CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY BETWEEN
THE NINTH AND TENTH PARTY CONGRESSES

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SUMMARY

In the period under review there emerged dramatic evidence of changes in China's foreign policy — including entry into the United Nations, improved relations with the United States, diplomatic recognition of Japan and in general a much more active diplomacy than in the past.

The focus of this thesis is an analysis of the changes in China's foreign policy formulation of which these developments are symptomatic and an assessment of the world view to which the new formulation corresponds.

The approach adopted implies that China's national interests are perceived through Marxist-Leninist perspectives and that its ideology is pragmatically implemented. Alternative approaches which consider that the Chinese are capable of seeing the world "as it is" apart from their ideological perspectives, or that their ideology prevents them from attaining a valid grasp of international reality are rejected as epistemologically unsound.

A brief historical survey is made of the principles which have come to dominate Chinese foreign policy and indications are given of the way in which these have been applied in practice by the Chinese Communist Party.

The central chapter of the thesis gives an account of the extended debate which took place within the Chinese leadership between 1968 and 1971 over the character of the contemporary international balance of class forces and the manner in which it was altering. The following chapters illustrate the ways in which this debate was resolved with respect to particular areas — the United States and the Soviet Union, the second intermediate zone and the Third World.

In the chapter dealing with the "super-powers" it is argued — contrary to the dominant analysis in the West — that what the Chinese Communist
Party regarded as the decline of United States imperialism was primarily responsible for the abandonment of the foreign policy formulation which had prevailed during the Cultural Revolution.

The reorientation of China's perception of the second intermediate zone is examined with particular attention to Western Europe, Japan and Eastern Europe.

The changes which took place in China's policy towards the Third World are examined as an integral part of the new assessment of international contradictions made by the Chinese Communist Party. It is argued that in the new assessment the Third World is no longer seen as the primary focus of international contradictions but that new opportunities are open to Third World states for reducing their dependence on imperialist powers.

The general argument pursued throughout the thesis is that the reformulation of Chinese foreign policy was achieved by the application of consistently held principles to a new international situation and that relevant debates within the Chinese leadership were concerned primarily with the character of international developments rather than the validity of the principles which should be applied to them.