

## China Watch by Gregory F. Buhyoff

### Washington bows lower

*The U.S. has hocked its Asia policy in order to shore up Deng Xiaoping's domestic political position.*

Despite a pathetically ignorant Ronald Reagan's protests to the contrary, the United States government has bowed to pressure from Peking on a matter of U.S. law, in the process of signing a new joint declaration with the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.).

A careful reading of the language of the Aug. 17 communiqué, dubbed the "Shanghai Communiqué II," reveals that Washington has effectively acquiesced to Peking's formula for a settlement of the Taiwan dispute, for the first time committing the U.S. to a "gradual" cessation of arms sales to Taipei and to de facto endorsement of Peking's proposal for a "peaceful reunification" of Taiwan with the mainland. Assistant Secretary of State John Holdridge admitted in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Aug. 18 that a "final resolution" referred to in the communiqué did mean a total cutoff of arms to Taiwan. The communiqué declares that "the two governments will make every effort to adopt measures and create conditions conducive to the thorough settlement of the issue," suggesting that the United States, despite promises made to Taiwan July 14, would act with Peking to force Taiwan to accept Peking's oft-contradicted formula for "peaceful reunification." China has conceded nothing in exchange for the U.S. kowtow.

The State Department foisted the capitulation on President Reagan to achieve a "settlement" of the dispute as early as possible in order to shore

up the political fortunes of Deng Xiaoping, whose faction is under increasing attack from opponents for softness on the Taiwan question. In fact, the recent announcement that the long-delayed 12th Party Congress will be held on Sept. 1 undoubtedly hinged on Deng's ability to get Washington to kowtow.

Though not consummated until after his ouster, the "Shanghai Communiqué" is the brainchild of Alexander Haig and the Kissinger-infested State Department, whose willingness to sell out U.S. interests for an alliance with China was a constant source of friction between State and the White House.

Following the furor caused by the communiqué, President Reagan insisted that it was subject to reversal in the event of a military threat to Taiwan, and reiterated that the defense of Taiwan is a "moral obligation." However, Assistant Secretary of State John Holdridge was asked at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing whether the cutoff of U.S. arms was consistent with Peking's demand for an unconditional cessation or Reagan's earlier stand that any arms cutoff be linked to a "peaceful settlement." Senators noted that Peking has still not renounced the use of force. "Holdridge replied with vagueness," complained a Senate source.

The day following the release of the communiqué, the Foreign Ministry in Peking declared that the document was only a "step along the way," and that China would not be satisfied

with anything less than congressional repeal of the Taiwan Relations Act. The *People's Daily* published an editorial the same day egregiously stating, "Taiwan is Chinese territory, and whatever means China uses to resolve the Taiwan issue is purely China's own internal affair . . . ."

Deng may need all the help he can get. He intends to carry out unprecedented and risky personnel purges and other "reforms" necessary for his faction to consolidate power. Opposition from elderly conservative leaders will be dealt with by dissolving the Politburo on which many of them sit; senior Politburo leaders such as Ye Jianying and Li Xiannian will be relegated to an "advisory council" with ostensible input into policy decisions. The Party chairmanship will also be abolished, and all responsibilities of the two institutions transferred to the Party Secretariat, a body Deng restored at the 4th Party Plenum and stacked with his own people. As a gesture of compromise, Deng is expected to "retire" himself, but the intended reforms, if successfully implemented will leave his men in power—at least until he dies.

Because the Congress is being held on such short notice, Deng is going ahead without the traditional process of first conducting provincial congresses. This will disenfranchise the mid- and lower-level party membership (where most of Deng's opposition exists) from the process of choosing delegates, a ploy conceived by Deng to control the election of a new Central Committee. However, there is the possibility that such a Congress will be viewed by the general party membership and population as illegitimate, something that could plague Deng and anyone else promoted there should another faction come to power in the future.