

New China revolution dooms 'Czar' Gorbachov

by Linda de Hoyos

All the hopes in Washington, London, and Moscow that Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov's historic trip to Beijing would usher in a "New Age" imperial condominium of Russia, the Western banking factions, and the Beijing regime in China, have been abruptly dashed to pieces by the revolution that is hour-by-hour gaining momentum in the People's Republic of China. The geopolitical strategists have been caught off-guard; the condominium chessboard has been thrown into the air by the demands for freedom and dignity in the streets of Beijing, Shanghai, and nearly every city in China. The "impossible" has happened: the 1911 revolution of Sun Yat-sen based on the principles of the American republic of Abraham Lincoln, has effected its resurgence, against the discredited communist dictatorship. The effects on the world are currently incalculable.

One thing, however, is certain: Czar Mikhail Gorbachov is finished. The much-hailed Sino-Soviet summit sealed Gorbachov's doom on several counts:

1) The summit has brought Gorbachov's assiduous efforts to project the Soviet Union as a friendly "Asian power" to a screeching halt. Even had there been no revolution in the streets outside the summit meetings, the Chinese leadership made clear that although it had permitted Gorbachov to visit, Beijing is not prepared for any concessions or accommodations to Soviet designs. There was no progress on the Cambodian conflict—although governments in the region and the United States had relied upon the Sino-Soviet summit to arrive at a *modus vivendi* for a settlement. Discussions on the Afghanistan issue must have also been acrimonious, since Gorbachov let loose with a blasting attack on Pakistan for alleged prolonging of the war, although Pakistan is a close ally of the P.R.C. In short, even on the diplomatic level, Gorbachov went home empty-handed.

2) Gorbachov's *glasnost* has been exposed to the world by the Soviets' and Gorbachov's own response to the student demands for democratic reform. In the three weeks of students protests leading up to the Sino-Soviet summit, Western pundits had proclaimed that the student movement would welcome Gorbachov as the hero of its demands for reform. The illusion ran that Gorbachov, acting as the head of the student democratic movement, would usher in *glasnost* for the P.R.C.

The Soviet press played the same theme. Writing before the summit May 15, *Pravda* columnist Vsdevolod Ovchinnikov proclaimed the "convergence" between the P.R.C.: "There are common aims and similar differences to be dealt with. . . . There is a growing businesslike, benevolent interest in the successes and failures of each side, a desire to know the neighbor's experiences, both successful and otherwise."

But when faced with a genuine outpouring of republican aspirations, the Soviet leader was intimidated and hostile. Gorbachov referred to the students as "hotheads," and proclaimed that those who believe that reform can come quickly "believe in fairy tales." To reporters, the intimidated Gorbachov appeared speechless at the prospect that such events might occur in the Soviet Union. From Moscow, meanwhile, columnist Ovchinnikov lied to his Russian readers: "It appears that in an attempt to exploit the current situation in order to put pressure on the government, the students have lost the support of many people who sympathized with them."

3) Most importantly, a process has been unleashed in China which challenges to the core the imperialist assumptions of the Soviet-West condominium, and also the anti-human foundations of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." Back in the Soviet Union, there was an initial blackout of the events in China, followed by lies such as those peddled by

Ovchinnikov. There has been no television coverage of the China events, out of obvious fear of the upsurge spreading to the Soviet Union itself. Nevertheless, throughout the republics and in Cracow, Poland, there is mass rebellion against the Soviet boot and economic deprivation. With the total discrediting of Chinese communism, can Russia be far behind?

Under these conditions, the Soviet hardliners have all the arguments necessary to force Gorbachov to close the glasnost door. China shows that once the lid is taken off of communist countries, reality asserts itself with a vengeance. Whether or not Gorbachov remains as the titular head of the Soviet Union, his policies are finished, and so are his condominium deals with Margaret Thatcher's London and George Bush's Washington.

Genie out of the bottle

The student upsurge which has now brought China to the point of revolution is the result of the resurgence of Sun Yat-sen's principles of republicanism in the face of a general breakdown crisis in the People's Republic of China. For 40 years, the Chinese people on the mainland have suffered nothing but extreme economic and cultural deprivation. The event that Chinese on Taiwan have always believed would take place has taken place: In a "great awakening," the Chinese people realize they have been duped.

Western paeans to the Chinese reform process begun by Deng Xiao Ping in 1983 ignore the facts. After an initial increase in agricultural output due to the increase in productivity resulting from the abolition of the communal system, Chinese agriculture is now falling backward—while the population continues to grow. China cannot feed itself. Government policy has only accelerated the breakdown; since 1985, investment in agriculture has steadily decreased.

By the middle of 1988, the rural industries that the government had created with its "Spark Plan" had collapsed after only a year's operation, sending tens of thousands of landless and unemployed peasants into the inhospitable cities. In the cities themselves, inflation has forced food prices up nearly 100% over the last two years.

Against this background, what has been unleashed since the April 15 death of ousted general secretary Hu Yao Bang is an urban revolution against the communist regime. At each point that the student movement appeared to subside at all, it has been further galvanized by new forces—urban industrial workers, the nation's press corps, and students from outside Beijing, who rode to the city on trains with free passes given by railroad workers.

By the end of the Gorbachov visit on May 16, the revolution had dramatically intersected the ongoing power struggle within the Politburo on the issue of the successor to Deng Xiao Ping. Communist Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang reportedly stood alone in the five-man standing committee as being against a crackdown on the occupation of Tiananmen

Square. By the evening of May 18, Zhao Ziyang had offered his resignation, and as of May 21, he has not been seen in public since he talked to students in the square that evening.

Prime Minister Li Peng, the adopted son of condominium agent Chou En-lai, has apparently taken the reins of power, ordering a full crackdown against the revolution on May 19. In a tirade before a meeting of top military and political leaders (with both Deng and Zhao absented), Li Peng indicated the near-hysteria reigning in party ranks. Li reported, "In some places, there have been many incidents in which people broke into local party and government organs, along with beating, smashing, looting, burnings and other undermining activities that seriously violated the law." He charged that the only purpose of the students is "to overthrow the people's government . . . and to totally negate the people's democratic dictatorship."

But as of the dawn of May 21, the crackdown has not occurred—the army will not move. Reportedly, four out of ten armies in China have refused orders to move against the students in Beijing. General Chen, head of the elite army in the Beijing region, was the first to refuse, and he is now reportedly under house arrest. Also refusing were the armies of Shanghai, Inner Mongolia, and Manchuria. Deng Xiao Ping himself, who, as chairman of the Supreme Military Commission, is basically commander-in-chief of the armed forces, is reportedly in Hubei province, attempting to roust the military there to charge Beijing. Szechuan forces, which reportedly might obey Deng, are tied down in Tibet.

Within Beijing itself, there are reportedly about 5,000 troops, but none have taken actions against the students. Convoys of troops have been stopped by throngs of city workers, peasants, and students from going into the city, or have been stopped by a combination of barricades and people in the giant intersections leading to the square.

Meanwhile, more and more people are arriving in Beijing to join the revolution.

It is impossible to predict the outcome of the current events now unfolding in China. In the next hours and days, this will depend upon the intersection of the ongoing factional process in the army and the broadening of the revolution from the cities into the countryside.

'What about democracy, George?'

Those were the words on signs of P.R.C. students at a demonstration in Washington. The question is to the point. Despite the fact that the students in Shanghai carried a large replica of the Statue of Liberty in their demonstrations, there has not been one word of encouragement for the Chinese revolution from the United States administration. This is in keeping, however, with the longstanding British policy of unadulterated hostility to Sun Yat-sen and everything he stood for. The President will have to wake up—his inanities uttered so far indicate only that he is clinging to a condominium that no longer exists.