

Festive Atmosphere Dominates Chinese Demonstrations

Oct. 22 — The following is excerpted from a Prensa Latina, Cuban news agency, dispatch:

Thousands of Peking residents continue to line up on the streets in this capital, repudiating the four members of the Politburo arrested last week and expressing support for Hua Kuo-feng, the new chairman of the Chinese Communist Party... Since the early morning hours, when many still were asleep, new demonstrations broke out as official acknowledgement of the arrest of the four became known. While there is still no official indication of the order of the events, it became known the four, known as the "Shanghai four," attempted to overthrow Hua Kuo-feng. The demonstrators reiterated the "anti-party character" of the Shanghai four.

For many foreigners, this is the first time they have seen the Chinese army participate in such great numbers in popular demonstrations. This seems to indicate the support of the army for the measures taken. Another aspect that catches the eye is the unprecedented festive atmosphere in the demonstrations. There are various aspects that confirm this, such as the use of drums, the constant playing of music in the loudspeakers, the illumination of the streets at night, as seen only during important festivals. It is expected tomorrow will be the last day of the celebrations.

"Legitimacy in Peking"

Oct. 22 — The following excerpts are from a New York Times editorial:

... Among foreign analysts, consensus is beginning to build up that Hua Kuo-feng may abandon the strange practices symbolized by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and that China will settle down instead to sober economic development with stress on more conventional education and industrialization. Such a highly pragmatic regime would probably attempt to improve its relations with Moscow to permit a reduction of that high state of readiness against military attack from the north which Mao regarded as essential.

While China may eventually follow such a course, it seems premature to accept this forecast without continued attention to alternatives. The outside world knows little about Hua Kuo-feng. The problem of legitimacy in Peking remains in the balance. For all the jubilation in the streets, the question of Hua's justification for donning Mao's mantle and assuming Mao's eminence is not fully resolved.

Mao Tse-tung provided a sacred dogma for Chinese Communism and was elevated before his death to the status of a living god. Hua Kuo-feng was an obscure figure — virtually unknown outside the leading circles in Peking — until less than a year ago....

Many of Hua Kuo-feng's associates undoubtedly question his claim to the power and position he has now assumed. Mr. Hua's efforts, once his seizure of power is completed, will most likely be aimed at legitimatizing his primacy. Until his tactics and strategies emerge, China's internal and foreign policies remain an enigma.

Thai Coup Followed By Reign Of Terror Arrests; Strong Reaction In Region

Oct. 23 (NSIPS) — The two-week old rightwing military junta in Thailand has instituted a reign of terror inside the country and has rapidly reversed the previous government's policy of détente with other Indochinese states. The junta's policies, backed by the U.S. State Department and Henry Kissinger, have evoked a tough response from the Vietnamese, Laos and more surprisingly, from nationalist circles in Indonesia who are known to favor a détente and cooperation policy between the region's non-communist states and their Communist neighbors.

The Indonesian nationalist daily Merdeka roundly attacked the Thai military's anti-communist hysteria as a throw-back to the time when Thailand was a base for armed U.S. aggression against the people of Indochina. Speaking for the pro-development faction led by President Suharto, Merdeka charged the junta with using anti-communism "to suppress the just demands of the Thai people." The Indonesian condemnation was echoed in the Vietnamese Communist Party paper, Nhan Dan, which likened the Thai regime to that of Pinochet in Chile. The bloody Oct. 6 coup in Thailand was aimed at "impeding and reversing the inevitable tendency of social progress" in the region, charged Nhan Dan. In Laos, demonstrations 20,000-strong were held in the capital city of Vientian protesting against the Kissinger-orchestrated bloodbath in Thailand.

Indonesia: U.S. Out!

Indonesian Foreign Minister Malik made his nation's desire for an Asian peace zone clear two days ago, announcing his opposition to the U.S. decision to expand its military base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Malik charged that the U.S.

decision was not only contrary to resolutions passed by the United Nations, but an insult to the protesting governments of the region who consider the base a direct threat to their security. Last week, former foreign minister and prominent Indonesian leader, Ahmed Subardio welcomed a Soviet proposal for the removal of all foreign bases in the region, according to the Soviet daily Pravda.

Linking the coup to Kissinger's other international terrorist deployments, Nhan Dan came out in full support of Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro's denunciation of the U.S. for last week's brutal bombing of a Cuban airliner. The paper charged the U.S. with "promoting acts of piracy which have worldwide repercussions and consequences."

The Thai regime left no doubt as to its role as a tool of U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's determination to crush regional détente between Communist and non-Communist Southeast Asia and break up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional organization including Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. This past week, the Thais provoked clashes with Laotian security forces, prompting the Laotian government to expel the military attaché stationed in the Thai embassy in Laos. The Vietnamese charged the Thais with widespread arrests of Vietnamese residents, putting them in "disguised concentration camps." The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry demanded the immediate release of those detained. Meanwhile, Thanat Khoman, foreign affairs advisor to the junta and major Kissinger lackey, has deployed throughout the region. Khoman, the former foreign minister

who negotiated the U.S. military base agreement in the 1960s has been deployed to Malaysia and Japan in an apparent effort to elicit support for the new government's anti-detente policy.

Internally, power is being consolidated under a regime of the most reactionary elements in the country. A new constitution has been adopted that excludes any guarantees of basic civil liberties. In addition, a new cabinet was formed and filled with the top military officers of the Junta, including Admiral Sa-ngad Chaloryu as Defense Minister, who led the Oct. 6 coup; General Boonchai Bamroongphong as deputy Prime Minister, a military officer noted for his close ties to the CIA. The civilian posts have been filled with individuals like Prime Minister Thanin Kraivichien who are from the so-called Committee of 99, a notorious rightwing group of business leaders formed after the 1973 overthrow of the military dictatorship of Thanom Kittikachorn. Significantly the post of Interior Minister was given to Samak Sunthornvej, a notorious right-wing Democratic Party leader who ousted Prime Minister Seni Pramoj had kicked out of his cabinet just prior to the Oct. 6 coup. He is hated throughout progressive circles and the labor movement.

Under this regime, the junta has moved to exterminate the country's remaining democratic and progressive forces by issuing a decree allowing the police to arrest and detain indefinitely anyone who "stirs up trouble." Just hours after the decree was announced by Commander in Chief of the Army, General Serm Na Nakhorn, the CIA trained officers in the Administration Reform Council (as the junta is formally known) issued an order for the arrest of all liberals and intellectuals who have not yet fallen victim to the bloody repression. Two days

later a spokesman for the junta announced that 2,647 political detainees of the over 4,000 who have been arrested remain in prison.

The targets of the junta's witch-hunt have been those pushing for a non-aligned Thailand and detente with the country's neighbors, among them the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) and the Thai Socialist Party. All leaders of the NSCT have already been arrested and are among the many designated by the junta to stand trial in military tribunals. The Bangkok Post of the past week reports police sweeps throughout the country to pick up known socialists and activists.

The new decree declares not only Socialists but virtually anyone not openly supporting the junta as liable to imprisonment. "Re-education and vocational training centers" have been established for those who refuse to "repent." Among the key journalists, intellectuals and alleged "communist sympathizers" arrested are Pansak Vinyaratn, publisher of the liberal weekly Chaturas and a strong supporter of regional detente with Vietnam, and Vatchara Vethayathirang who is a prominent economics writer of the mass circulation newspaper, Thai Rath.

Another decree has given the prime minister the power to declare any region in the country a "communist infested" area, empowering him to suspend all civil liberties and name a "director of Communist suppression" who would be empowered to direct all counterinsurgency operations along the lines of the "strategic hamlets" policy used by the CIA in Vietnam, including central distribution of rice, other food stuffs, medicines and other essential goods. "Communist suspects" could be held for 180 days without trial.

"The dollar system is on the verge of collapse. The dollar and everything that depends on it is bankrupt —when the collapse will occur is entirely a political question. There is only one solution: the declaration of an international debt moratorium on major categories of debt, especially those related to the dollar. The IMF and the World Bank are bankrupt. Then new credit must be created to maintain production and employment. We must immediately form an International Development Bank to replace the IMF and related institutions."

—U.S. Labor Party Presidential Candidate
Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.
Bonn Press Conference,
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