality and the substitution of promises of economic advance for political rights which could have defended national customs and institutions."<sup>191</sup> There are many conflicts and contradictions in the Soviet Nationality and Federal experiment (as in many great and daring undertakings) but I think it



symptomatic and significant that the very Union Agreement, which laid the foundation of the USSR, while providing a final article guaranteeing the free secession of any republic, also contained a more basic ominous article stipulating that only the federal government could affect changes in the Union Agreement -- which, one might assume, includes accession and secession.<sup>192</sup>

With this brief historical review of the treatment of the Nationalities problem in the first and foremost Socialist state, we may now return to the main topic under consideration -- the solution of the problem undertaken in the Chinese People's Republic. Before the victory of the Chinese Communist revolution, the minority peoples were granted a more sweeping right of secession under the constitution of the Chinese Soviet Republic than the smaller peoples in the Soviet Union enjoyed under Article Thirteen of the Soviet constitution. Article Fourteen stated:

The Soviet government of China recognizes the right of self-determination of the national minorities in China, their right to complete separation from China, and to the formation of an independent state for each national minority. All Mongolians, Tibetans, Hsiao, Yao, Koreans, and others living on the territory of China shall enjoy the full right of self-determination. i. e., they may either join the Union of Chinese Soviets or secede from it as they may prefer....<sup>193</sup> (Italics mine)

Thus, as we noted before (supra p.7), the Chinese revolutionaries applied the Bolshevik tactic of encouraging centrifugal forces which might aid them to smash down the ancien regime in their quest for power. Now having consolidated their revolution, they have returned to the centralist tradition of one indivisible China -- this time buttressed by a system of regional autonomy to safeguard the national minorities.



As we have already seen (supra p.5), specifically Chinese reasons -- both economic and historical -- have been submitted in the attempt to explain Peking's reversion to the unitary state concept. One can also point to cultural factors when discussing Peking's proclivity and reversion to the unitary state concept in its organisation of government. For example, one student of the area asserts that the federalism, like that obtaining in the USSR, is an idea quite alien to the Chinese, who regard themselves more as a civilisation than as a nation.<sup>194</sup> What is referred to here, presumably, is "nation" in the western European sense of nation-state, for the "Greater Han" theory popularised by the AMT holds that China is indeed one nation inhabited by five rac<sup>e</sup>s (not nationalities who might be entitled to self-determination). In any event, we have seen how federalism was also alien to Russia's Imperial Tradition as well as to early Marxian thought, and how it developed mostly as a political expedient in the circumstances of revolution and civil war. An article attacking "local nationalists" who had cited the Soviet Union's federal structure as a desirable arrangement which could profitably be emulated by the People's Republic, pointed to China's specific economic and historical conditions (China's Hans comprise 94% of the population and China has many areas of mixed population) as well as the ultimate goals of Socialism. Reminding the nationalists that the right of self-determination was not absolute but subject to the basic interests of the proletarian revolution, it declared "the object of socialism is not to separate the nationalities from one another but to draw them together so that they can be fused together."<sup>195</sup> Thus the People's Republic is being true to concrete con-



ditions in China as well as to the Socialist Revolution in rejecting the federal experiment attempted in the Soviet Union.

Since there is no federal structure to guarantee, at least theoretically, the equality or political autonomy of national minority areas, one might compare the organs of regional autonomy with ordinary state administrative agencies to determine the peculiar functions of the former and how they differ from the latter. The Soviet Orientalist, A. G. Iakovlev, writes:

The organs of national self-government are the organs of state power in the provinces Ma mestakh. They manage finances, organise detachments of general security, are able, corresponding to the political and economic peculiarities of the minority peoples, to work out proposals on autonomy and devise legislative acts of local significance with their subsequent presentation for confirmation by the standing committee of the All-China Congress of People's Representatives.... Regions of national autonomy in China, on the whole, correspond to the ordinary administrative units...Autonomous regions (Oblasti) like provinces, are the largest units of the administrative division of the C.R. They are directly subordinate to the Central People's Government.<sup>196</sup> [Italics mine]

In other words, these autonomous organs are administrative units of the Centre, which take account of local customs and peculiarities. But later on, the same writer describes national hsiang (volost') as not being considered areas of national autonomy according to the CPR constitution:

In them are created organs not of national self-government but regular local administrative organs. However, in their activities, the employees in hsiang administrations are obliged to use the languages and scripts of the respective minorities and to take into account the traditional, religious and other peculiarities of the population. All nationalities living in the hsiang territory send a specific number of their own deputies to the hsiang assembly of people's representatives. These assemblies have the right to carry out concrete measures and also work out separately functioning proposals corresponding to the national peculiarities of the local population.<sup>197</sup> [Italics mine]



What we have here are organs which are explicitly said not to be organs of national autonomy performing the same functions, i. e. taking into account national peculiarities, etc., as the autonomous organs. This might lead one to the conclusion that the word autonomy has no real political or administrative significance, except as a psychological appeal to those minorities which are compact and numerous enough, or command sufficient territory to necessitate a concession to their national sensitivity. The hsiang, then, is a Han administrative organ of the central government on the local level; the national hsiang is an administrative organ on the local level, but its form and composition will be somewhat different and not all Han; an autonomous area will also be an administrative organ of the central government but it will be different in form (non-Han), and larger in area. I find little difference between the national hsiang which Iakovlev says is not an autonomous area but an ordinary administrative unit, and an autonomous area which corresponds also to ordinary administrative units but is somehow also "autonomous" -- except size.

The General Programme for the Implementation of Regional Autonomy does not help elucidate the peculiarly "autonomous" character of these minority units. Article Twenty states that "under the unified economic system and economic construction plan of the state, all autonomous organs shall freely develop local economy" and that these areas shall exercise local financial autonomy under the unified state financial system.<sup>198</sup> The Programme contains very little indication that important policy and decision-making powers have been delegated to the autonomous minority organs. In fact, the essence of the Programme seems to urge cadres to impart a national style to the implementation of



central directives as the best means of expediting compliance in these areas. Indeed Burhan has noted that autonomous chou and hsien have increased incentives for plan fulfillment.<sup>199</sup> Such regional autonomy, to the Western observer, loses much of its significance. Witness the remarks of one noted scholar:

In a highly unified state such as Communist China, "autonomy" is, of course, in no sense equivalent to genuine self-rule. It represents formal rather than substantive autonomy. It permits local minority groups to participate in Communist-directed political activities and, to a certain extent, to assume responsibility for local administrative problems or, more often for the local enforcement of general policies laid down by Peking. In most cases, the relatively small and widely dispersed autonomous areas have only a minor sphere of activity. Where larger autonomous units have been created, as in Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang, the reins of power are held in dependable Chinese Communist hands. The broad aim of Peking's policy is to facilitate the manipulation and control of the minority peoples by the Chinese Communists, not to generate or encourage any ambition for independence among the native peoples whom they rule.<sup>200</sup>

Chinese regional autonomy is manipulative or flexible enough to permit variation -- especially regarding the position of Han Chinese. Article Five of the General Programme exempts organs of state power within national autonomous districts from carrying out regional autonomy. If they only form a majority, then democratic coalition governments are to be set up (but not necessarily regional autonomy). The number of national areas thus watered down or deprived of what autonomy they possessed, has been increased by a device which was favourably noted by Ulanfu.<sup>201</sup> He observed that for economic or political requirements, autonomous districts bordering Han districts may include part of the Han towns and districts. Under special circumstances, "to facilitate unity" and construction work in autonomous districts, they may even include a



majority of Hans. The consequences of, and possibilities for abuses under a system which allows the Hans such a privileged position are obvious. The minority governments find within their midst, sizeable and ever-increasing "islands of separateness", over which they have no direct administrative control. Not only that, but areas within their provenance can be whittled away with the arrival of new Han colonists or by simple administrative redistricting, devised by superior organs to coincide with new economic projects and planned settlements. In Sinkiang, with many industrial towns growing up around new industries employing mainly skilled Hans brought in from other provinces, the vexatious problem of organs within the Autonomous Region staffed by Hans, not directly controlled by the minority cadres and being in an administrative system whose chain of command leads more directly to the Centre, has been sharply aggravated. An almost analogous problem has arisen in Soviet Kazakhstan where, because of the Slavic inundation of its northern areas, these have been placed under a separate administration (to deal directly with the Moscow-promulgated virgin lands policy) whose Party secretaries are all Slavs.<sup>202</sup>

In comparing Chinese-devised autonomy with the Soviet system, it has been noted that the former differs from the latter in two respects -- it is extremely centralised and limited, and autonomous units can be formed without regard to the size of the minority population, besides which, the same group can have several autonomous units in different parts of China.<sup>203</sup> The last mentioned is correctly seen as a flexible improvement over the Soviet system. This Western writer has also pointed out that Chinese regional autonomy actually is only equivalent to autonomous



oblasts in the USSR -- falling far short of rights enjoyed by Soviet autonomous republics and union republics. These observations are not lost on Soviet commentators. Kotov remarks that, "in no field of economy or state control does the SUAR have full plenary powers. It carries on its activity according to state direction and under the control of the central state organs of the CPR."<sup>204</sup>

Though Kotov avers that it is wrong mechanically to copy from the Soviet Union, one cannot escape noting an almost superior tone as the Russian compares the Soviet and Chinese systems. Five points of difference is that local national autonomy is granted by the federal structure in the Soviet Union, whereas China has the framework of a unitary popular-democratic state. While he asserts that Article Fifty-three of the General Programme confers only administrative autonomy, he, like Stalin and Lenin, says the Soviet system guarantees both administrative and political autonomy. In China, the type of autonomy (presumably chou or haien) is determined by factors of number, compactness, and size of minority-held territory while socio-economic level, number etc., are the important variables in the Soviet system. Of course, in the CPR, autonomous organs of all types have the same volume of autonomous rights -- what limits the competence of the different types is their administrative level. The Soviet Union presents a contrast with its various grades of autonomous rights attendant upon its administrative and political autonomy. Lastly, as we have seen, one and the same nationality in China may have different types of autonomy in different regions of the country due to the great dispersal of nationalities in various provinces. In the USSR, as we well know, one minority will have either administrative or political autonomy in the area of their basic and most compact settlement. What the



Soviet scholar does not point out though, is that much of the political autonomy in the Soviet system is more formal and apparent than real, because important policy-making functions are not vested in the decentralised administrative structure of government, but in the strongly centralised Party apparatus based in Moscow. This similarity is obliquely referred to when Kotov declares the two systems to be identical in purpose i. e. the raising of the economic and cultural level of the minorities with a view toward strengthening the solidarity of all, under the leadership of the working class (and Communist Party), "united in spirit," to establish a socialist society.<sup>206</sup>

We have traced throughout this essay, the intimate connexion between the changes in national minorities' policy and the periods of socio-economic reconstruction of the country as a whole. We have noted that during the initial phases of land and agrarian reform there was a concerted effort to bring the economic decisions of the Centre closer to the minority masses by instituting various democratic coalition governments and national autonomous organs in those areas (supra pp 8-9). People's Conferences of All Circles (replaced by Assemblies of Peoples' Representatives with the advent of the five year plan in 1953) performed the function of propagandising the tasks of the locality and the benefits of the CPR national minorities' policy, of devoting time to careful discussions and consultations so as to arrive at a unanimous opinion.<sup>207</sup> Though the Conferences originally resembled little more than debating societies publicising the decisions of government organs, by mid 1951,



they had acquired the functions later possessed by the Assemblies -- i. e. they selected the appropriate people's government organs, controlled their activity, confirmed budgets, and issued resolutions with the force of command. Between Conference sessions, Consultative Councils elected by them issued resolutions binding only as recommendations. It is strange that though the Councils represented the Conferences to which the local peoples' governments were subordinate, they themselves had no power of command over the latter -- relations being based on "mutual aid and cooperation." Once we realise, however, that the Councils sat only four times at the Provincial level and once a month at the city and hsien level, we can appreciate their having been able, at best, to exercise minimal control of governments.

The post-1951 successors to the Conferences, the Assemblies, were elected by both indirect and direct means. These also had an urban-rural ratio of four to one on the local level, and eight to one in the All-Chinese Assembly. Representatives to town, hsiang, national hsiang, city ch'u (boroughs), and city (not divided into ch'u) assemblies were elected by the people directly. All others above the hsien level were elected by the lower bodies, by secret ballot (the lower levels could use either secret ballot or show of hands). It appears that early practice did not utilise the secret ballot method, for the first general elections in Sinkiang were conducted by show of hands.<sup>208</sup> The electoral procedure, also involved nomination of candidates by parties, mass organisations and electors jointly, after which a list would be drawn up by the local electoral commission and published after discussion by "groups of electors." The original Sinkiang Provincial Assembly of Peoples'



Representatives thus elected for four years numbered 251 Uighurs, 48 Kazakhs, 45 Chinese, 14 Dzungars, 9 Mongols, 4 Uzbeks and 2 Russians. The Provincial Assembly sits once a year whereas hsien, city ch'u and city assemblies meet twice, and hsiang, national hsiang, and town assemblies three or four times. The actual work of the assemblies was often left to their executive organs -- the Peoples' Committees -- which was responsible both to the parent body as well as to the superior body. Either one of these last named could annul measures enacted by it -- further reducing the autonomous competence of local bodies of regional autonomy.

This system of regional autonomy has been praised in Peoples' China because it is flexible and is a true Marxist-Leninist nationality policy. It combined democratic centralism (a hallmark of the Leninist organisational pattern) with a regard for the peculiarities of the given region. Ulanfu stresses that its concrete form may be determined according to the will of the majority and "those leaders having close ties with the people." This makes it possible for the instrumentalities of government to accord with the conditions of the minorities "at the present stage of development."<sup>209</sup> I think in the Chinese view, this system's major advantage -- and therefore its greatest political utility -- is that it allows the government in the area to "assume a form easily understood and willingly accepted by the people." The reason, of course, why the form can be easily accepted is because ideally, government agencies are staffed by minority cadres in local costume, speaking the local languages, eating local food and familiar with local customs, mores, sensibilities. It is that these local cadres will make the fruits of the Chinese Revolution easily accepted and more palatable to the non-



Chinese masses. The essence or desired goal of regional autonomy is to allow indigenous personnel to socialise and communise their native lands. In this way will regional autonomy realise its Leninist mission of wiping out the hatred and misunderstanding which Ulanfu sees as the legacy of a history of oppression.<sup>210</sup> This goal of equality cannot be achieved, however, until the minorities have been made economically equal. Thus, could Chu Teh state that: "all the nationalities have already acquired equality of political status. Development of production is now the key to further advance and emergence from backwardness."<sup>211</sup>

That the Chinese have always borne in mind Lenin's and Stalin's theses on "the actual inequality" of minorities even under a Socialist government, is evidenced by their repeated warning that the final question would not really be solved until the minorities have reached the level of advanced nationalities. These theses are the main theoretical formulae which set forth the arguments favoring retention of special safeguards and forms guaranteeing minority freedom from oppression even under a state building Socialism. Since the real guarantor of political, social and economic equality is seen to be production, and given the obvious fact that the development of China's minority-populated areas is part of the general industrialisation and modernisation of the country, envisaged by her leaders, it is inevitable that the Battle for Production should become intimately related to the proposed solution of the National Question through regional autonomy. In other words, with the coming of the national plans for the development and reconstruction of China, the organs of local autonomy had as their principal functions "particularly the improvement and development of production" where before they had con-



cerned themselves mainly with political work.<sup>212</sup> This shift of emphasis we have already mentioned earlier (supra pp15-16) when we investigated the impact of the national economic plan on the minority regions. It is during this and subsequent periods as new classes are formed with the economic transformation of the region that the slogan "the national question is, in essence, though not in all its complexities a class problem" becomes a self-confirming hypothesis.<sup>213</sup> Thus we have seen how theory began by saying justice and freedom from aggression are a sham without economic equality among the nationalities. But economic equality demands radical reform and change, which in turn begets class war and national antagonisms. If such a policy be not handled circumspectly and relatively slowly, the result will be minority resistance on the scale which was observed in Sinkiang.

We might, at this point, make an allusion to the process of agrarian transformation in the early years of Soviet Central Asia. The first Bolshevik attempt at land reform here in early 1920 failed to change radically the traditional society. This was not only because there was less differentiation between rich and poor than in Central Russia, but also because most of the land had been distributed to tribal units (not individually) or it had reverted to its original owners. Bukhara, Khorezem, Turkmenia and other predominantly non-Russian parts of Central Asia experienced little change in traditional rural and communal institutions initially. Also, in contrast to Russian regions, the poorest elements had been loath to seize the property of the mullahs, bais, and clan patriarchs simply because there was so little class conflict. The religious-tribal structure of each Central Asian Muslim community emphasised



internal unity. Faced with such a configuration hindering revolutionary agrarian reform, the Bolsheviks in 1922, and again in 1925-26 utilised the Koshchi as an instrument of class war in the Central Asian countryside.<sup>214</sup>

As successors to the various Unions of Poor Peasantry which had been ignored by the early Tashkent Soviet government, the Koshchi resembled a combination of cooperatives and rural trade unions. Their members generally were landless and small peasants, agricultural workers, tenant farmers, share croppers and village artisans. As an instrument of government-sponsored policy, their structure and hierarchy were sovietised and they were authorised to make land seizures. Basically they constituted an important device for intensifying the class struggle in Muslim regions, and breaking down the traditional patterns of leadership and community life. After the land reforms had been completed, and when they began to compete with the Soviets and the Party Organs in authority, the Koshchi were subsequently stripped of their powers and most of their membership. In this way did a once significant political institution in Central Asia become little more than a voluntary mass social organisation. The Chinese, however, seem to have been able to revolutionise Sinkiang and achieve their objective without resorting to this device.

Before concluding this brief discussion of the two revolutions there is one problem which concerns national minorities in both countries and which deserves additional attention. As we have noted in China, the minorities' fears of majority-sponsored and -inspired assimilation, ab-



scription or fusion have not been allayed by pronouncements drawing on Marxist-Leninist theory (supra pp. 36-38). In Soviet Russia, Stalin had caused misgivings when he admitted, back in 1925, that some nationalities will undoubtedly be assimilated. Even if they were not immediately assimilated, their future did not look too bright. "The national cultures must be permitted to develop and expand and to reveal all their potential qualities in order to create the conditions necessary for their fusion into a single common culture with a single common language."<sup>215</sup> Stalin elaborated on the theory of fusion in 1930 at the XVI Party Congress and admitted it was self-contradictory. However, he attributed this to "dialectics" in much the same way that the Marxian theory on the withering away of the state was self-contradictory. Knowing that the minority peoples would suspect this future language to be Russian and would fear that Moscow had been given carte blanche to restrict the flourishing of their tongues, Stalin carefully distinguished between Socialism's victory in one country and its triumph internationally. He definitely stated that the languages in the far away period of world-wide Socialism would not be Russian or German and attacked the deviation of Great Russian chauvinism. Krushchev at the XXI Party Congress, ventured to say that the nationality policy was geared to bring nations closer together.<sup>216</sup> He admitted, however, that attentive consideration to national characteristics must not be abandoned. Starting with the law of planned proportional development in the Socialist economic system, the First Secretary showed that formerly backward countries could draw on the experience and mutual aid of other countries in order to catch up. In this way a common line of economic and cultural development is evened out. The experience of Kazakhstan and Central Asia, precapitalist in 1917, and having bypassed



the capitalist stage thereafter, was cited as a model for nations coming together on a world wide scale. In fact, he stated that the theoretical basis for a nationalities policy in the period of extensive Communist construction was unity -- unity of productive relations, unity of economic system, unity of voluntary union, unity of purposes and interests in the struggle for Communism, unity of morals and political principle, the socialist content of culture and the leading and directing role of the Party. There seemed to be little talk of national flowerings, differences, or development. The main task was to show that all the peoples of the union would enter Communism "more or less together" and he accomplished this by showing that they all would be more or less like each other. Minority Group fears of assimilation are consequently thrust aside before the more important (or superior) question of advance to Communism.

The Kazakh, Dahandel'din, commenting on the merger of Soviet nations which has already begun in the Soviet Union, noted that the full flowering of national cultures results in their disappearance in each other.<sup>217</sup> He might well have mentioned that this "historical process" was facilitated considerably in his native land by the fact that Kazakhs now account for a mere 30% of their republic's population. It is said that the XXI Congress completed the return to the Stalinist line in nationality policy which had begun in early 1957 to combat minority intelligentsias' attempts to rehabilitate national cultures and developments and revise some earlier Soviet concepts.<sup>218</sup> This is illustrated by Dahandil'din's remark that the truly national writer acquiesces in and even welcomes the blurring and eventual disappearance of the language and culture of his people since their place will be taken by an international language and culture. Statements such as this were intended to



restrain the host of intellectuals from the smaller peoples who had utilised the post-Stalin thaw and rehabilitations to stage a counter-offensive on the cultural front. Azerbaijan had made a study of the local language compulsory for both Russian and Azeri children; Turkmenistan had put only Turkmen in top posts; Latvia's Gosplan chairman claimed she need only produce what was to be used in Latvia.<sup>219</sup> We find that Sovnarkhozy had attempted to reduce goods produced for shipment out of their republics while funds would be arbitrarily allocated for local projects not in the plan. There was also a marked tendency to use more native labour in opposition to the inflow from other parts of the Union.<sup>220</sup> To combat these cultural and economic threats, a campaign against parochialism and bourgeois nationalism was instituted in 1958-1960. The result of these efforts has been further emphasis on the transitory nature of national development with a view toward<sup>3</sup> the superior and imminent coming together and fusion in the period of Communist construction.

The process of fusion and coming together received much attention at the XXII Party Congress. The New Programme of the Party predicted the achievement of complete unity, though opining that the obliteration of national and linguistic distinctions is a longer process than the elimination of class differences.<sup>221</sup> An international culture common to all the Soviet nations is said to be developing. The words of the Programme on the Socialist content of the cultures of the various peoples in the union, leave no doubt as to how this inevitable process shall be guided:

...The Party will promote their mutual enrichment and rapprochement, the consolidation of their international basis, and thereby the formation of the future single



world-wide culture of communist society. While supporting the progressive traditions of each people and making them the property of all Soviet people, the Party will in all ways further new revolutionary traditions of the builders of communism common to all nations.<sup>222</sup>

There is no overlooking the fact that the envisioned social change is to be a directed and, to an extent, a planned one. There is also no gainsaying the fact that Russian forms and the Russian language will find prominent places in the future Soviet Communist society. The Programme explicitly lauds the voluntary study of Russian and says it has become the common medium of intercourse and cooperation between all peoples of the USSR.<sup>223</sup> Both Krushchev and Nikhitdinov eulogised the progressive role of this tongue at the Congress. It would appear that mastery of the Russian language is a conditio sine qua non for the completion of the of the cultural revolution in the Soviet Union:

"Life itself, the interests of each nation and the building of Communism demand still greater efforts in the organization of a profound study and mastery of the Russian language by all peoples of the Soviet Union."<sup>224</sup>

Soviet writers have taken pains to relegate the eventual merger of nations to the time when the single system of a world socialist economy shall have provided the necessary conditions for it, and have said it is only then that the need for a common international language shall arise.<sup>225</sup> Even when predicting that "fewer and fewer signs will remain distinguishing one nation from another" an author will stress the lengthiness of the process or hazard the opinion that even when, socialist nations become Communist their cultures will still preserve a national form for a certain time.<sup>226</sup> Another writer opines that the old forms will emerge as are capable of conveying the Communist content in the best possible way. These pronouncements on future cultural homogeneity are,



granted, theoretical and oftentimes highly speculative, but they still have import for the lesser peoples involved. Such speculations based on Marxist-Leninist doctrine, voiced by Party members, often in Party publications, are taken seriously enough to evoke controversy, sometimes sharp reactions from more nationally minded intelligentsia. The problem still remains of getting the minority populace, especially its intellectuals, to support and conform to a self-contradictory goal. This is especially difficult when the Leninist Nationalities Policy owed much of its origin and strength to the attempt to satisfy national aspirations of peoples long throttled by an overt Tsarist policy of Russification. The Nationalities Policy devised by the Bolsheviks offered the subject peoples national liberation or, at least, a cultural autonomy. Now that actually political autonomy has been circumscribed and fettered by the power of the Central Authorities, the minorities see even their meagre cultural autonomy threatened -- and they are asked to support and accelerate the process! The advantages gained by the appeal to national psychology in instituting national republics, regions etc., albeit having less political power vis-a-vis the Centre than their titles imply, are in danger of being lost when the native peoples see not paradox but contradiction, not dialectics but a near diabolic erosion of their national identity.

Before concluding this paper, it should be mentioned that a few areas of investigation have not been treated. Policies pursued in educating the minorities would require extensive treatment and have not been



included. The equally vital linguistic policy has not been touched but I feel a few summary remarks on these two fields are necessary. To begin with, the main aims of education policy have been to foster patriotism for China, to facilitate the recruitment of trained cadres, and "to enable the culture of all nationalities to be exchanged and elevated more rapidly."<sup>227</sup> The result of this has been an actual limitation on areas of study though the educational facilities have reached even greater numbers of the population. The desire to enable the cultures of all "to be exchanged" has led to a predominance of purely Chinese techniques and methods as well as a tendency toward Sinification of the minorities' culture. The government points to the thousands of texts and books in the minority languages as proof that its educational policy differs from the "assimilation policy" of the KMT.<sup>228</sup> The figures on educational institutions and nationality institutes in existence are impressive as is the variety of ways of bringing learning to the populace, e. g. the mobile units used in pastoral areas.<sup>229</sup> The 1958-59 number of minority students was quoted as 240,000 or better than 10% of the region's population.<sup>230</sup> But though the list of works translated in the regional languages is long, a report on Teachers Colleges indicated that of the many scientific works and reference books, "few....have been translated into the languages of the local nationalities for use in institutes of higher learning."<sup>231</sup> The implications are that the prodigious amount of books being translated are primarily of a political nature, aimed at producing loyal, communist cadres. The problem is now being felt because teachers must spend extra time learning Chinese so they can translate the necessary scientific materials on their own. This difficulty is most likely encountered right



up to the University level and has led to the introduction of many Han teachers and subsequent emphasis on Han language study. A complete reversal in policy, based on a more deliberate Sinification, of the schools is augured by the oblique statement: "In the past, it has been a practice in Sinkiang to set up schools according to nationalities; now the people of all nationalities want to run schools by joint efforts."<sup>232</sup>

Linguistic policy was also geared to the needs of socialist construction. The adoption of Slavic scripts for Uighurs, Kazakhs, Aolkos, Sibos, Uzbeks and Mongols in August 1956 was hailed as a boon to Han cadres because the new alphabets more faithfully mirrored the sounds of the spoken language.<sup>233</sup> I assume the nomadic Tajiks did not receive the script in use in the Soviet Union since the 14,000 inhabitants of Tash Gurgan Autonomous Tajik Hsien were listed as having no written language.<sup>234</sup> It seems these changes occurred academically but had little effect on the population at large. The old arabic was still in use when the alphabets of the Uighurs and Kazakhs were latinised in 1960. These changes also were deemed justifiable in the interest of national unity, socialist construction, and "cultural exchange." Strangely enough, in recounting all the disadvantages of the old arabic script, not a word was spoken of the cyrillic reforms of 1956.<sup>235</sup> It was as if they had not existed. The new alphabets are said to be based on the proposed Han alphabet and thus the Uighur latin script would differ from the one created in the Soviet Union back in 1928.<sup>236</sup> It is, however, one more means of bringing Han influence to bear on the minorities. Han terms and Han phraseology will be "directly borrowed" in cultural, economic, and political work and a "Standardisation plan" has been adopted.



It seems to me that the linguistic front will be one of the main areas in the battle for Han cultural supremacy.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

1



The two revolutions have been very different in origin, setting, and conduct but their common goals and similar motivations pose like problems for the minority groups facing them. Conversely the Nationalities present related problems to the majorities endeavouring to revolutionise them. In China, the work of socialising and communising is still in full swing. The phase of violent revolt, reaction and uprising is generally finished. This relative quiescence (in comparison to earlier periods) is marred only by cases such as the Tibetan which had not been subject to earlier socialisation or revolutionary change. In the Soviet Union, strident national discontents have by and large been toned down. In spite of all the campaigns against bourgeois nationalism,<sup>3</sup> no serious deviations such as Khvylovism, Shumskyism and Volobuevism in the Ukrainian CP<sup>237</sup> or the Sultan-Galievism in the Muslim republics -- all products of the precollectivisation era - have arisen. To be sure, during the Stalinist period there were numerous purges for alleged national deviations. In part, I believe these were produced by the ever tightening control of the Centre and Stalin over the rest of the Party and the State, and also by the populace's reaction to these measures. The post war drives against incipient or resurgent "pan" movements resulted in much harassment of national intelligentsias and wholesale revisions of national histories. In point of fact, the campaign almost encouraged local nationalism in Central Asia because the Party found itself emphasising specific Uzbek, Tajik etc. cultures in combating pan-Islamism, pan-Turanianism, pan-Iran-



ianism. The vigour of these recriminations toned down, however, after Stalin's death. Just before the XIX Party Congress, the Republican Parties had purged many for nationalism and homeless cosmopolitanism (Ukraine) on bourgeois nationalism (Georgia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Lithuania etc.).<sup>238</sup> Some more personnel were lost after Beria's downfall but their sins were connected mostly with the cult. Finally, the widening of Republican powers which followed the New Course, XX Congress, and Council of Ministers' decisions 1955-59 gave the national regions a bit of leeway and the result was the most recent campaigns against bourgeois nationalism which we have witnessed.<sup>239</sup> However, in scope as well as content, these latterday heresies represent dim reflections of the past.

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We have followed Chinese minority policy through a few definite stages. I do not consider my periodisation as completely arbitrary, but rather reflective of various shifts and turns. I do not believe actual policy was realised in quite the manner planned. The Communist Party had to be flexible and adopt new techniques and campaigns as the need arose. The general progression from small reform to total regimentation of the minority peoples was definitely envisaged and policy followed the outlines for general economic revolution. The objective of turning the nationality question into a class problem was not diabolically invented by the Chinese to cloak their real intentions. We are dealing with convinced Marxists who view the world and their society in terms of specific categories. They actually believe that as the country develops from pre-



capitalist stages, class struggle intensifies and is finally resolved. No wonder then that with the rapid development of Sinkiang more is said about class problems than about nationality divisions. Thus, though they actively and consciously promoted class war among peoples whose class divisions were almost nil, they were acting on an ideological impulse which dictated their creating familiar situations, from a doctrinal point of view. They most likely viewed this as a "necessary" stage in the development from "feudalism" to socialism.

We have already commented throughout the paper on the tasks of each step in policy (generally speaking). Policy has become more "Chinese" in character ever since the Communists stopped saying that Han chauvinism causes local nationalism. In the last few stages, any instance of nationalism has been attributed to class differences -- divisions we have seen nurtured, exacerbated and exploited by the Party itself. It would seem that the days of an anti-chauvinism campaign are over and the Chinese are determined to go slow no more. The relative caution and care of the first few years has given way to the irresistible onward rush of the revolution in China proper. From time to time, the regime will consider it "appropriate" to speed up the transformation of a given area and slowness will be suddenly followed by a vigorous, aggressive and radical approach. After the 1957-8 period there has been generally a more rapid attempt to remake traditional society. The leaders have unabashedly strengthened the predictions of the assimilationphobes who daily view the future of the minorities in this non-Chinese but Chinese-dominated region. Remarks on inevitable fusion plus large-scale Chinese migrations worry the minorities who largely wanted to preserve their distinctiveness and national character. I believe the Chinese will be less cautious in



their dealings with the smaller peoples especially since their hegemony and control has been so firmly established. The growth of the Party and the spread of communes have almost the same implication for Sinkiang as Party growth, collectivisation and industrialisation had for the Soviet lands across the border. On the basis of these past ten years, however, I believe that the Chinese in Sinkiang will accomplish more in less time than the Russians in Central Asia.



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