THE PURGE OF LO JUI-CH'ING:
THE POLITICS OF CHINESE
STRATEGIC PLANNING

Harry Harding and Melvin Gurtov

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PREFACE

THIS REPORT was prepared as part of The Rand Corporation's continuing program of research, under United States Air Force Project Rand, on problems affecting Asian security and the political and military policies of Communist China. In placing the fall of Lo Jui-ch'ing, Chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, in the context of China's domestic political situation, the war in Vietnam, and the Sino-Soviet rift, this study seeks to broaden our appreciation of the various policy arenas in which strategic planning is conducted in China. A reconsideration of Lo's purge not only brings to light important differences in defense strategy that may still be dividing members of China's decisionmaking elite. It also demonstrates the extent to which domestic political considerations can affect strategy preferences and the Chinese leadership's determination of the armed forces' mission.


One of the authors, Harry Harding, is a consultant to The Rand Corporation.
SUMMARY

THIS REPORT is a study of the causes and implications of the purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing, Chief of Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), in December 1965. Our interpretation is that the major issues in Lo's purge concerned Chinese strategic doctrine and its implications for domestic politics. In particular, we believe that the most important issue was Lo's insistence that the PLA reorder its priorities, reduce its domestic political activities, and make immediate preparations against an American attack. To the Maoists, these proposals involved completely unacceptable political and economic costs, and placed Lo's loyalty and reliability in serious question.

A careful examination of the events of 1965 leads us to conclude that Lo did not advocate either an amelioration of relations with Moscow or a more "interventionist" line on the Vietnam conflict. Lo did, however, apparently disagree with Mao and Lin over the implications of Chinese policy in Vietnam for an adequate strategic posture. Lo seems to have argued that, even with a relatively cautious policy toward the Vietnam conflict, China was running military risks that demanded a re-evaluation of defense strategy and an increase in defense preparations. The ensuing debate involved disagreements over the nature of the threat that the United States posed to China, the most appropriate Chinese strategy for responding to the threat, and the corresponding preparations necessary to implement that strategy.

Compared with Lin Piao, Lo saw both a broader spectrum of American threats facing China and a greater probability that the United States would initiate hostilities against the Chinese. Unlike Lin, Lo warned of limited air strikes against Chinese installations assisting North Vietnam, as well as an all-out American invasion of China. Lo advocated
extensive defense preparations to cope with these contingencies. Making immediate preparations, Lo argued, would be more realistic than either assuming that war was unlikely or concluding that China's defensive capabilities were already sufficient. The defense preparations Lo desired included (1) construction of additional defense installations, especially antiaircraft sites, (2) rapid redeployment of China's air defense -- including jets, radars, and available SAMs -- to south China, (3) a re-emphasis on military, as opposed to political, training within the PLA, and perhaps (4) an increase in regular troop strength.

Our main conclusion is that these proposed defense preparations, because they required a number of domestic policy decisions inconsistent with Mao's plans and the interests of other groups, represented the single most important reason for Lo's purge. Opposition to Lo's proposals came from two sources. First were those civilian and military cadres whose programs would have suffered resource cuts in order to pay for the defense preparations Lo desired. In the Army, opposition to Lo probably centered in the General Political Department (GPD), the military regions in north and northwest China, and in the departments concerned with research and development and with the militia.

The most telling objections to Lo's proposals, however, came from Mao, Lin Piao, and their close supporters. In 1964, these men -- concerned over the general political direction of Chinese society -- had launched the first campaigns in a political "protracted war." Aimed at rectifying ideological deviations among Chinese intellectuals, at reducing organizational ossification within the Party and state machinery, and at molding "revolutionary successors" among China's youth, these campaigns relied heavily upon the political loyalty and the ideological correctness of the Chinese Army. The PLA was to serve as an organizational model for the Party and the state, provide individual heroes for youth to emulate, participate in the revolutionization of literature and art, and supply skilled cadres for campaigns in other sectors of society. The Maoists feared that the adoption of Lo's proposals would force the disengagement of the PLA from domestic political activity and might, by increasing the ratio of military to political training, reduce the PLA's political reliability.
Lo's position certainly aroused considerable opposition in Peking, but it probably attracted substantial support as well. And though Lo was ultimately purged, his supporters appear to have been powerful enough to arrange a compromise with Mao and Lin. The compromise involved the rejection of the elements of Lo's program that were especially objectionable to major interest groups in China's defense industry in return for the long-term improvement of China's air defense. Although the PLA has continued to pay verbal homage to the principles of "people's war," the compromise represented a considerable victory for China's military professionals.

The Maoists, too, gained major benefits from the Lo Jui-ch'ing affair. By purging Lo, the Maoists were able (1) to eliminate from sensitive Party and Army positions a powerful and ambitious politician whose active opposition to Mao was suggested by his persistent, public dissent on basic strategic and domestic policies, and who may have been allied with Mao's opponents in the Party, and (2) to warn Party leaders that the rectification of the Party was to continue and that any opposition on their part would be dealt with harshly. Perhaps most important, the Maoists apparently were satisfied that the military professionals would not interfere with the continued involvement of the GPD in domestic political activity or with the emphasis on political training in the PLA.

The purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing, and the strategic debate of 1965 that it climaxed, suggest several conclusions about present and future Chinese policymaking:

(1) Alternative Chinese defense policies can be evaluated, to a greater extent than has previously been thought, according to narrow bureaucratic interests as well as broader strategic considerations. Future analyses of Chinese decisionmaking should take into account the strong possibility that informal political and economic interest groups are important elements in the determination of strategic policy.

(2) China's strategic posture is formulated and modified in a political process in which domestic implications are carefully considered. Two crucial considerations in this process are the perceived necessity for the continued participation of the PLA in domestic political affairs,
and the Maoist preference for strategies that dovetail with long-term defense planning.

3. The Maoists are reluctant to permit the national security functions of the PLA to take precedence at any given time over its domestic political functions. Internal instability and external pressures did not lead an insecure elite into foreign adventures. It appears that only an external threat of considerably greater magnitude and urgency than that posed in 1965 would prompt Chinese deployments to the border and make direct Chinese countermeasures a real possibility.

4. Maoist strategic thinking is defensively oriented, and Mao recently formulated the "general rule" that Chinese troops will never be sent outside Chinese territory to fight. The Maoists appear still to rely on the strategy of "luring deep": allowing the invader to strike deep into China, and then harassing his rear and disrupting his supply lines with irregular and guerrilla forces while blocking his advance with conventional forces. But in constantly publicizing this strategy, the Maoists may also be revealing that its principal purpose is to deter potential invaders by making them aware of the high costs involved in attempting to breach Maoist authority.
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I. INTRODUCTION

FIVE YEARS after the event, the purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing, Chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), still invites inquiry. Previous interpretations of Lo's removal have relied primarily on a textual exegesis of a series of documents, published between February and September 1965, that deal almost exclusively with the questions of strategic doctrine and foreign policy raised by the escalation of American involvement in the war in Vietnam. The Cultural Revolution, however, has subsequently provided us with an additional set of materials on Lo Jui-ch'ing, concerned more with the domestic political and economic implications of alternative strategic postures than with foreign policy issues. These official and unofficial criticisms of Lo, most of which appeared in the second half of 1967, reveal an additional dimension to the "Vietnam debate" and make it possible to reexamine Lo's purge in a new light. One of the purposes of this Report, then, is to link these two sets of materials -- the documents of the Vietnam debate and the revelations of internal politics during the Cultural Revolution -- in an attempt to produce a coherent and plausible explanation of Lo's purge.

Reconstructing the events that led to the purge is important not only for the historical record. By trying to fit the purge into the total context of China's political climate, we may also be able to shed light on the interaction among domestic politics, strategy, and foreign policy and its implications for decisionmaking. Furthermore, besides being able to identify different views within the Party and the Army over the proper place of political training, which is hardly a new topic, it is also possible to discern differences in the perception of external threats and the deterrence postures and force dispositions to counter them.
Despite all the changes wrought by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, reconsideration of the Lo Jui-ch'ing affair still has contemporary value. The PLA, as a political instrument and a major source of political authority, requires continuing attention to its leadership, doctrine, and behavior as a bureaucracy. Many of the same issues that were apparently raised and debated in 1965 probably were not resolved by Lo's dismissal. Questions consequently must still be asked about how Party and Army leaders will react to foreign crises: what their priorities will be, how these will affect their arguments and preferences, and how external threats may influence the formation and durability of domestic and international political alliances.
II. THE POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF THE VIETNAM "DEBATE"

The Political Context

Chinese domestic politics in 1964 were marked by an increasing concern over the political and ideological directions of Chinese society. Though China's economy appeared to have recovered from the "three hard years" following the Great Leap Forward, Chinese leaders were alarmed about developments in three other critical areas of Chinese society: dissatisfaction and individualism among youth, serious deviations from major ideological principles among intellectuals, and organizational ossification and decay in both Party and state. Were corrective measures not taken, some leaders feared, the nation would be susceptible to either a restoration of capitalism or the entrenchment of revisionism. To meet these threats, the Party Center devised remedial policies that relied to a great extent upon the PLA as a model and vanguard of reform.

The Center's first cause for concern was the increasing alienation of China's educated youth. The surface manifestations of their discontent included interest in Western music, "decadent" entertainment, "bourgeois" fashions, and material comfort. But their disenchantment stemmed primarily from the government's inability to provide them with challenging and rewarding employment. The youth openly resented being asked to accept menial labor in the countryside, where they could make little use of the specialized technical skills they had acquired in high school and college. China, in short, was unable to absorb the burgeoning intellectual class that its educational system was creating. Instead, it
was producing an intelligentsia profoundly dissatisfied and impatient
with the career choices available to it.\(^1\)

Perhaps the Center's most important campaign aimed at youth in 1964
was a drive to create "revolutionary successors."\(^2\) Young people were
urged to follow the same political education methods employed by the PLA
in its efforts to create "4-good" companies and "5-good" soldiers: to
study and apply the Thought of Mao Tse-tung in all their activities; to
emulate selected models (many of them Army men) who had demonstrated
through heroic action their proletarian standpoint; to learn of the hard-
ships of the old society by exchanging experiences with older workers
and peasants; and to engage in physical labor. The aim -- as in the
PLA -- was to rectify the "bourgeois" tendencies in the students' think-
ing to enable them to meet the five criteria for "revolutionary succes-
sors" set down by Mao in "On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism."\(^3\) Only then
would they be qualified to assume leadership positions in Chinese society.


\(^2\)See "Cultivating and Training Millions of Successors to the Pro-
portance of the campaign was indicated by the presence of Mao, Liu Shao-
chi, Chou En-lai, and other central leaders at the Ninth Congress of
the Communist Youth League, held in Peking between June 11 and 29, 1964.

A related campaign involved serious discussion of ways to restructure
the educational system so as to reduce the imbalance between voca-
tional training and job openings. Proposals were widely circulated to
modify academic curricula and revise the criteria for the admission and
promotion of students. At year's end, the decision was made to rein-
troduce the system of half work, half study that the schools had estab-
lished during the Great Leap Forward. The purpose of these reforms was
both to make the curricula more relevant to the nation's manpower needs
and to make educational opportunities available to a broader segment of
China's youth.

\(^3\)The five requirements were: (1) "They must be genuine Marxist-
Leninists"; (2) "They must be revolutionaries who wholeheartedly serve
the majority of the people of China and the whole world"; (3) "They
must be proletarian statesmen capable of uniting and working together
with the overwhelming majority"; (4) "They must be models in applying
the Party's democratic centralism, must master the method of leadership
based on the principle of 'from the masses, to the masses,' and must
cultivate a democratic style and be good at listening to the masses";
and (5) "They must be modest and prudent and guard against arrogance
and impetuosity; they must be imbued with the spirit of self-criticism
China's intellectuals troubled the nation's leaders in another way. In the spring and summer of 1964, newspapers and magazines began to carry a series of attacks against Yang Hsien-chen, head of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Higher Party School. Yang was accused of emphasizing the "unity of opposites" rather than the "struggle between the aspects of a contradiction" when lecturing on Mao's theory on contradictions. Yang's discussions of the resolution of social conflict, in other words, were said to have underestimated the role of struggle and exaggerated the possibility of compromise. But even more important than his distortion of Mao's theory of dialectics were the purported implications of Yang's theories for both domestic and foreign policy. Yang's notion that "two combine into one" (ho erh erh yi) provided, it was said, the philosophical justification for a relaxation of the class struggle at home and an improvement of China's relations with the Soviet Union and the United States. 4

In order to combat these ideological deviations, the central leadership launched a series of campaigns against Yang and other scholars associated with him. The campaigns, which obtained extensive media coverage, involved nationwide discussions of the basic pertinent political issues (the issues were considered so crucial that these discussions were held at levels as low as the factory), and congresses of intellectuals convened to expurgate Yang's writings. A major component of this early "cultural revolution" 5 was the growing participation of PLA cultural teams under the General Political Department (GPD) in the movement for Peking Opera reform that would later come to be associated with Mao's

and have the courage to correct mistakes and shortcomings in their work" ("On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World," Peking Review, No. 29, July 17, 1964, pp. 26-27).


wife, Chiang Ch'ing. Army opera troupes were credited with major contributions in the effort to "revolutionize" this traditional art form.

Finally, the Party leaders were also concerned over organizational problems, particularly those in basic-level rural units and in offices dealing with economic affairs. The documents captured in the Lien-chiang raids, for example, indicate that the basic levels were plagued by corruption, speculation, extortion, waste, and capitalist tendencies. To cope with these problems, the Party undertook increasingly stringent rectification measures during 1964. In September, work teams that, as a part of the Socialist Education Movement (SEM), had been sent into the countryside to "enlighten" the basic-level cadres, were ordered to intensify their investigations of rural conditions and to permit the masses to struggle against errant officials.

In the same month, An Tzu-wen, Director of the Organization Department of the Party's Central Committee, published a major article that underlined the Center's concern about the political reliability of the Party and state organizations and foreshadowed the extensive purges of 1966-67. An warned cadres at every level that, "whatever [their] seniority, Party standing, and worthy service," they must all intensify their reeducation. Echoing Mao's insistence that "one divides into two," An declared that the Party tended to divide into proletarian and bourgeois wings, and that those who represented the bourgeois standpoint should be identified and resisted.

As a first step in organizational rectification, the Party began to restructure major governmental institutions during this period. The

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model presented for emulation was the PLA. Following the purge of P'eng Teh-huai in 1959, Minister of Defense Lin Piao had begun to rebuild the political organizations within the Army with the aims of rejuvenating the Army's political departments and reconstructing Party branches down to the company level. In February 1964, Peking established political departments in governmental offices responsible for industry, commerce, trade, and finance, modeled on the political departments of the PLA. Furthermore, these new supervisory units were staffed, to a large extent, by cadres dispatched from the Army. The PLA, in short, was seen as a good model of political reliability, and other bureaucracies were ordered to "Learn from the PLA."  

As for Lo Jui-ch'ing, who as head of the PLA stood to benefit from the Center's attempt to make the PLA the vanguard of the Party's assault on "revisionism," there is scattered and somewhat ambiguous evidence that he did not fully support the Maoist position on Army affairs in 1964.

That the evidence is ambiguous is not as surprising as it may seem. Although Lo is now considered to have been a military "professional," his appointment as Chief of Staff of the PLA in 1959 was interpreted at the time as an attempt by Mao and Lin Piao to place a loyal, reliable, politically oriented officer in a sensitive position. Lo had formed a close association with Lin during the Anti-Japanese War, when he had served as Lin's deputy, first at the Red Army College, and then at K'ang-ta (The Resist-Japan Military-Political University in Yenan). During the civil war, Lo fulfilled political assignments in the PLA, including Deputy Political Commissar and Chairman of the Political Department of the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Field Army in 1946-47, and Chairman of the Political Department of the North China Military Region in 1948. Between October 1949 and his 1959 promotion to Chief of Staff, he served as Minister of Public Security and Commander of the Public Security Forces. During the next five years, Lo acquired further positions of

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trust: Vice-Premier of the State Council, Deputy Minister of National
Defense, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CCP, and Secretary-
General of the Military Affairs Commission.

Furthermore, Lo's public statements revealed few indications that
he was succumbing to the "professional standpoint." As late as December
1964, Lo reiterated his support of the Maoist position on the primacy
of politics in the work of the PLA, declaring that the armed forces
"should strengthen their military and political training, particularly
political training. They should carry out all kinds of ideological and
political tasks, raise the class consciousness of their members, and
cultivate excellent work styles. On this basis, they should carry out
painsstaking training to master the skill of killing the enemy within
200 metres."10 As Morton Halperin and John Lewis have pointed out, this
statement by Lo indicates his acceptance of the so-called Party position
on military affairs, as opposed to the "professional standpoint." For
Lo's reference to killing the enemy within 200 meters is indicative of
an emphasis on "close combat," which, according to Halperin and Lewis,
is "the highest political form of the art of military engagement. It
is this form which shows that in war people are more important than
weapons."11

On the other hand, Red Guard documents have consistently referred
to a private dispute between Lo and the Maoists over the so-called
military tournaments. According to the Red Guard accounts, Lo instituted
a series of military competitions in January 1964, in the belief that a
desire to perform well in the tournaments would encourage military units
to improve their military skills. Lo's first mistake was to initiate
the tournaments without consulting either Mao, Lin, the Central Committee,
or the Military Affairs Commission; he apparently made the decision on
his own authority. It is not clear when opposition to the tournaments
began to arise. But the Maoists eventually decided that they distracted

10. New Year's Day statement to the Army, Radio Peking domestic
11. Morton Halperin and John Wilson Lewis, "New Tensions in Army-
Party Relations in China, 1965-1966," China Quarterly, No. 26, April-
the troops' attention from political study and fostered a competitive — rather than cooperative — spirit among the soldiers. Cultural Revolution documents claim that at the "end of 1964" Lin issued a directive criticizing the tournaments (and by implication ordering their termination), which Lo tried to distort and delay. Lo allegedly continued to argue that because of the tournaments, military training in 1964 had been more successful than in any other year since 1949.12

Moreover, some of Lo's public statements appear ambiguous on the proper relationship between political and military training. In an article for Chung-kuo oh'ing-nien (China's Youth), for example, Lo recognized the necessity for young soldiers to study political theory and Mao Tse-tung's Thought, but he also said that "tempering in revolutionary struggle," which he defined as learning the regimen of the common soldier, was "even more important."13 During the Cultural Revolution, Lo was

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13 Lo Jui-ch'ing, "The Road to the Growth of Young Soldiers," Chung-kuo oh'ing-nien, No. 6, 1964, in Wu-hao chao-shih (Five-Good Soldiers), Shanghai, Jen-min ch'u-pan she, 1965. According to Lo, "It is indeed important that young soldiers earnestly study theory and grasp certain theoretical knowledge. But even more important is tempering in revolutionary struggle. Chairman Mao said [in "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War"]: 'Reading books is study, applying [what is read] is study, and moreover is even more important study.' Knowledge is incomplete, is partial when one has book knowledge and no practical tempering. . . . Youthful officers who have not been through tempering in war and basic-level tempering must uniformly go down to the ranks and serve as ordinary soldiers, live a strict soldier's life for a time and let that serve as a supplementary course. A youth who has not been through wind and rain and has not seen the world cannot become a strong revolutionary soldier."
criticized for making statements, like this one, that could be interpreted as placing equal emphasis on military and ideological training. 14 There is room, therefore, to speculate that Mao and Lo differed both publicly and privately over the doctrine of the "primacy of politics."

Another possible cause of tension between Lo and Lin Piao was Lin's poor health. The Red Guards have accused Lo of using Lin's illness to further his own ambitions. According to one of the more reliable accounts, Lo visited Lin sometime in late 1964 to request authority to oversee the operational affairs of the Army. In effect, Lo was asking Lin to delegate to him all the day-to-day tasks of managing the PLA. When Lin refused, Lo is accused of having "exploded," saying: "A sick man should seek cure for his illness and should not concern himself with other things! A sick man should give his place to the worthy! Don't meddle! Don't block the way." 15 If true, this rather melodramatic incident would indicate both that Lo considered his own career obstructed by a man who was kept in office, despite ill health, largely because of his increasingly close relationship with Mao, and that the personal relations between Lo and Lin were seriously strained as a result. As Liu Shao-ch'i reportedly put it, "Lo Jui-ch'ing despises and fears Comrade Lin Piao." 16

How, then, can we evaluate Lo's personal and political position at the beginning of 1965? It is possible, we believe, that Lo was more interested than Lin or Mao in the military duties of the PLA; there are also some indications of strong political ambitions on Lo's part and


15 "Down With Lo Jui-ch'ing," p. 9.

16 "Selected Edition of Liu Shao-ch'i's Counter-revolutionary Revisionist Crimes," Nank'ai University, August 18 Red Rebel Regiment, Liaison Station (under the banner "Pledging To Fight a Bloody Battle With Liu-Teng-T'ao to the End"), April 1967, in SCMM, Nos. 651-653, April 22, 28, and May 5, 1969."
perhaps a personal rivalry between Lin and Lo. But Lo's position appears on balance to have been quite secure. Even the Red Guard documents are unable to make a strong argument that Lo followed an incorrect policy line during 1964.\(^{17}\) Once the United States began to escalate its military operations in Vietnam, however, differences between Lo and Mao-Lin on China's strategic policy and defense posture that may previously have been latent or compromising became points of conflict.

In summary, then, 1964 saw the intensification of a political "protracted war",\(^ {18}\) aimed both at rectifying organizational and ideological deviations and at molding "revolutionary successors to the cause of the proletariat." The Maoists apparently considered the continued participation of the PLA crucial to the successful conduct of this struggle. As we have just indicated, the PLA was neither devoid of personal rivalries nor completely free of professionalism. Nonetheless, Lin Piao's efforts to improve the political reliability and ideological correctness of the PLA had been sufficiently successful for Mao to use the Army as an organizational model for the Party and state, and to dispatch cadres from the GPD to lead campaigns against revisionism in sectors of civilian society ranging from economics to the arts. The importance of these campaigns to the Maoists, and the importance of the PLA to the campaigns, was such that any proposal that would divert attention from domestic problems, restrict the performance of the Army's domestic functions, or threaten to weaken the political fibre of the PLA would probably receive extremely critical scrutiny.

\(^{17}\) There are many other quotations in Red Guard documents that purport to document Lo's adherence to the "bourgeois military line." Most of them, however, are undated.

Vietnam

Prior to the Tonkin Gulf incidents, the Chinese Communists' characterization of the Vietnam conflict and their material commitment to the insurgents were modest. The Chinese considered the Viet Cong revolution only one of several national-liberation movements in the underdeveloped world, not the most important. China's public identification with the Viet Cong involved sympathetic support and encouragement, probably reflecting the leadership's belief that a Vietnamese Communist guerrilla war would eventually be capable of overwhelming the Saigon government without the need of major external assistance. Accordingly, during 1964 the CPR became an increasingly important, but was not the most significant, source of weapons for the Viet Cong.

Although the Chinese leadership was confident about the outcome of the Viet Cong revolution, it apparently was concerned about American intentions, mainly, it seems, with respect to North Vietnam. In the summer of 1964, Peking charged that the United States had violated Chinese territorial and air space 19 times during May and June, and said that such violations bore a "close relation" to U.S. "schemes" in Southeast Asia. Perhaps in anticipation of new trouble, Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi wrote Xuan Thuy, then the North Vietnamese foreign minister: "China is the brotherly neighbor of the DRV, as closely related to it as the lips to the teeth. Any aggression against the DRV cannot expect [to find] the Chinese people sitting idly by doing nothing." An editorial in Jen-min jih-pao on July 9 noted recent American threats "to carry out a sea blockade and bombing of the DRV," actions that would be considered a threat to "China's peace and security."

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19 See, for example, Mei Chih-chin, "The U.S. Vainly Struggles On in Southeast Asia," Shih-chieh chih-shih (World knowledge), No. 5, March 10, 1964, pp. 7-10.

20 Jen-min jih-pao editorial, July 1, 1964, p. 3.

21 Ibid., July 8, 1964, p. 1.
referred to the possibility of direct Chinese intervention in Vietnam in response to a U.S. ground invasion of the North. Chou said it was for the Americans to decide whether they wanted war with China, and on what scale; but once they had decided, China would consider a multi-front war rather than fight "a second Korea." 22

These pessimistic official Chinese statements probably reflected not only an attempt to deter U.S. escalation in Vietnam but also a reluctance to stake out in advance the range of China's commitments to Vietnam. Also in the aforementioned interview, for example, Chou seemed -- perhaps purposely -- to contradict himself when he said at one point that China might become involved if North Vietnam were invaded and, at another, implied that Chinese involvement would depend on whether the United States attacked China.

The engagements in the Tonkin Gulf on August 2 and 4, 1964, and the first U.S. air raids against North Vietnamese targets did not lead the Chinese substantially to augment their verbal or material commitments to North Vietnam. While asserting, through newspaper commentaries and official statements, that "aggression against the DRV is aggression against China," the leadership seemed to distinguish between American attacks on North Vietnam (such as the air strikes of August 4), which called for China's "resolute support," and an American invasion, which

22. The undated interview was given in Shanghai to Dr. Hugo Portisch, whose newspaper, Der Kurier, of Vienna, published it on August 1. Although Chou was not identified, the context -- the speaker's statement that he recently visited Pakistan, which Chou did the previous February -- indicates it was he. Chou said China would directly intervene "only if, perhaps, the United States would send up their 'special warfare' [forces] toward the north, if they attacked North Vietnam. . . ." On China's response, Chou said: "A very wide and a very broad front can be set up there [in Southeast Asia]. Such a war would not remain isolated in a narrow space. It would also involve Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, perhaps also Thailand." Chou said with respect to the scope of fighting: "If they [the Americans] want a small war, well, then a small war it will be. If they want a big war, then it will be a big war. It all depends on the Americans. We do not want any war whatsoever. But if it is forced upon us, they will find us ready."
might require a more direct Chinese response. To meet the first situation, China sent about 15 MIG-15 and MIG-17 subsonic jets to North Vietnam in August, agreed to train Hanoi's pilots in China, and completed or began to construct new jet-accommodating airfields in south China. This last measure, as subsequent events would make clearer, was designed to provide sanctuary and repair and maintenance facilities for North Vietnam's jet fighters. It was also a minimum step, in the absence of accompanying air force redeployment, toward strengthening China's own air defense. To meet the second contingency, Peking appeared to rely more on the force of words than on action. Although large-scale close-range combat maneuvers reportedly took place in August in Kwangtung and Fukien provinces, no significant redeployments of PLA units occurred during the latter half of 1964.

When the Tonkin incidents were not followed by further U.S. air attacks or by increased American involvement in South Vietnam, whatever concern existed in China over U.S. intentions seems to have relaxed. No deployment of additional jet fighters and personnel to military facilities in south China appears to have occurred, for one thing. For another, the anxiety in Chinese statements about Vietnam that was noticeable in mid-1964 was greatly muted by the end of the year. The explanation can be found in Mao Tse-tung's interview with Edgar Snow in January 1965. Mao expressed confidence that the United States would not expand

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23 Jen-min jih-pao editorial, August 6, 1964, p. 1: "Whenever U.S. imperialism intrudes into the territory, territorial waters and airspace of the DRV, the Chinese people, without hesitation, will resolutely support the just war of the Vietnamese people resisting the American aggression. The Chinese Government has repeatedly seriously warned the U.S. Government that if it dares to launch an attack against the DRV, the Chinese people will definitely not sit idly by without helping."


26 A Chinese broadcast of August 13 (reported in The New York Times, August 14, 1964, p. 3) specifically linked the maneuvers to pledges by the CPR leadership to support Hanoi against U.S. aggression.

the war to the North (Secretary of State Rusk had said so); but in any event, he declared, Chinese forces would not fight beyond the border. In South Vietnam, the Viet Cong were proving quite capable of winning on their own; increased U.S. intervention would only strengthen the Viet Cong materially and politically, so that the Americans could be expected, after another few years, to return home or try elsewhere. Mao did not even exclude the possibility of another conference in Geneva to discuss the American withdrawal from Vietnam while U.S. forces were still there.

Sino-Soviet Relations

Following the announcement on October 14, 1964 of Khrushchev's ouster, the Chinese Communists accepted Moscow's invitation to send a delegation to the October Revolution celebrations. Unquestionably, the main purpose of the delegation, led by Chou En-lai, was to sound out the new leaders, Kosygin and Brezhnev, on the numerous issues in dispute. These included Khrushchev's long-delayed plan to hold an international Communist conference; peaceful coexistence with the United States; commitments to revolutionary movements; the Soviets' "revisionist" domestic programs; and the acceptability of Titoism. The Chinese found in the course of their visit (November 5-13) that nothing had really changed in the Soviet posture; Khrushchev's successors wanted an improvement in Sino-Soviet relations on terms that would silence Peking's criticisms and limit competition in foreign policy, probably in return for the resumption of Soviet economic assistance. The two Communist parties remained as far apart as ever. According to P'eng Chen's later account, the Chinese delegation advised them [Brezhnev and Kosygin] to discard his [Khrushchev's] legacy and to put right their perverse attitude towards enemies and friends. They again refused to listen. They declared to our delegation's face that there was not a shade of difference between them and Khrushchev in their attitude toward enemies and friends. . . .

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The possibility of a reconciliation was dimmed by the Moscow experience, but at least some Chinese leaders -- to judge from Chou's remarks in his Report on the Work of the Government (December 21-22, 1964) -- still held out hopes for Sino-Soviet unity. Nevertheless, at the end of 1964 and into the new year, the Chinese press published a number of statements by other Communist parties, such as the Japanese and Albanian parties, that were critical of the new Soviet leaders. Peking resumed more direct polemics denouncing Khrushchev's policies, which may have been responsible for the Soviet decision, late in November, to hold a preliminary conference of Communist parties the following March 1. The first step had been taken toward a world conference that would, Peking had long insisted, irrevocably split the Communist movement.

Domestic Politics, Strategic Posture, and Foreign Policy at the Start of 1965

The first months of 1965 saw a major increase in the level of American involvement in Vietnam. On February 7, 9, and 11, American war planes raided installations in the North, supposedly in retaliation against Viet Cong attacks on American barracks near Pleiku and in Quinhon. On March 1, the United States stopped claiming that its air strikes against the DRV were reprisals for specific Communist actions in the South, and began a continuous air campaign against North Vietnam. For the Chinese, the situation in Vietnam had, in the space of a month, undergone a very ominous change.

In China, as in every nation, the three policy arenas we have been discussing -- strategic, domestic, and foreign -- are intimately interrelated. In determining their response to American escalation, therefore, Chinese leaders had to take into account the effects of a change in strategic posture or foreign policy on the domestic Chinese political

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Griffith, pp. 64-65.
situation. Those who advocated a major shift in the Chinese strategic posture, for example, would have to justify the resulting cost to domestic political and economic programs. And conversely, those who wished to continue existing domestic policies would have to consider their implications for Chinese military preparedness and for the flexibility of Chinese foreign policy.

In reevaluating their policies in 1965, then, Chinese leaders almost certainly considered the interconnections among the various policy arenas. Our discussion of China's domestic and international environments at the end of 1964 leads us to believe that the CCP probably took the following relationships into account:

(1) The Relation Between Strategic and Domestic Policies

Given the extensive and critical role of the General Political Department of the PLA in several major domestic political campaigns, an intensification of military training or redeployment of military units to meet strategic needs might have two effects. First, it might seriously hamper the continuation of the political campaigns begun in 1964. Secondly, greater emphasis on military training might lower the priority of political indoctrination programs within the PLA, and might therefore reduce the overall political reliability and ideological correctness of the Army.

Economically, a decision to improve the combat posture of the PLA would require the diversion of economic resources from civilian projects into military programs. In addition, greater emphasis within the Army on military activities might divert the Army from its domestic economic functions, such as sideline production and public works.

Conversely, domestic political and economic requirements might be permitted to limit the kinds of military preparations and the level of military expenditures that the PLA could undertake. Strategic options might be selected that would maximize the PLA's participation in politics and minimize the Army's share of the nation's economic resources.
(2) The Relation Between Strategic and Foreign Policies

Chinese policy toward Vietnam would clearly exert considerable influence on the character of Chinese strategic policy, including the deployment of forces and the nature of military preparations. A decision to expand or restrict military expenditures and preparations would tend, respectively, to enlarge or diminish the flexibility of Chinese policies toward the Vietnam war.

China's policy toward the Soviet Union would affect the availability of certain types of sophisticated conventional weapons and a nuclear deterrent against the United States. Therefore, China's perceived need for an improved strategic posture might require a readjustment of its relations with Moscow.

(3) The Relation Between Domestic and Foreign Policies

Since an aid program to North Vietnam might necessitate readjustment of domestic expenditure patterns, depending upon the amount and scarcity of the resources supplied, domestic economic requirements might put constraints on Chinese aid to North Vietnam.

Conceivably, the desire to improve China's economic conditions might encourage attempts to ameliorate relations with the Soviet Union. On the other hand, China's continued use of conditions within the Soviet Union as a "negative model" domestically (consider the devastating critique of Soviet society contained in "On Khrushchev's Phoney Communism") would severely restrict its ability to improve relations with Moscow, whether such an improvement were intended to increase Soviet trade and aid to China or to elicit Moscow's cooperation on assistance to North Vietnam.

These three interrelationships provide a background for analyzing the inner-Party debate of 1965. The rapid American escalation in Vietnam during that year, by bringing into question the adequacy of the Chinese strategic posture, threatened to disrupt the balance established in 1964.

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among the three realms of policy. Proposals to alter China's strategic stance or its foreign policy would inevitably raise very touchy domestic political and economic questions. Chinese leaders would have to decide the degree to which improvement or maintenance of their position in one policy arena would warrant sacrifices in the other two. And this decision in turn hinged upon another: whether domestic "revisionism" or American "imperialism" posed the greater threat to the Chinese state in 1965. In fact, as we will argue, it was the inability to agree which was the more serious threat that lay at the heart of the so-called strategic debate of 1965.
III. THE EVOLUTION OF CHINA'S VIETNAM POLICY,
FEBRUARY–NOVEMBER 1965

U.S. AIR STRIKES against North Vietnam in February 1965, and the March 1 announcement from Washington of the start of a continuous air campaign over the North, compelled Peking to redefine its Vietnam policy and to consider its implications for the rift with Moscow. By chronologically tracing Chinese policy formulations and Chinese actions, the groundwork can be laid for establishing whether, to what extent, and on what basis Lo Jui-ch'ing differed with other leaders on Vietnam policy, Sino-Soviet relations, and China's strategic posture.

February

Chinese statements regarding the U.S. air strikes -- including a speech by Lo Jui-ch'ing -- were quite consistent. Two points were stressed: first, that the DRV now had the right to retaliate, and could expect continued Chinese political and material support; and second, that China was prepared for a direct confrontation with the United States only if the United States "imposed" war on China. There is no evidence, contrary to the interpretations of some analysts, that at this juncture unity with the Soviet Union (except on China's terms) was being advocated by any Chinese leaders.

As to the appropriate response to the U.S. attacks, the implication of various Chinese statements was that North Vietnam should step up the infiltration of men into the South. The DRV, said Liu Ning-yi (a member of the CCP Central Committee and President of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions) on February 10, now had "the right to take the initiative
and counterattack the U.S. imperialist aggressors." He expressed confidence that "the Vietnamese people" could cope with the Americans. A Chinese government statement on February 13 proclaimed that the "DRV has secured the right to take the initiative in dealing counterblows to the South Vietnamese puppets." China would play a supporting role in this undertaking: "The 650 million Chinese people will definitely not ignore it [U.S. aggression] or stand idly by without helping" (Liu Ning-yi); "With respect to the struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. imperialist aggression, we will exert our greatest effort to support it" (Lo Jui-ch'ing).

In promising China's "greatest effort," Lo does not appear to have been recommending a new CPR commitment in Vietnam. Actually, Lo seemed to hedge on China's commitment. He would only say that "with respect to U.S. aggressive action in expanding the war to the DRV, the Chinese people definitely cannot ignore it," and that it would "stir up the protests of Asian and the world's people." Lo was much less equivocal about the case where "U.S. imperialism singlemindedly dares to impose aggressive war on us," for then, "we are prepared and understand how to deal with its aggression."

Such Chinese statements notwithstanding, renewal of the U.S. air attacks had overthrown Mao's optimistic forecast about American intentions and therefore must have raised questions about whether proclamations of Chinese attentiveness would be sufficient to deter further U.S. escalation. It has consequently been suggested that at this time the position of some Chinese leaders, Lo Jui-ch'ing among them, was that "while China was not prepared to change its basic position on the questions at issue with Moscow, it was prepared to strengthen the alliance

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34 In a speech at a North Korean embassy reception, Jen-min jih-pao, February 9, 1965, p. 1.
35 Contrary to the interpretation of Uri Ra'anan that Lo was here "hinting at intervention" by the Chinese "as in Korea." See Ra'anan, p. 36.
in the face of the common danger."36 Certainly, several (if not most) Chinese leaders, including Mao,37 still accepted Sino-Soviet unity and the Sino-Soviet alliance in principle. None seemed prepared, however, to compromise on the issues in dispute — including support of the Vietnamese Communist insurgency and Soviet leadership in the world Communist movement — in order to improve China's deterrent posture toward the United States, least of all at a time when the U.S. threat to China was still remote. It may also be questioned whether any Chinese leader could really have believed that the Soviets would give something for nothing, i.e., would agree to reaffirm a commitment to China's defense while accepting continued Chinese criticism and ideological separatism.

Kosygin's visit to Peking on February 5, en route to Hanoi, provided the occasion for Mao and his associates to confront the Soviet premier personally with their discontent. According to a later Chinese account,38 Kosygin contended that the United States should be helped out of Vietnam through negotiations, but was told that it was time for resistance, not talking. The Chinese still resisted his proposals for normalizing relations,39 and in speeches after Kosygin's departure, expressed continued

37 See the congratulatory message sent by Mao, Liu Shao-ch'i, and others to Soviet Party and government leaders on February 13, in New China News Agency (NCNA) Daily Bulletin No. 2596, February 14, 1965, pp. 7-8. Liu Ning-yi, in his previously cited speech of February 10, had also called upon the socialist countries to "unite" on the Vietnam question; but the context makes clear that he did not believe unity then existed (contrary to Ra'ananan, p. 35) or was just around the corner.
38 In a letter of July 14, 1965 from the CCP Central Committee to the Soviet Party (CPSU), a genuine copy of which (with only minor deletions) was published in an article by Edward Crankshaw, The Observer (London), November 14, 1965, p. 5. See also "Refutation of the New Leaders of the C.P.S.U. on 'United Action,'" by the editorial departments of Jen-min jih-pao and Hung-ch'i, November 11, 1965 in Peking Review, No. 46, November 12, 1965, pp. 15-16 (hereafter, "Refutation").
39 According to a secret letter sent by the CPSU in early 1966 to Communist party offices in the Soviet Union and to other "fraternal" parties, Kosygin, while in Peking, had proposed that polemics be discontinued, trade be expanded, and technical cooperation begin anew. The Chinese leadership is said to have rejected all these overtures. An excerpted version was published in Die Welt (Hamburg), March 21, 1966.
suspicions about Soviet reliability. Kuo Mo-jo, vice-chairman of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association, and Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi both expressed their belief that Sino-Soviet unity still needed to be "consolidated and developed" (Kuo) and "tested and tempered" in "concrete action" (Ch'en). 40 By the end of February, the Chinese felt their position had been vindicated: as they would later charge, 41 no sooner had Kosygin returned to Moscow than he and his colleagues proposed to convene a new Indochina conference, based on President Johnson's call for "unconditional negotiations," and later urged that negotiations begin once the United States stopped bombing the DRV. "The dark spirit of Khrushchev has not dissipated," a biting Jen-min jih-pao commentary asserted on February 26; the new Soviet leadership -- "Khrushchevism without Khrushchev" -- was as interested as ever in peaceful coexistence with the United States.

March

By the end of February, the Chinese position on aid to Vietnam had become fairly well established. To maintain the sanctity of their "principled stand" against imperialism and revisionism, Peking would do nothing publicly that would imply acceptance of Soviet leadership in combating the threat to North Vietnam. On their own, the Chinese would increase military and economic aid to Hanoi; 42 provide antiaircraft artillery units and instructors; 43 introduce PLA construction personnel

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40 Kuo Mo-jo's speech of February 13 is in NCNA Daily Bulletin No. 2596, February 14, 1965, pp. 17-21. Ch'en Yi's speech on February 15 is ibid., No. 2598, February 16, 1965, pp. 5-6. Both speeches were made during celebrations to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the Sino-Soviet treaty of friendship and mutual defense.

41 CCP Central Committee letter of July 14, 1965 (cited in note 38), and "Refutation," p. 16.

42 Chinese military aid consisted then of some additional subsonic MIGs, infantry weapons, and ammunition; economic aid included trucks, construction materials, pharmaceuticals, and rice.

43 New York Times, January 17, 1965, p. 1. The AAA units were probably detailed to protect PLA logistical personnel as well as North Vietnam military targets.
(eventually numbering from 30,000 to 50,000) to rebuild and defend damaged rail and road links and storage facilities in the area between the China border and major DRV cities; assist in the construction or expansion of DRV airfields and other defense facilities; and make south China airfields available as redeployment areas for North Vietnamese jets, which would otherwise be vulnerable to U.S. air attacks. From Mao's viewpoint, it may be assumed, these steps were in keeping with the stated policy of self-reliance (since they freed North Vietnamese army personnel to assist the Viet Cong); bolstered the DRV's defenses (and thus encouraged Hanoi's continued resistance); and minimized the risks and necessity of deeper Chinese involvement in the conflict. Tough-sounding Chinese statements during March consequently seemed more relevant to the Sino-Soviet controversy than to actual Chinese policy on Vietnam.

Soviet activities, meanwhile, could only have decreased the likelihood that Mao's opposition to unity with Moscow would change, or that anyone in Peking advocating unity would make headway. From March 1 to 5, the Soviets convened a nineteen-party "consultative meeting" (not attended by Hanoi) that prompted the most intensive Chinese criticism yet of Soviet policies. During the conference, on March 4, Chinese

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44 See loc. cit.; New York Times, August 12, 1966, p. 4; and Whiting, p. 77.
45 Work on the rail and road links was necessary after June, when they became targets of U.S. air strikes. The first Chinese units arrived in the early fall of 1965, the last in the spring of 1966 (Whiting, p. 77). Their arrival freed North Vietnamese soldiers to perform similar tasks on the transportation lines between North and South Vietnam.
46 Bueschel, p. 83, mentions Meng-tzu in Yunnan as one of the bases used by the North Vietnamese beginning in late 1965.
47 A Jen-min jih-pao editorial (March 25, 1965, p. 2), for instance, responded to the Viet Cong's five-point statement of March 22 by not only promising "all necessary material assistance" but also announcing China's willingness "at once to send our own personnel to fight together with the Vietnamese people . . . when the Vietnamese people need them."
48 "A Comment on the March Moscow Meeting," by the editorial departments of Jen-min jih-pao and Hung-oh'i, March 23, 1965, in Peking Review, No. 13, March 26, 1965, pp. 7-13. As the article explains, the Chinese had tried to persuade the new Soviet leaders to abandon plans for holding such an "illegal schismatic meeting." The Soviets' persistence "only goes to prove that they are still bent on deepening the differences,
students in Moscow staged a demonstration in front of the American Embassy. Soviet authorities moved in to stop it, drawing a Chinese protest against their "ruthless suppression" (rejected by Moscow). At the end of the month, four of the students were ordered to leave the USSR, again arousing Chinese protests.

Chinese polemics directed at Moscow, such as the March 23 commentary on the Moscow meeting, continued to support the principle of unity while discounting the prospects for it.\(^{49}\) To be consistent in this position, Peking at least had to agree to assist in the shipment of Soviet goods to North Vietnam. Kosygin had in fact received assurances of Chinese cooperation in February.\(^{50}\) If the Chinese felt that the Soviets were not matching words with deeds on Vietnam -- and there was evidence of Soviet foot-dragging\(^{51}\) -- Peking could hardly resist both Soviet and

wrecking unity and doing fresh damage to the international communist movement. . . . Quite obviously, the new leaders of the C.P.S.U. have gone a step further in destroying the basis for the unity of the Communist Parties. In these circumstances we would like to ask: When they exclaim [in the conference communiqué], 'what unites the Communist Parties greatly out-weighs that which at the present time disunites them,' what is this if not an effort to conceal their revisionist and schismatic essence?"\(^{49}\)

Ibid., p. 10: "At a time when the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam is being wantonly bombed by the U.S. gangsters, all the countries of the socialist camp and the revolutionary people throughout the world should, as a matter of course, unite and wage a tit-for-tat struggle against the U.S. aggressors."

\(^{50}\) A Chinese account ("Malinovsky is a Liar," a statement of the Foreign Ministry, in Peking Review, No. 19, May 6, 1966, pp. 25-26) says that the transit arrangements were agreed upon in February.

\(^{51}\) The central committee of the CPSU did not publicly ratify the defense agreement reached when Kosygin was in Hanoi until March 26. It then probably took another few months before the Soviets shipped the first surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and related equipment to North Vietnam, since not until late July did the first SAM attack U.S. jets. There are several possible explanations for these delays. One is that Soviet leaders were anxious not to close the door on DRV-U.S. negotiations, which might have resulted from the proposed talks on Cambodia's neutrality in the spring of 1965. Other possible reasons are that the Soviets were uncertain about China's reliability to transport the goods; they needed to be sure about how the United States would react to new aid deliveries (perhaps recalling the Cuba blockade); and they needed time to draw up a "menu" of goods that the North Vietnamese could best use.
North Vietnamese pressure for Chinese cooperation in facilitating the delivery of Soviet military aid. On March 30, two agreements were signed -- but, probably at China's insistence, not publicized -- regarding the transshipment of Soviet matériel to the DRV: one between Peking and Moscow, another between Peking and Hanoi.\textsuperscript{52} As would later become plain, however, the Sino-Soviet agreement did not guarantee that China would expedite Soviet deliveries and thus give the appearance of a rapid Soviet response to Hanoi's needs.

April

The limits of China's willingness to help the Soviet Union help North Vietnam were clearly set in April. In letters to Peking on April 3 and 17, the Russians proposed holding trilateral (DRV-USSR-CPR) talks on the coordination of aid. They further proposed, probably in the same two letters,\textsuperscript{53} that China permit the Soviet Union to send 4000 regular army personnel through Chinese territory to Vietnam, to have the use of one or two airfields in southwest China (probably Yünnan) for the air defense of North Vietnam, to garrison 500 men at such bases, and to establish an air corridor over Chinese territory.

The Chinese wasted little time in replying; judging from the context of the July 14 letter, the reply was delivered sometime between the Soviet letters of April 3 and April 17.\textsuperscript{54} They rejected the proposal for trilateral talks on the grounds that they did not want to give either the West or other Communist nations the impression that when the conference was over the Soviet Union would be empowered to speak for China on Vietnam. Peking probably feared that the Soviet leaders would exploit


\textsuperscript{53} The trilateral conference proposal is mentioned, though without a date, in "Refutation," p. 17. The other Soviet proposals are referred to in the Chinese reply of July 14, 1965,(cited in note 38), and in an interview of Liao Ch'eng-chih (deputy director of the Staff Office for Foreign Affairs) given over Tokyo Television on July 15, 1965.

\textsuperscript{54} The text of the Chinese April letter is unavailable, but the CCP's July 14 letter restates its main points.
a trilateral conference to pursue their role as brokers trying to bring Hanoi and Washington together around a peace table. In the Chinese view, the Soviets would seize the opportunity afforded by the summit meeting to tie China to a Soviet- and American-composed Vietnam settlement that would bargain away the Viet Cong's interests for the sake of a worldwide détente.

At the same time or within a few weeks, Peking also spurned Moscow's proposals for the direct use of Chinese territory by Soviet military personnel. In the words of the July 14 letter of the CCP Central Committee, these proposals had "ulterior motives." "China is not one of your provinces," the Committee told the Soviet party leaders.

Peking probably rejected the establishment of an air corridor because it would have allowed the Soviets to retain control over their aid deliveries through China. The Chinese would thus in some sense surrender authority over their own territory, and an opportunity to inspect Soviet shipments would be lost. The remaining proposals were probably even more unacceptable: they amounted to permitting the Soviets to maintain and garrison one or more bases that could be used to receive, assemble, repair, and refuel Soviet-built jets that would be flown by North Vietnamese back and forth across the China border. The Russians would thereby reap the credit for providing dramatic new military assistance to the DRV — probably including late-model jets that China could not offer (see below) — and for seemingly winning over Peking to "united action."

Moreover, since the Soviets would have unfettered control over the disposition of the aircraft, China would run the risk of U.S. "hot pursuit" and retaliation — a risk that China so far had minimized by making its airfields available only for the deployment of North Vietnamese aircraft, not for their use in combat. The Chinese would have no opportunity to determine the missions of the jets (or to examine closely those models not in the Chinese arsenal). Finally, a Soviet base on Chinese soil would constitute a dangerous extraterritorial precedent, one that Peking might have difficulty reversing if the base continued to function as the war dragged on.

In short, the Chinese — and unquestionably Mao — would have nothing to do with any measure that would allow the Soviets access to China. The
transshipment of military cargo was agreeable precisely because the Chinese controlled it -- a fact that soon produced Soviet charges of Chinese tampering and deliberate delays. When the Chinese criticized Soviet aid to Hanoi -- in a Red Flag commentary\(^{55}\) -- they really meant that the Russians were reluctant to confront the Americans by sea (at Haiphong) and were only willing to assist North Vietnam in ways that would have the Chinese take all the risks.

May

Thus, Peking's policies had, in three respects, already been decided. Briefly, these were: (1) China would not permit the Soviet Union independent use of Chinese territory or air space to aid North Vietnam because of the military risks and political costs involved; (2) support of the Communist revolution in South Vietnam would be based on the principle of self-reliance,\(^{56}\) and would consist of the kinds of matériel and personnel that would benefit the Communists, North and South, without creating undue risks for China; (3) American intentions to intensify the bombing of the North in order to blackmail Hanoi to the conference table

\(^{55}\) See "Commentator's" article, "Drive the U.S. Aggressors Out of Vietnam," Hung-ch'\'i, No. 4, April 1965. Commentator said of the Soviets' aid: "Their deeds do not tally with their words. Posing as benefactors, they utter a lot of ballyhoo about helping the Vietnamese people. They have given some aid but it is merely for the purpose of making capital out of it in order to bargain with the United States, undermine the anti-U.S. revolutionary struggle of the people of Vietnam and the rest of the world, and to serve U.S. imperialism. In a word, the modern revisionists are feigning support but, in reality, betraying the Vietnamese people's patriotic anti-U.S. struggle... ."

\(^{56}\) The Jen-min jih-pao statement of March 25, promising Chinese personnel "when the Vietnamese people need them," was qualified on April 20. A resolution of the Sixth Session of the Standing Committee of the Third National People's Congress made the promise conditional also on "the needs of the common struggle" against the Americans (in Jen-min jih-pao, April 21, 1965, p. 1). Ch'en Yi, interviewed by a French correspondent on May 29, made the policy of self-reliance explicit when he said: "Yes, I think the Vietnamese people are perfectly capable, by relying on their own forces, to drive the American aggressors out of their country." See Peking Review, No. 23, June 4, 1965, p. 15.
(a strategy that Moscow was abetting) should be exposed and resisted. Any high-ranking Chinese Communist who might have wanted to propose a different Vietnam strategy would have had to consider that Mao had already made some basic policy choices.

Lo Jui-ch'ing's major article commemorating V-E day offers interesting contrasts and similarities to a Jen-min jih-pao editorial, published about the same time, which presumably reflected the views of Mao and Lin Piao. Lo and the editorial were in agreement that a distinction must be made between unity against imperialism (a united front on Chinese terms) and Soviet-style unity (which is not unity but socialist betrayal). They also agreed on the implications of the distinction for negotiations with imperialists: certain limited kinds of agreements have, correctly, been negotiated with the imperialists (in Korea and at Geneva); but peace agreements, especially when made from a disadvantageous military position, only encourage aggression. As Munich showed, imperialism cannot be appeased by making concessions. Lo and the editorial were restating, undoubtedly for Hanoi's benefit, the Chinese case against negotiating with the Americans on Vietnam in order to make them stop the bombing.

57 In "Drive the U.S. Aggressors Out of Vietnam," Commentator, had stated that the American strategy was to use bombing in two ways: first, as "blackmail" to induce North Vietnam to the conference table; second, as a "smokescreen" to conceal escalation.


60 A different interpretation of Lo's comments about Munich has been offered by Maury Lisann, "Moscow and the Chinese Power Struggle," Problems of Communism, Vol. XVIII, No. 6, November-December 1969, pp. 32-41. Lisann argues that Lo's reference to the failure of Chamberlain and Daladier to align with the Soviet Union against Nazi Germany constituted an indirect admonition to Mao and Lin Piao to accept the Soviet proposals of April. But Lisann seems to be reading into Lo's statement much more than was intended. Lo seems to have been in complete accord with Mao's view that the Soviet Union, in working for Vietnam negotiations, was risking "another Munich" in the same way as Chamberlain and Daladier did.
Lo and the editorial differed somewhat in their assessments of U.S. strength and intentions. Whereas the editorial held that the United States was "in a much worse strategic position than was Hitler in his day," and hence that the possibilities for frustrating American aggressive plans were greater than ever, Lo contended that American ambitions exceeded Hitler's even though actual U.S. military capabilities were inferior to his. 61 Lo's argument, consequently -- one on which the editorial did not take a position -- was that the danger of a new world war was sufficiently great to compel China's increased preparedness:

It makes a world of difference whether or not one is prepared once a war breaks out. Among all these preparations, political and ideological preparation must be given the first priority. Moreover, these preparations must be made for the most difficult and worst situations that may possibly arise. Preparations must be made not only against any small-scale warfare but also against any medium- or large-scale warfare that imperialism may launch. These preparations must envisage the use by the imperialists of nuclear weapons as well as of conventional weapons....

Was Lo, then, urging that China's preparations include reconciliation with the USSR in order to be assured of having the Soviet nuclear deterrent, in which case concessions to the Soviets -- perhaps along the lines of their April proposals -- would have to be made? 62 His condemnation of the Soviet leadership and its line on united action argues otherwise, as does his statement, in accord with the editorial, that "new weapons" should not be preferred to proven revolutionary warfare methods. But

61 Although the editorial stated, "It is much more difficult for the United States to unleash a world war," it left open the possibility that one might occur. It spoke of "U.S. imperialist plans for aggression and war" and of the United States "following in Hitler's footsteps" by daring "to impose a world war on the people...."

62 The argument that Lo did urge "unity" with Moscow is made by Ra'anana, pp. 43-44. He cites, as have others, Lo's assertion that "the United States' monopoly of the atom bomb was broken many years ago." The presumption is that Lo was referring to the Soviet nuclear capability, and was really saying that a reduction in Sino-Soviet tensions would assure China's protection. But Lin Piao, in his September article on people's war (see below), used precisely Lo's words; and a more accurate translation of them would be that the U.S. monopoly "has long since been broken," which could refer to China's bomb.
Lo's remarks about preparations and his proposals for defending China may be interpreted as differing with the Maoist position in two important respects.

First, in emphasizing the need to prepare for all-out attacks by the enemy, Lo may have had in mind a surprise air attack against China's defense and industrial targets and military installations. Conceivably, Lo's assessment was based on the conviction that Mao's program to aid North Vietnam risked U.S. retaliation, against which urgent preparations were necessary. He may therefore have been proposing faster improvements than were being made in China's air defense — jet fighters, SAMs, radars, and AAA — which would have required the redeployment of available equipment to south China. The Soviet Union, of course, was one possible source of late-model Mig's, sophisticated radar sets, and SAMs — all of which the North Vietnamese were receiving. But even if the Soviets had been willing to provide these items, the price was known and had

63 On this point, Alice Langley Hsieh has written: "Lo may have been advocating a series of 'quick fixes' (much as certain of his predecessors had in the mid-50s) in China's defense posture to deter, if not counter, any inclination on the part of the United States to extend the bombing to the mainland." Communist China's Military Policies, Doctrine, and Strategy: A Lecture Presented at the National Defense College, Tokyo, September 17, 1968, The Rand Corporation, P-3960, October 1968, pp. 29-30. This concern about surprise attack was hardly new in Chinese military thinking; several senior military leaders had referred to it and to the need for active air defense in the early 1960s. See Hsieh, "China's Secret Military Papers: Military Doctrine and Strategy," China Quarterly, No. 18, April-June 1964, pp. 82-84, 92.

64 During 1965, most estimates agree, China's jet fighter capability was mainly in old-model Mig-15's and Mig-17's — according to one source about 1000 of the former and 400 of the latter. (Laurence L. Ewing and Robert C. Sellers, eds., The Reference Handbook of the Armed Forces of the World, Washington, D.C., Sellers and Associates, 1966.) A small number of Mig-19's — about 70, according to ibid. — were also available. China's production of Mig-21s did not get under way until 1965, and then only in limited numbers, whereas the North Vietnamese were receiving advanced-model Mig-21s in 1965. See Bueschel, pp. 89-91.

65 In February, it will be recalled, Kosygin had offered to resume economic and technical assistance, not military aid. According to the Die Welt excerpt of the secret CPSU letter (see note 39), in April and July the Soviet leaders also proposed cooperation on industrial and nuclear research, which the Chinese also turned down.
been rejected; and it is difficult to believe that Lo was willing to risk political suicide by proposing that China deal with Moscow.

Second, in entertaining the possibility of a U.S. invasion of China, Lo proposed as the "only strategy" a version of active defense that seemed to involve a PLA deployment quite different from Mao's "people's war" concept. Lo said, citing Mao and the experience of the Soviet Army, that China should defend against enemy penetrations, trade space for time, and prepare to counterattack with superior forces to destroy the enemy's remaining troops. Chinese ground forces should be able to pursue and destroy the invader "in its own lair," "in his nest," instead of "luring the enemy in deep" (the Maoist view), which would give a prominent defense role to the militia. Lo's strategy apparently was to rely heavily on a conventional defense, relegate the militia to harassing

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66 Lo said: "The strategy of active defence does not stop with driving the aggressor out of the country, but requires strategic pursuit to destroy the enemy at his starting point, to destroy him in his nest. As Stalin put it, we must not allow a wounded beast to crawl back to recuperate; we must follow on its heels in hot pursuit and finish it off in its own lair... We seriously warn the U.S. imperialists that they must not expect us to refrain from counterattacking once they have attacked us. Nothing comes so cheap."

Ishwer Ojha has interpreted this passage as a recommendation that China undertake immediate action, under the guise of "strategic pursuit," against American forces in Vietnam. (See Ishwer Ojha, "China's Cautious American Policy," Current History, Vol. LIII, No. 313, September 1967, pp. 135-140, 175-176.) This interpretation strains Lo's analogy between the Vietnam conflict and World War II. It is more likely that Lo was threatening that China would counterattack across its borders if American forces invaded China, just as Stalin had pursued Hitler's armies back into Germany. Lo may also have been arguing that, since American forces had attacked North Vietnam, the DRV had the right to send forces into the South to stage counterattacks against American installations. If so, this was not a novel position; Chinese spokesmen had granted Hanoi this "right" in February.

67 See Liu Yun-cheng, "The Role of People's Militia," Peking Review, No. 6, February 5, 1965, pp. 17-20. In "sudden war" situations, the author noted the possibility that the rear areas might be attacked first, in air raids and by "air-dropped enemy forces." The militia would play a vital role in such a situation; it would "effectively maintain social order, steadfastly carry on production, safeguard communications, consolidate the rear and co-ordinate operations with and support the fighting at the front."
the enemy's rear, and deploy the PLA to defend fixed positions, carry on interior warfare, and be prepared for strategic pursuit. After Lo's purge, the Maoists would charge that Lo really advocated "passive defense," a strategy that Mao had opposed in the encirclement period of the civil war because it meant the defense of static positions, "the building of defensive works everywhere and wide dispersal of forces to man them." From Lo's description (in his May article) of the Soviet defense strategy during World War II, he apparently did favor defending certain strategic "cities and other places" and establishing a "far-flung" defense line. But, on the basis of Lo's published statements, it would

68 Lo said that "victory in war" required "close co-operation among the different armed services, of which the ground forces, and particularly the infantry, are primary."

One charge leveled against Lo after his purge was that he had "obstructed and opposed" Mao's guidelines for building up the local forces and militia, the implication being that Lo did not consider them of much value and preferred to rely on the professional standing army. (See "Basic Differences between the Proletarian and Bourgeois Military Lines," by a Red Guard group in the PLA General Staff headquarters, in Peking Review, No. 48, November 24, 1967, pp. 13-14; and "Down with Lo Jui-ch'ing," p. 3.) Whether this charge, like so many others, referred to 1965 is unclear. During the early 1960s, Lo seemed to be on both sides of the fence with regard to the militia: he defended maintaining a large militia even in peacetime, but he also insisted that its primary function be production and that it engage in military training only during leisure hours. See Lo's article in Hung-ch'i, No. 10, October 1960, as broadcast by NCNA (Peking), May 15, 1960, and John Gittings, The Role of the Chinese Army, London, Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 218.

69 Thus, Lo mentioned that in World War II, the Soviets correctly implemented active defense against the Nazi invaders by forming a defense line that took advantage of both geographic ("high mountains") and man-made barriers ("fortified cities"). Irregular troops operated in the rear to disrupt the enemy's supply lines. Eventually, the Nazis were routed at Stalingrad. Lo's preferred defense line, we may surmise, was not necessarily at the border but was close to it.

70 "Basic Differences between the Bourgeois and Proletarian Military Lines," p. 15. The "passive" strategy referred to in the civil war period was promoted by Chou En-lai and Liu Po-ch'eng during the Kuomintang's fourth encirclement campaign (June 1932-March 1933). A plan to "halt the enemy beyond the gate," it prevailed over Mao's strategy of luring deep (today called "active defense"). See Jerome Ch'en, Mao and the Chinese Revolution, New York, Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 177.
seem that Lo did not want to defend every city or installation; his position did allow for a fluid defense, but opposed the indefinite retreat of the PLA into the interior.

It was, of course, in Vietnam that a direct confrontation with the United States was most likely to occur. But Lo did not seem to favor commitments beyond those Mao had already dictated. He said that China was providing political, moral, and full material support, and was "also prepared to send our men [ji-en-yüan, more accurately, "personnel"] to fight together with the people of Vietnam when they need us." But, consistent with previous pronouncements, he added that China would attack only when attacked, and that he thought the Viet Cong were "daily approaching final victory."

Summarizing Lo's position, our interpretation is that he: (1) considered, or at least asserted, that the U.S. threat to attack China was imminent, more so than the Maoists were ready to concede; (2) advocated that China be better prepared for an attack by improving its air defense in and possibly also deploying additional ground forces to south China; (3) sought, as an alternative to reliance on the Soviet Union's protection, to deter a U.S. invasion by warning that Chinese ground forces might cross international frontiers (e.g., into Vietnam, Korea, Laos, or Thailand) if war were imposed on China; (4) upheld the policy that the kinds of assistance the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese were receiving from China were appropriate and sufficient.

Lo's professed anxiety about the U.S. threat, and his strategy for dealing with it, seem to have received lukewarm support from the Maoists.

71 Lo's statement -- "We will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counter-attack" -- is not given due weight in the account of Donald S. Zagoria (Vietnam Triangle: Moscow, Peking, Hanoi, New York, Pegasus, 1967). Zagoria contends, with Ra'an'an, that Lo was a "hawk" on Vietnam who favored accommodating the Soviets in order to improve China's defense and interventionist options in Vietnam.

72 The purported Central Committee Work Group's "Report on the Question of Errors Committed by Lo Jui-ch'ing," p. 98, accuses him of having requested the Standing Committee's approval of "a massive increase in troop strength" and a merger of "the various military regions" in 1965.
Aside from the domestic political implications of redeploying forces and equipment and thus emphasizing the PLA's national security functions, there remained the strategic question whether or not American actions in Vietnam threatened to spill over into China. On this question, which arose anew when the United States resumed bombing North Vietnam after a one-week pause (May 13-19), Chinese commentaries remained cautious. A *Jen-min jih-pao* editorial of May 20 foresaw continued escalation in Vietnam but refrained from saying that the United States was preparing to extend the bombing closer to China. 73

**June, July, and August**

Lo Jui-ch'ing may have received additional support for his strategy recommendations when the air war over North Vietnam widened in the summer. Late in June, U.S. aircraft attacked targets north of Hanoi for the first time. The North Vietnamese industrial city of Nam Dinh was said to have been struck on July 2. The Chinese also charged that their air space over Yunnan was violated on July 11 when U.S. planes allegedly bombed the strategic Vietnamese border city of Lao Cai.

The new support for Lo's position seemed to be reflected in *Jen-min jih-pao*, which now began to characterize U.S. actions in more threatening terms. On June 1, its "Observer" noted that American air strikes were moving steadily northward. A "dramatic change" in the scope of the fighting was taking place; was not "the Johnson administration ... preparing to spread the war in Indochina to the rest of Southeast Asia,

73During the first months of 1965, China reported having shot down six U.S. jets and U-2 reconnaissance planes that had allegedly violated Chinese air space. When, as in mid-April, these incidents were commented on by Lin Piao, they were termed provocations, not signs of impending American attack. Lin's order for alertness is in NCNA (Peking) domestic broadcast of April 18, 1965. Significantly, the one U.S. plane reported by the Chinese (NCNA, April 9) to have been downed in a dogfight with Chinese aircraft -- the first such engagement reported since the Korean War -- was said to have been destroyed by the missile of another American plane. Peking refused to claim credit for the "kill." See New York Times, April 10, 1965, pp. 1, 3.
and even to China?" Observer did not call outright for additional war preparations; but he did imply their advisability, and he also seemed to propose additional aid to enable the North Vietnamese to intensify their efforts in South Vietnam:

Since the United States, ignoring repeated warnings from the Chinese people, has sent large numbers of its own troops and rounded up troops from some of its satellites and committed them to its aggression against Vietnam, a fraternal country of China, the Chinese people have thus acquired the right to do all in their power to aid the Vietnamese people in counter-attacking the American aggressors... Now that U.S. imperialism has... threatened China's security in an increasingly serious manner, the Chinese people are all the more entitled to take every additional measure necessary.  

A Jen-min jih-pao editorial of July 13, reacting to the air incident of July 11, went further, considering it "even more serious" than previous incidents. "This is planned, deliberate war provocation pure and simple," and was "another extremely dangerous threshold" in U.S. escalation. Again, however, the writer was ambiguous about the implications of escalation:

We have a full estimation of the madness of U.S. imperialism and are well prepared with regard to its war adventure plan. The Chinese People's Liberation Army now stands ready, in battle array. We will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counter-attack.  

Lo Jui-ch'ing's pithy formula had been quoted, but the PLA was said to be already fully prepared.

If these commentaries were meant to put pressure on Mao, they did not succeed. Not only did Mao apparently fail to order a quickening of the pace of China's air defenses (beyond airfield construction, which, however, seems to have been part of a long-term, nationwide program rather than a response geared exclusively to events in Vietnam). Through the Army newspaper, whose increasing usefulness to Mao may have been

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74 As broadcast by NCNA (Peking) international service, June 1, 1965.
related to *Jen-min jih-pao*'s at least partial adoption of the professional military (and, perhaps, Party dissidents') viewpoint, Mao's concern was made known anew that "some people" in the army command, still holding to "bourgeois military thinking," were denigrating political training and Party leadership in the armed forces. "Politics in command" had to remain there; improvements in military training, the fulfillment of military tasks, and the utilitarian (rather than educational or ideological) use of political training were not what was meant by politics in command. Only through increased political work in the PLA could Party leadership be assured and revisionist and bourgeois trends of thought eliminated. Was the army command being warned here to cut out talk of war preparedness when the primary need of the army was to improve its political performance?

During June and July, too, criticisms of the Soviet Union continued. A joint newspaper editorial re-covered old ground on Sino-Soviet

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76 The transmittal of Mao's views through *Chieh-fang-ch'un pao*, the organ of the General Political Department, became more frequent later in 1965. That paper may have been chosen because of the reliability of its editorial staff as much as because it was the appropriate vehicle for communicating the Party's views to the PLA command. Since 1958, the deputy editor (and probably de facto chief) of *Chieh-fang-ch'un pao* was T'ang P'ing-chu, a lieutenant general with civil war service and experience mainly on the political side of the PLA system. A measure of his reliability is that, after the Cultural Revolution began, T'ang was named the "responsible person" of *Jen-min jih-pao* (August 1966) and then (October 1966) its acting managing editor, replacing Wu Leng-hsi, who was purged for allegedly serving the Liu Shao-ch'i line. In January 1967 T'ang also became a member of the All-PLA Cultural Revolutionary Group; although he was criticized by Red Guards the same month, he apparently survived the ordeal with his positions intact. See *Who's Who in Communist China*, Vol. 2, Hong Kong, Union Research Institute, 1970, p. 602, and *Tso-kuo yueh-k' an*, No. 36, March 1967, p. 49 and No. 55, October 1968, p. 8.

77 *Chieh-fang-ch'un pao* editorial, June 10, 1965; excerpted in *Jen-min jih-pao*, June 11, 1965, p. 2. The likelihood that Lo was a specific target of the editorial is enhanced by a thinly veiled reference to tournaments: "If [in training] one chases after championism and formalism, the fact that he scores brilliantly in shooting and throws a grenade for a distance of 45 meters does not mean that his consciousness has been raised." The abolition of ranks, awards, and insignia in the PLA by decision of the State Council in May 1965 was in keeping with the editorial's message on Party authority.

78 Editorial departments of *Jen-min jih-pao* and Hung-ch'i, "Carry the Struggle Against Khrushchev Revisionism Through to the End," in *Peking Review*, No. 25, June 18, 1965, pp. 5-10.
differences and came up with the same answers: revisionism had to be combatted if China's revolutionary stance and anti-imperialist line were to be successful. Soviet aid to Vietnam was dismissed as "gestures."

Similar statements were made by the Chinese delegate to the Helsinki "World Congress for Peace, National Independence, and General Disarmament," and by Liu Ning-yi at an anti-bomb conference in Tokyo. Most authoritative of the anti-Soviet diatribes was the CCP Central Committee letter of July 14, which (as has already been discussed) denounced anew the Soviet proposals of April, thus indicating that Moscow was still trying to gain their acceptance.

As July ended, a new element was introduced into the Vietnam conflict with indications from Washington that additional ground forces would be dispatched to augment the existing U.S. strength of about 75,000. The pessimistic appraisal again came from "Observer," who said that the Vietnam situation, like that in Korea in 1950, was dangerously escalating. He wondered whether President Johnson intended that "the 'ground war' will be expanded without limit? People can still remember clearly how the U.S. war of aggression in Korea was expanded. The Johnson administration is taking the same old road." Once the President, on July 28, confirmed the troop increase -- an additional 50,000 men -- another article in Jen-min jih-pao expressed surprise that Johnson would do "what Eisenhower and Kennedy dared not to do or refrained from doing," that is, send large numbers of soldiers to fight a land war in Asia. The article contrasted the relatively favorable conditions for the United States in Korea with the insurmountable disadvantages in Vietnam. China, Washington was reminded, had taken part in the Korean conflict only one year after the takeover of the mainland; now, China "is already 15 years old and has become much stronger than before." The concern in Peking clearly

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was that the United States might cross the demilitarized zone and, as it did in Korea, confront China with an invasion of a socialist ally. Yet, as before, no new commitments to the DRV were offered or proposed; instead, the ongoing resistance of the Vietnamese Communists, with China's "utmost" support, was cited as the best way to "smash" American war plans.

Lo Jui-ch'ing, speaking on Army Day (August 1), agreed with Jen-min jih-pao's estimate of the seriousness of the U.S. threat. Referring to Secretary Rusk's statement that "the idea of the sanctuary is dead," Lo said that the PLA was prepared for an American attack:

If [the Americans] become blinded by their lust for power, miscalculate the strength and determination of the Chinese people, insist on spreading the war to the Chinese people, and force us to accept their challenge, then the Chinese people and the Chinese PLA, which long since been well prepared and been standing in battle array, will not only resolutely take them on to the end, but moreover will welcome their arrival in great numbers. . . .

In stating that the PLA was already well prepared, however, and in going on to assert the primacy of political training and "the revolutionary spirit of men," Lo appeared to have retreated from his stance of May.

Perhaps Lo was responding to criticisms in the June 10 Army newspaper editorial. Or perhaps it was the Chieh-fang-chün pao editorial of August 1 that caused the retreat. While agreeing with Lo's May article that the United States was fully capable of spreading the Vietnam war to China, and that "full preparations" should be made for every contingency, the editorial sought to close the debate over the best kind of defense: People's war, as Lin Piao had said, constitutes the best defense; it negates the enemy's technological edge, does not depend on the size of the enemy's attack, and is just, revolutionary war. Moreover, people's war acts as a deterrent: "Imperialism's military experts and advisers cannot conceal their fear of people's war; they cannot but recognize that all China's people are troops, that they are 'an important force which frightens foreigners into not daring to invade,' 'a great sea formed by 700 million which no modern weapons can destroy.'" And nothing could

\textsuperscript{83}Jen-min jih-pao, August 2, 1965, p. 1.
change this doctrine:

No matter whether past, present, or future, regardless of changes in the style or objectives of war, regardless of the appearance of nuclear weapons and how great the changes in technological conditions, this truth [that the masses are the greatest strength in war] that Chairman Mao has clearly pointed out will never change. At present, our weapons and equipment are becoming daily more modernized. Moreover, we have our own atomic bomb. When imperialism forces war upon us, we must as before rely on the masses to carry out people's war. Even if, in the future, destructive power and weapons are much greater, [our strategy] will still be this way and will forever be this way. There cannot be the slightest doubt about this point... (Italics added.)

The editorial closed by reemphasizing Mao's instructions on militia-building.

The Maoist position on PLA doctrine and defense posture also received support from a senior army veteran in a third major Army Day statement. In an article that received wide coverage, Ho Lung, a member of the politburo and vice-chairman of the National Defense Council, wrote on the "struggle between two lines on army building." Ho asserted that conditions of modern warfare, far from being grounds for changing the system of democratic centralism in the armed forces, were all the more reason for retaining it. New equipment and techniques could only be fully used by "practising democracy, bringing the collective wisdom of the masses into full play and rallying the initiative and creativeness of the masses under the collective leadership of the Party committee." Ho reminded his readers that the PLA had long been a political no less than a military force: "The Marxist-Leninist line of the Chinese Communist Party, represented by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, and all the fine traditions of the Party were usually implemented first in the army." The clear implication of Ho's remarks was that no strategy or weapon could be used as a pretext for changing the organization, political regimen, or political purposes of the PLA.

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84 Ho Lung, "Democratic Tradition of the Chinese People's Liberation Army," Peking Review, No. 32, August 6, 1965, pp. 6-17. The article was originally published in Hung-ch'i, Jen-min jih-pao, and Chieh-fang-chun pao.
September, October, and November

If Lo Jui-ch'ing's Army Day speech was a retreat on the question of war preparedness, his speech on V-J Day (September 2) showed that the retreat was only temporary and perhaps tactical. Contrasting his views with those of Lin Piao in the now-famous article, "Long Live the Victory of People's War!" leads to further speculations about differences in the Chinese leadership over U.S. intentions and China's defense.

That the United States was threatening China was no longer a matter of disagreement. But the nature of the threat was characterized differently by Lo and Lin. Lo drew analogies between the existing situation and the Korean War, in which China's involvement stemmed from the expansion of a nearby conflict, and World War II, in which Germany launched an all-out invasion of Russia without warning. Lin's analogy was to the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s. Thus, whereas Lin held that "The U.S. imperialists are now clamouring . . . for another large-scale ground war on the Asian mainland" involving China, Lo asserted that the U.S. threat was twofold: Washington might "dare to send its troops to invade China," or it might, "in order to save itself from defeat, . . . go mad." Unlike Lin Piao, Lo did not rule out the possibility of an irrational U.S. air escalation into China.

Implicitly, the imminence of the threat was also in dispute, for since Lo was concerned about a surprise U.S. attack, he also had to be concerned that such an attack might come sooner rather than later. As seems to have been the case earlier, Lo urged more attention to China's defenses against the various possible kinds of U.S. attacks. China, he said, "certainly must have sufficient plans and certainly must complete preparations for U.S. imperialism's spreading the war of aggression against Vietnam and for imposing the war on us. Preparations involve a thousand and one things . . . ." Lin Piao's article lacked the same note of urgency. His statement implied confidence that the United States

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would prefer not to invade China and get bogged down in a people's war. Lin said:

The Chinese people definitely have ways of their own for coping with a U.S. imperialist war of aggression. Our methods are no secret. The most important one is still mobilization of the people, reliance on the people, making everyone a soldier and waging a people's war. We want to tell the U.S. imperialists once again that the vast ocean of several hundred million Chinese people in arms will be more than enough to submerge your few million aggressor troops. If you dare to impose war on us, we shall gain freedom of action. It will then not be up to you to decide how the war will be fought. . . .

Lin seemed more interested in deterring the United States than in mobilizing quickly for defense; and his statement suggests that, in his and Mao's view, China was already well organized to defend against an invasion if deterrence failed. Lo, besides apparently believing that improvements in air defense were urgently required, may also have decided that even in ground defense, the leadership needed to do more and quickly. He said that "the most important, the most fundamental" kind of preparation was "to prepare well in all fields for making people's war in accordance with the demands of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's thoughts on people's war." As in previous months, Lo was mainly concerned about getting troops and equipment into position before it was too late, not

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87 A Jen-min jih-pao editorial of September 2, 1965 (pp. 1-2) likewise said that China was sufficiently prepared: "If U.S. imperialism stubbornly wants to expand the war to the Chinese people, the Chinese people and the Chinese PLA will determinedly accompany it to the end. The Chinese people are mobilized, organized, armed. . . ." Similar statements about China's preparedness were made by "Commentator" in Jen-min jih-pao, September 21, and by Ch'en Yi in his memorable news conference of September 29 "welcoming" a showdown battle with all enemies (Peking Review, No. 41, October 8, 1965, p. 14). Another interesting testimony to the leadership's attitude is a Jen-min jih-pao editorial of September 21 on the strategic importance of the militia, which appeared in the same issue that reported the downing of a U.S. F-104 jet over Hainan and the capture of its pilot. The editorial stressed that "arming the masses" should proceed simultaneously with the ongoing modernization of the regular forces, since "Strengthening the militia is an extremely important measure for dealing with U.S. imperialism's expansion of aggressive war. . . ."
about selling his superiors on the idea of dickering with the Russians
for nuclear protection or new weapons. 88

By September, the conflict between the Mao-Lin view of the PLA's
role and mission and Lo Jui-ch'ing's view probably began to become acute.
For by that time, Mao's political program for reinforcing discipline and
ending moral decay and corruption in Chinese society -- the Socialist
Education Movement -- had floundered badly. This occurred in roughly
two stages. 89 In the first, from late 1964 to January 1965, basic-level
rural cadres, placed under investigation by Party work teams and supervi-
vised by peasant groups formed by Party committees, became demoralized
under such harassment. Discipline and production in villages, instead
of improving, apparently suffered. The second stage, beginning in Janu-
ary, sought to shift from rectification and "class struggle" to con-
ciliation and indoctrination. Pressures against basic-level cadres and
peasants were relaxed. Gradually, however, a new target took their
place: Party members "in authority who take the capitalist road." Two
kinds of drives were launched to deal with these persons, one to "revolu-
tionize" hsien- (county-) level Party committees, another to have the
entire population "study and apply the thought of Mao Tse-tung."

Mao's appearance at a Central Committee meeting in September 1965
has been considered the first shot of the "Great Proletarian Cultural
Revolution." 90 The available evidence suggests that Mao probably called
the meeting because the latest phase of the Socialist Education Movement
had failed to root out higher-level Party dissidents. Mao was probably
confirmed in his suspicions by the resistance to his authority encountered
at the meeting. 91 With the benefit of hindsight, it would seem that Mao
at that time (if not earlier) came to two decisions about the new course

88 Actually, Lo's September speech included the sharpest language he
had used in characterizing the Soviet leaders and their policies.
89 This paragraph draws upon the essay by Richard Baum, "Revolution
and Reaction in the Chinese Countryside: The Socialist Education Move-
ment in Cultural Revolutionary Perspective," China Quarterly, No. 38,
April-June, 1969, pp. 92-119.
90 Philip Bridgham, "Mao's 'Cultural Revolution': Origin and Develop-
91 Ibid.
his rectification campaign would have to take: first, it would require more militant forms of struggle to expose and, if necessary, purge Party members whose loyalty to his "thoughts" was flagging; second, since the Party leadership was of doubtful reliability, the vehicle for carrying the revolution forward would have to be the Army under Lin Piao, in particular its General Political Department.  

Yet "bourgeois thinking" existed in the Army as well as in the Party. If the Army's political command was to replace the Party as the vanguard of the revolution, Lo Jui-ch'ing, whose insistence on war preparations would divert the PLA from political involvement, had to be dealt with first. Mao's counterattack of his opponents, beginning with Yao Wenyuan's article in the November 10 Wen-hui pao on Wu Han's drama, Hai Jui Dismissed from Office, may thus have been more than an indirect criticism of P'eng Chen, Wu Han's superior as mayor of Peking. It may also have been a warning to Lo Jui-ch'ing and others in the Army leadership. This interpretation is supported by Mao's statement that Hai Jui represented the dismissed Defense Minister P'eng Teh-huai, and by the fact that Yao's critique was reprinted and (unlike other newspapers) endorsed by the army organ Chieh-fang-ch'ih pao (on November 29), which had become Mao's principal news organ.

The possibility cannot be dismissed that in the fall of 1965, Mao and Lin genuinely believed that Lo, P'eng Chen, and two other senior Party officials, Yang Shang-k'un and Lu Ting-yi (later labeled the "four family village"), were the leaders of a conspiracy to usurp power in a

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92 William Whitson has suggested to us that Party dissidents with influence on Jen-min jih-pao may have been motivated to support Lo Jui-ch'ing's position on the external (U.S.) threat partly in order to divert Mao from continuing or broadening the Socialist Education Movement. Perhaps Mao's awareness of this strategy further intensified his dissatisfaction with the Party leadership.

93 On P'eng Chen's reading of the Yao article, see Bridgham, p. 18.

military coup. P'eng Chen may have managed to survive longer than Lo and Yang -- he was not purged until May 1966 -- because the Maoists did not yet feel strong enough to move against someone of his stature and power, because they required further evidence to persuade themselves or others, or because events in Vietnam were still too uncertain to warrant declaring war on the Party apparatus. In the light of these considerations, the effective purge of Lo, probably in early December, served two purposes in addition to removing a potential obstacle to the PLA's full-scale involvement in politics. First, eliminating Lo and, at about the same time, Yang Shang-k'un, his colleague on the Party secretariat, disposed of two resisters within the Party to a future move against

95 The first official accusation linking Lo to P'eng, Yang, and Lu came in Lin Piao's address of May 18, 1966 to an enlarged session of the CCP Central Committee Politburo. Lin Piao said, "Chairman Mao, in recent months, has paid particular attention to the prevention of a counterrevolutionary coup d'état and adopted many measures. After the Lo Jui-ch'ing problem, he talked about it. Now the P'eng Chen problem has been exposed, and he again summoned several persons and talked about it, dispatched personnel and had them stationed in the radio broadcasting stations, the armed forces and the public security systems in order to prevent a counterrevolutionary coup d'état and the occupation of our crucial points." Lin went on to note that "coup d'état have today become a fad," with an average of eleven in the last six years. The original text of Lin's speech is in Chungkung yen-chiu (Studies on Chinese Communism), Vol. VI, No. 5, May 10, 1970, pp. 124-131. The translation used here is in Issues and Studies (Taipei), Vol. VI, No. 5, February 1970, pp. 81-92.

96 Lo's last public appearance was in the last week of November 1965. On December 8, 1965, a conference reportedly convened by Mao and the Central Committee opened in Shanghai to "expose and criticize" Lo's errors (see "Report on the Question of the Errors Committed by Lo Jui-ch'ing"). Investigation of Lo was then carried out by a work group appointed by the Central Committee. It held two sets of meetings between March 4 and April 8; but halfway through the proceedings, on March 18, Lo reportedly attempted suicide by jumping from the building. The Soviet news agency TASS reported on December 24, 1966 that Lo and P'eng Teh-huai had been formally arrested by Red Guard groups -- twenty days after P'eng Chen was dragged out for public condemnation.
the Party. Second, their removal was a way of warning and, indeed, putting further pressure on P'eng Chen, a suspected co-conspirator.

The leading role of the General Political Department in the evolving Cultural Revolution was not apparent to the outsider for some time. But to Peking insiders, the handwriting may have been on the wall by the middle of November. Lin Piao's "five principles" -- his early directive of November 15 on the tasks of the PLA for 1966, with their stress on "putting politics in the forefront" (t'u-ch'u cheng-chih) and regarding "the works of Chairman Mao Tse-tung as the highest instructions" in all work -- may have been intended as the guidelines for determining the loyalty of Party cadres. A political work conference of the PLA General Political Department, which lasted from December 30, 1965 to January 18, 1966, confirmed the PLA's priorities. Lin Piao's five principles were reported to be the main topic; and "putting politics in the forefront" was said to be important in modernizing the armed forces, revolutionizing the Army, and defeating imperialism and modern revisionism. The report of the head of the General Political Department,

97 Yang was last mentioned in the Chinese press on October 24, 1965. He, the three other members of the "four family village" (sun-chuang-tien), and K'ang Sheng had been members of the Central Committee Cultural Revolution Group that Mao had established in 1964 (under P'eng Chen) to deal with reform of Peking opera. The report issued by this group -- the so-called February (1966) Outline -- was the basis for the removal of P'eng Chen, who was accused of trying to prevent a cultural revolution in the arts and in the Party. Of the five members of the Cultural Revolution Group, only K'ang Sheng survived; all five were secretaries or alternate secretaries in the secretariat of the Central Committee. The fall of Yang and Lo was therefore in great part the first round of a Maoist assault on the Party secretariat. For further background, see Tsu-kuo yueh-k'an, No. 44, November 1967, p. 17.

98 See the discussion in Bridgham, pp. 19-20. Briefly, Lin's five-point directive was: the "creative study and use of Chairman Mao's works"; persistence in the "four firsts"; the involvement of leading cadres in the ranks and in directing the four-good company movements; the promotion of superior commanders and soldiers to responsible positions; and hard drilling, mastery of technique, close-range fighting, and night-fighting tactics.

99 jen-min jih-pao, January 19, 1966, p. 1. The work conference was said to have been attended by Chou En-lai, Chu Teh, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, and P'eng Chen, with speeches delivered by Yeh Ch'ien-ying, Hsiao Hua, and Yang Ch'eng-wu.
Hsiao Hua, recited Mao's warning of a counterrevolutionary comeback that would change the Party unless politics remained in command. The Army's role in preventing that "dangerous situation" would be critical; yet the Army was vulnerable to "political degeneration" because, having been victorious and having enjoyed a long period of peace, it might relax its vigilance. Hsiao's recommendation -- to "make the army the most responsible tool of the Party and to put guns forever in the hands of the most reliable people"\(^\text{100}\) -- would not have to wait long before being implemented.

\(^{100}\)Only excerpts of the speech were published: see ibid., January 25, 1966, pp. 1-2.
IV. THE PURGE OF LO JUI-CH'ING: ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

IN ATTEMPTING to explain the purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing, we will first identify the major policy issues on which Lo significantly differed from Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao. We believe that these issues did not concern Sino-Soviet relations or the level of Chinese involvement in Vietnam but, rather, Chinese strategic doctrine on defense and its implications for domestic politics. In particular, we believe that the most important issue was Lo's insistence that the PLA reorder its priorities, reduce its domestic political activities, and make urgent preparations against an American attack. To the Maoists, these proposals involved unacceptable political and economic costs, and placed Lo's loyalty and reliability in serious question.

After discussing the issues in Lo's purge, and after summarizing how the "Vietnam debate" affected its major participants, we will conclude with a discussion of the implications of the Lo Jui-ch'ing affair for American strategic planning.

The Major Issues

The two foreign policy issues most often linked to the purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing -- China's relations with the Soviet Union, and China's policy toward North Vietnam -- instead of being central issues seem to have provided a context for a debate over defense strategy and over the domestic political implications of alternative Chinese strategic postures. As for Sino-Soviet relations, it is not inconceivable that the Soviet proposals for united action found advocates in Peking. Certain Chinese leaders might have found the Soviet package attractive on economic grounds.
or might have been sensitive to external pressures to cooperate more fully with Moscow on aid to North Vietnam. China's continued refusal to accept the Soviet initiatives had been disenchancing other Communist parties, which considered Chinese intransigence a significant aid to the American war effort.\textsuperscript{101} For China to accept the Soviet proposals would incur certain ideological costs, to be sure, but it would also bring economic benefits and might improve Peking's chances of requiring Soviet conventional weapons.

Our assessment is, however, that the question of united action played little part in the purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing.\textsuperscript{102} First of all, the

\textsuperscript{101}In 1966, for example, the Japanese Communist Party admitted the importance of the doctrinal questions in the Sino-Soviet dispute, but argued that the failure of China and the Soviet Union to agree on the practical question of aid to Hanoi was directly responsible for American escalation of the war. (See "In Order to Strengthen the International Action and United Front Against U.S. Imperialism," Akahata, February 4, 1966.) It is possible that, in spring 1965, the JCP or other Communist parties already held these views and communicated them privately to Peking.

\textsuperscript{102}Had Lo been in favor of united action with the Soviet Union, Russian accounts of the Cultural Revolution could be expected to treat Lo favorably. There are Soviet references to disagreements within the Chinese leadership over the question of united action. For example, three members of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences write:

Some of the CPC leaders saw that the independent existence of China was threatened by Mao Tse-tung's "special" line, particularly by his refusal to rely on the socialist camp in face of U.S. imperialist intervention in Southeast Asia, and demanded a reassessment of China's discredited foreign policy. Differences arose in the CPC leadership between those who desired more active resistance to U.S. imperialism on the basis of unity with the socialist camp, and the Maoists, who counted on attaining their goals by balancing between the socialist camp and the USA, halting active support for the struggle of the Vietnamese people and demonstrating their anti-Sovietism.


On the other hand, one of the few direct references to Lo that we could locate accuses him of an anti-Soviet position:

It is true that they [Lo, Liu Shao-ch'i, and Teng Hsiao-p'ing] came out against completely replacing Marxism with
tenor of Lo's speeches was hostile to Khrushchev and his successors. More important, Chinese dissatisfaction with the new Soviet leadership reached the level of open criticism by February 1965; and in April, Peking decided to reject the Soviet proposals within weeks after their receipt. For Lo to attempt to reverse this decision would have been tantamount to political suicide. Furthermore, since Kosygin apparently did not offer to resume military aid to China, Lo could not have been assured that China would receive sophisticated weapons in return for making concessions to the Russians. Finally, Lo, as Army Chief of Staff, probably resisted Moscow's attempt to acquire extraterritorial privileges and air bases on Chinese territory. His personal authority would have been reduced, the risk of U.S. retaliation would have increased, and Chinese air force technicians would have been prevented from examining North Vietnamese MIGs flying to and from China.

On China's Vietnam policy, our conclusion is that Lo's position was consistent with that of other Chinese leaders. This position admittedly did contain ambiguities. On the one hand, Lo and others declared that China would not attack unless it were attacked first; on the other hand, by referring to the Korean analogy, and by offering to "send personnel" into North Vietnam, the same men seemed to threaten stronger action should the United States continue to escalate its level of action against North Vietnam. There are several interpretations of these seemingly

the "ideas of Mao," but it is also true that it was precisely they themselves who for a long time promoted the cult of Mao Tse-tung, and tried to "combine" internationalism with nationalism and anti-Sovietism.

(Fedor Burlatskii, Maoizm -- ugroza sotsializmu v Kitae (Maoism -- Threat to Socialism in China), Moscow, Politizdat, 1968, p. 63.)

103 The Chinese, understandably, never specified what form this "stronger action" might take. Nor are the conditions that would have triggered "stronger action" completely clear. They may well have included an American invasion of North Vietnam, the bombing of the Red River dikes, or other American actions that would threaten the stability of the Hanoi government. Recall, for example, Chou's warning in 1964 that China might directly intervene "if, perhaps, the United States would send their 'special warfare' [forces] toward the north, if they attacked North Vietnam" (Der Kurier, August 1, 1964).
contradictory remarks. One is that China did not envisage sending combat troops into North Vietnam under any circumstances, and that the "stronger action" threatened would be limited to material and political aid and support personnel. Lo's formulation -- "we are prepared to send our men to fight together with the people of Vietnam when they need us, [but] we will not attack unless we are attacked" -- brought these two elements together. It described perfectly the construction troops and antiaircraft divisions sent to North Vietnam during 1965. Supplying defense support troops and technical assistance would enable Hanoi to increase significantly its defensive and offensive capabilities and would improve China's capacity to send aid to the North.

Another interpretation, not incompatible with the first, is that the Chinese were being deliberately ambiguous in order to deter the U.S. from escalating its attacks against North Vietnam while avoiding an irrevocable commitment to protect the Hanoi regime by armed intervention. Such a commitment would, of course, reduce Chinese flexibility at a time when the international and domestic situations were in a state of rapid flux. Finally, a third possibility is simply that the Chinese had not decided what to do if the United States further escalated the war, and that the somewhat contradictory statements reflected true ambivalence in the thinking of top Chinese leaders. Whichever interpretation proves correct, it is important to re-emphasize that Lo's position was basically in accord with the position of other Chinese leaders. Neither Lo nor anyone else seems to have advocated measures such as the introduction of Chinese combat forces into North Vietnam or the widening of China's air defense perimeter to include the northern sectors of the DRV. Nor is there any firm evidence that Lo believed that the level of Chinese material aid, political support, or noncombatant manpower assistance to the DRV was seriously deficient. 104

104 It is true that, in his speech of September 2, Lo emphasized different things in his discussion of aid to North Vietnam and the Viet Cong than did Lin Piao. In "Long Live the Victory of People's War!" Lin emphasized both the self-reliant struggle of the Chinese Red Army during the Anti-Japanese War and the role of self-reliance in modern wars of national liberation. Lo, while also referring to the self-reliance of the Red Army, went on to advocate "still more effective"
While Lo apparently did not disagree with the content of Chinese policy towards the Soviet Union and North Vietnam, one of our major conclusions is that he did significantly disagree with Mao and Lin over the implications of Chinese policy in Vietnam for an adequate strategic posture. Lo seems to have argued that, even with a relatively cautious policy toward Vietnam, China was running military risks that demanded a reevaluation of defensive strategy and an increase in defense preparations. The ensuing debate involved disagreements over the nature of the threat that the U.S. posed to China, the most appropriate Chinese strategy for responding to the threat, and the corresponding preparations necessary to implement that strategy.

As we have seen, Lo and Lin Piao agreed that the threat posed by the United States was not an overwhelming one, that the United States had certain critical weaknesses, and that therefore China could adequately deter or defend itself against an American attack. But Lo disagreed with Lin on two major points. First, Lo saw a broader spectrum of threats facing China. While Lin (and Mao) believed that any hostile American action would inexorably lead to an American invasion, Lo warned of discrete and limited American actions of much lesser magnitude, such as air strikes (with either conventional or nuclear weapons) against Chinese military installations. Second, as compared with Lin, Lo saw not only a wider range of possible hostile American actions, but also a greater probability that the U.S. would initiate hostilities against China. Referring both to the ambitions (which Lo characterized as even greater than Hitler's) and the possible irrationality of the United States, Lo warned that China's deterrence posture was not as secure as the Maoists believed.

To meet these threats, Lo seems to have proposed a strategy that differed from Maoist prescriptions in at least three respects. First,
Lo placed more reliance on the regular PLA forces (especially the infantry) than on either local forces or the militia. This is not to say that he advocated ignoring the militia, but rather that he saw China's militiamen playing a distinctly subordinate role in war. Second, Lo tempered the strategy of "luring deep" with calls for the establishment of prepared defensive positions fairly close to and covering sizable portions of the Chinese border. And third, because Lo saw limited American air strikes (unaccompanied by an invasion) as a real possibility, he advocated the rapid improvement of China's air defense in the south. 105

To the Maoists, reliance on elaborate air defense installations and on conventional ground forces meant competing with the United States in an area where the Americans had clear-cut superiority. It would be foolish indeed to try to meet the enemy on his own terms. Rather, China should rely on its strong points -- vast superiority in manpower and large expanse of territory -- and follow a strategy of irregular warfare after luring the enemy deep. Furthermore, the establishment of prepared defensive positions would provide American forces with clear targets for air attacks, and would require dispersal of Chinese forces to such an extent that the initiative would be lost.

105 It is also possible that Lo differed from Mao on a fourth point, the wisdom of strategic pursuit. The evidence is fairly complex. In his May article, Lo spoke out in favor of counterattacking across China's boundaries, but his motive may have been to deter American attack, not to suggest a set strategy. Chou En-lai, in 1966, also warned of the possibility of strategic pursuit. In his four-point formulation of China's America policy, Chou declared: "Once the war breaks out, it will have no boundaries. Some U.S. strategists want to bombard China by relying on their air and naval superiority and avoid a ground war. This is wishful thinking. Once the war gets started with air or sea action, it will not be for the United States alone to decide how the war will continue. If you can come from the sky, why can't we fight back on the ground?" (Peking Review, No. 20, May 13, 1966, p. 5). Mao seems to be totally opposed to strategic pursuit. In his interview with Edgar Snow in January 1965, he stated that Chinese troops would not go outside Chinese boundaries to fight. More recently, at the first plenum of the Ninth Central Committee in April 1969, Mao again promised (in referring to the Sino-Soviet conflict), "If the enemy should invade our country, we would refrain from invading his country. As a general rule, we do not fight outside of our own country." JPRS, No. 50,564 (Translations on Communist China, No. 104), May 21, 1970, p. 6.
Since Lo and the Maoists disagreed as to the most effective strategies for coping with American threats to China, it is not surprising that they also disagreed on the types of defense preparations that China should undertake. Lin Piao's statements in 1965 reflect his conviction that China's preparations to wage people's war were already sufficient both to deter the United States from an invasion and to defend China in the unlikely event that the Americans would attack.\(^{106}\) Lo, assigning greater probability to an American attack, and advocating significant changes in Chinese strategy, called for crash preparations for defense. Making immediate and urgent preparations, Lo argued, would be more realistic than either assuming that war was unlikely or concluding that China's defensive capabilities were already sufficient. Although some preparations and redeployments were made during the summer of 1965, Lo probably considered them inadequate. Western news reports revealed shortages of equipment and ammunition, with troops urged to use dummy weapons in training.\(^{107}\) Despite the efforts of the summer, in his September speech Lo still warned that there were "a thousand and one things" to do to make China ready for war. While Lo did not spell out what preparations he had in mind, on the basis of our reconstruction of the strategy he advocated we believe that Lo sought (1) construction in south China of additional defensive installations, especially antiaircraft sites, (2) redeployment of air defense capability — including jets, radars, and available SAMs — to south China, (3) a reemphasis on military, as opposed to political, training within the PLA, and perhaps (4) an increase in regular troop strength.

\(^{106}\) Our argument here is slightly different from that of Franz Schurmann. ("A Special Feature: What is Happening in China?" *New York Review of Books*, October 20, 1966, pp. 18-25.) Schurmann concludes that a basic difference between Lo and the Maoists was the former's desire for pre-attack preparations, as against the latter's reliance on post-attack mobilization. Red Guard criticisms of P'eng Teh-huai for failing to make adequate preparations against American attack lead us to believe that Schurmann is in error. (See "Settle Accounts with P'eng Teh-huai for his Crimes of Usurping Army Leadership and Opposing the Party," *Ching-kang-shan kuang-tung wen-yi chan-pao* (Canton), September 5, 1967.) We believe that the nature of the preparations advocated by Lo is much more important than their timing, and that the Maoists did not in fact rely solely on post-attack mobilization.

Our main conclusion is that these proposed defense preparations, because they required a number of domestic policy decisions inconsistent with Mao's plans and the interests of other groups, represented the single most important issue in Lo's purge.

In the first place, Lo's proposed defense preparations involved decisions on resource allocations that would have harmed sectoral and national defense interest groups. Military and civilian cadres associated with the militia, with industrial and public works projects that relied on Army cooperation and support, and with military regions that would be tapped to provide equipment and personnel for the south, could be expected to be skeptical and critical of Lo's proposals. The national program for research and development of advanced weapons was particularly threatened, Red Guard commentaries suggest. Implicit in Lo's recommendations was the diversion of funds to the PLA — for training and additional equipment — at the expense of the budget, the experimentation program, and production schedules of certain sectors of the defense industry.

The most telling criticism of Lo's proposals, however, was that they would have had a crippling effect on the crucial immediate political functions of the General Political Department and on the roles planned for the Army in the future. Lo's program for military training would have placed political education in a subordinate position; as early as June 1965, the Maoists indirectly criticized Lo for using political training merely as a tool for boosting spirit and morale, and therefore for improving military efficiency. While admitting that good political work would be reflected in military performance, the Maoists warned against those "comrades" who viewed political work as a means, not as an end.

108 According to these charges, Lo, as well as P'eng Teh-huai before him, sought to restrict and retard defense research; resisted guidelines formulated by Mao and other authorities; dismissed achievements that had been recorded, and wanted to take over the leadership of research institutions (in keeping with the "quick-fix" approach) in order to bend research to meet the production needs of the regular forces. "Down with Lo Jui-ch'ing, Usurper of the Army Power," pp. 6-7, and NCNA international service broadcast of August 27, 1967.

If political training were sacrificed for military training, then the political reliability of the PLA would suffer; and if security affairs came to demand more of the Army's time, then the Army's involvement in domestic political activities would be reduced. Moreover, Lo's programs were not only politically costly, but also (given the Maoist perceptions of the American threat, outlined above) strategically unnecessary. The conjunction of disagreements over strategic estimates and domestic priorities added a significant element to the debate. If Mao and Lin had disagreed with Lo as to the proper defense strategy, but had agreed with him that the American threat was imminent, then Lo might simply have been accused of misjudgment. But since they saw no significant American threat to China that would warrant immediate and wide-ranging defense preparations, the Maoists could logically have concluded that Lo had ulterior motives for suggesting major adjustments in domestic priorities. They have accused him of concocting an elaborate rationalization for proposals whose real purpose was to force the disengagement of the PLA from political activity, reduce its political reliability, and thus encourage the spread of revisionism in China:

Lo Jui-ch'ing dwelt considerably on "war preparations," and it seemed as if he was concerned over our country's security. This is not true. What he called "war preparations" were in fact preparations for usurping the army leadership and opposing the Party.110

In short, Lo's position was probably criticized on two grounds. First, Lo was proposing a crash program of military preparations -- a "quick-fix" of China's defense -- that would have necessitated a redistribution of economic resources among various sectors of Chinese society. Interest groups that would have suffered from this redistribution were probably a major component of the opposition to Lo's proposals. Second, the Maoists apparently feared that Lo was exaggerating the need for defense preparations in an effort to draw the Army away from political activities, and thus to undermine its ideological reliability. The

110"Big Military Competition is Big Exposure of Lo Jui-ch'ing's Plot," italics added. We assume here that the accusation concerns Lo's activities in 1965.
Maoists may even have believed that Lo intended, by disrupting and delaying Party rectification activities, to support and protect high Party officials who opposed Mao's efforts to "re-revolutionize" Chinese society.

Were the Maoists correct in their estimate that Lo was using strategic policy issues in a cleverly disguised effort to obstruct their political "protracted war"? Or were they misinterpreting what was actually an honest disagreement over the strategic implications of the Vietnam war? What, in other words, were Lo's motives in the Vietnam debate of 1965? Unfortunately, the available evidence does not permit us to answer these important questions adequately. But we can list briefly three possible interpretations of Lo's behavior. The first is that Lo sincerely disagreed with Lin and Mao about the risks that China was incurring by aiding North Vietnam. Lo's more pessimistic evaluation of the situation may, of course, have stemmed largely from his perspective as head of the General Staff Department of the PLA. As Army Chief of Staff, Lo's primary concerns were the Army's national security functions and its preparedness for war. His role, in other words, demanded that he prepare for the worst possible contingency. As a result, he may have overestimated the dangers posed to China by the escalating American participation in the Vietnam conflict.

Mao and Lin Piao had a different set of concerns: internal security and the general political directions of Chinese society. Both these concerns demanded that the PLA remain a reliable instrument of political authority. Just as the Vietnam war made questions of external security more crucial to Lo, so did the Socialist Education Movement make the maintenance of the Army's "proletarian standpoint" increasingly important to Mao and Lin. As the salience of these concerns increased for both sides and began to conflict, the Maoists came -- mistakenly, if this first interpretation is correct -- to equate Lo's honest professionalism with opportunism and bureaucratism. Lo, they felt, could not be trusted to help launch and sustain a Cultural Revolution purge of the Party apparatus. He was considered unreliable at a time when reliability and loyalty were the qualities that Mao and Lin valued most. 111

111 Mao's move against Lo might not have occurred had not the Maoists then perceived a threat to Mao's authority in the Party from "capitalist
A second interpretation, less charitable to Lo, is that he was using the Vietnam war as a justification for an attempt to improve his own political position, particularly vis-à-vis Lin Piao. Continued emphasis on the political role of the PLA, and on the preeminence of the GPD within the PLA, would mean continued priority for tasks that Lin, not Lo, would lead. Continued subordination to a man whom he had come to dislike may have seemed a rather gloomy future to Lo Jui-ch'ing. On the other hand, the additional resources that Lo was requesting — ostensibly needed to improve China's strategic posture — would have enhanced his personal authority, widened his area of responsibility, and increased the power of the General Staff Department. It may have been for reasons of bureaucratic politics, then, that Lo responded to the escalation of the Vietnam conflict with a request for intensification of defense preparations.

A third interpretation, not inconsistent with the second, is that Lo was attempting to protect his allies and patrons in the Politburo (particularly P'eng Chen and Liu Shao-ch'i), along with their clients and protégés in lower Party ranks, against what was becoming a widespread Maoist attack on the CCP. The publication of the so-called "Twenty-Three Articles" in January 1965 represented, according to Cultural Revolution accounts, Mao's personal repudiation of the alleged mismanagement of the Socialist Education Movement by Liu, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, and other Party leaders. In addition to correcting the "errors" committed by Liu and Teng, the Twenty-Three Articles also pointedly referred to the existence of "capitalist roaders" at all levels in the Party, including the Central Committee. It is quite plausible that Lo and his civilian Party allies were concerned about the new directions that the Movement was taking, that they saw the escalation of the Vietnam conflict as an opportunity to divert attention from the task of exposing domestic "revisionist" enemies, and that they hoped that the time gained could be used to secure their own political positions.

roaders." The insecurity of Mao's position may have been a significant factor in his determination to purge Lo. In more stable circumstances, Lo's contrariness might have been tolerated.
The available evidence does not indicate which of these three interpretations is the most likely to be correct. But it does seem that the Maoists believed -- whether correctly or not -- that Lo's behavior was, at the minimum, an effort to improve his personal position and, at worst, an attempt to keep the Army from supporting Mao's developing campaign against Party revisionism. From the Maoists' viewpoint, Lo was not just mistaken, he was treacherous.

Had Lo occupied an uninfluential post in the government hierarchy, his fate might have been different. But this powerful, ambitious man held sensitive Party and Army positions which, the Maoists feared, he could use to sabotage policies with which he disagreed. As secretary of the Central Committee and Secretary-General of the Military Affairs Committee, he occupied vital coordinating and policy-implementing roles. As a former Minister of Public Security, he retained important connections with his former colleagues, and his influence in public security work probably remained great. And finally, as Chief of Staff, Lo had considerable operational control over China's military forces. It was this combination of offices that contributed to Maoist suspicions that Lo -- in collaboration with P'eng Chen, Yang Shang-k'un, and Lu Ting-yi -- had the power to carry out some kind of coup against Mao and his close supporters. From the Maoist standpoint, the concentration of potential power in Lo's hands made his purge even more essential.

A Balance Sheet

While Lo's position, as we have seen, aroused considerable opposition in Peking, it probably attracted substantial support as well. Lo's supporters would have included other "professional" military men who either sincerely believed that Lo's proposals were essential to China's military security or saw in his program an opportunity to further their own bureaucratic positions. Although Lo was ultimately purged, it appears that his

supporters were powerful enough to arrange a compromise with Mao and
Lin. The outcome of the strategic debate, in other words, was attractive
(though in different ways) to three main groups of participants: the
Maoists, the military professionals, and Lo's opponents within China's
defense industry.

The compromise involved the rejection of the elements of Lo's program
that were especially objectionable to major interest groups within the
defense industry, including Lo's proposals to cut back on research and
development in order to permit rapid expansion of production and the com-
pletion of defense preparations on a crash basis. On the other hand,
there is evidence that some of Lo's other proposals for the improvement
of China's air defense were ultimately accepted. Perhaps they were im-
plemented more slowly and geographically more widely than Lo and his
supporters had originally proposed, in accordance with Mao's preference
for long-term national defense planning. But they were implemented non-
etheless, and, paens to "people's war" notwithstanding, represented a
considerable victory for China's military professionals.

The Maoists, too, gained major benefits from the Lo Jui-ch'ing affair.
The purge itself, perhaps conducted with the acquiescence of some of Lo's
own colleagues, allowed the Maoists to (1) eliminate from sensitive
bureaucratic positions a powerful and ambitious politician whose active
opposition to Mao was suggested by his persistent public dissent on basic
strategic and domestic policies, and who might have been allied with Mao's

113 Though Lo was purged, other military leaders who might have agreed
with his position emerged from the Cultural Revolution with their political
positions strengthened. Huang Yung-sheng, the commander of the Canton
Military Region (the location of many defense preparations both before
and during the Cultural Revolution) is currently Chief of Staff and a
member of the Politburo. (Yang Ch'eng-wu, Air Defense Commander in 1965,
was Huang's predecessor as Chief of Staff. Yang was purged in March
1968.) Wu Fa-hsien, Commander of the Air Force, is also a member of the
Politburo and is a Deputy Chief of Staff. In addition, the Air Force
political commissar, and several deputy commanders and deputy commissars,
are on the Ninth Central Committee.

It is possible that these men survived the Cultural Revolution be-
cause they were not linked with Mao's opponents in the civilian Party
apparatus; because they supported (or at least did not oppose) Mao's
use of the PLA during the GPCR; and because they were willing to sacrifice
Lo Jui-ch'ing at Mao's request.
opponents in the Party; and (2) warn Party leaders that the rectification of the CCP was to continue and that any opposition on their part would be dealt with harshly. Perhaps most important, the Maoists apparently were thereby assured that the military professionals would not interfere with the continued involvement of the GPD in domestic political activity or with political training in the PLA.

Implications for American Strategic Planning

On the basis of our study of the purge of Lo Jui-ch'ing and the "Vietnam debate" of 1965, several conclusions about present and future Chinese policymaking may be suggested:

(1) Alternative Chinese defense policies can be evaluated, to a greater extent than has previously been thought, according to narrow bureaucratic interests as well as broader strategic considerations. This is not to denigrate Lo's sincerity in stressing the imminence of the American threat to China, but only to suggest that his preferred strategy was based to an important degree on the perspectives of his position in the bureaucracy and on his assessment of his personal and bureaucratic power. It also suggests that Lo's followers and opponents (other than Mao and Lin Piao) likewise agreed or disagreed with Lo primarily on the basis of whether they stood to gain or lose from his proposals. Future analyses of Chinese decisionmaking should take into account the possibility that informal political and economic interest groups are important elements in the determination of strategic policy.

(2) China's strategic posture is formulated and modified in a political process in which domestic implications are carefully considered. A crucial element in this process is the perceived necessity for continued participation of the PLA in domestic affairs -- as an economic modernizing force, as a promoter of ideological rectitude, and, especially since 1967, as an instrument of political order -- and for the continued primacy of political (Party) authority in the PLA. So long as it is dominated by the Maoists, the political process is also weighted in favor of long-term defense research and cost allocations. Lo's strategy was unacceptable
not only because it would have unbalanced the Mao-Lin equation governing the proper interplay of the PLA and politics, but also because it would have upset the national defense budgeting and priorities to which Mao and Lin seemed committed.

(3) The Maoists are reluctant to permit the national security functions of the PLA to take precedence at any given time over its domestic political functions. The budding American threat in 1965 apparently did not prompt interest in any kind of preemptive move through a force buildup in areas near Vietnam; nor did it lead to an effort to bluff the United States into thinking that China was about to intervene directly. Mao was content to try to deter further American escalation with tough-sounding rhetoric and with the air and ground forces already in south China before the bombing of North Vietnam began.

Mao's response to escalation in Vietnam, dissension at home, and, by the fall of 1965, setbacks to Chinese interests abroad (the unproductiveness of threats made during the Indo-Pakistani war in September, the abortive coup attempt by the Indonesian Communist Party, and the failure to convene the "second Bandung" Conference in Algiers) was not to increase China's foreign involvement. Internal uncertainty and external pressures and disappointments did not combine to produce destabilizing international actions by an insecure elite.

Thus, it would appear that only an external threat of considerably greater urgency and magnitude than that posed in 1965 would prompt major new Chinese deployments to the border and make direct Chinese countermeasures a real possibility. It should be recalled, however, that Mao's slowness in augmenting the PLA's capabilities in south China during 1965 stemmed in large part from his overriding concern about revisionism in Party and society. In times of future external threats, debates between military professionals and Maoist ideologues over war preparedness may have different outcomes, depending, among other things, on the domestic political situation, the nature of the threat, and personal and professional relations among bureaucratic leaders.

(4) Maoist strategic thinking is defensively oriented, and Mao Tsetung recently formulated the "general rule" that Chinese troops will
never be sent outside Chinese territory to fight. 114 The Maoists appear still to rely on the strategy of "luring deep": allowing the invader to strike deep into China, and then harassing his rear and disrupting his supply lines with irregular and guerrilla forces while blocking his advance with conventional forces. But this strategy, which assumes the inevitability of an invasion of the China mainland, may also be considered — indeed, may be primarily intended as — the main deterrent in the Chinese arsenal at the present time. The Maoists' main purpose in so vividly portraying and frequently restating their defense strategy is probably to convince potential invaders of the unacceptable costs they would incur should they breach Maoist authority.

114 Mao, speech at the first plenum of the Ninth Central Committee, in JPRS No. 50,564 (Translations on Communist China, No. 104), May 21, 1970, p. 6.