

Hamilton influenced Sun Yat-sen's founding of the Chinese Republic

by Michael O. Billington

One of the slogans displayed prominently by the youth who defied death at Tiananmen Square in the days preceding June 4, 1989 was, "You cannot fool all of the people all of the time." This quote from Abraham Lincoln evoked in the mind of every Chinese patriot the legacy of the father of the Chinese Republic, Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Dr. Sun had based his fundamental principles, known as the "Three Principles of the People," on the concept presented by Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address: "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," an historical connection which Dr. Sun never failed to present, proudly, to any audience. In fact, Sun Yat-sen considered this concept to be the connection between his view of a world truly governed by Christian morality and reason, and the profound truths of the Confucian tradition which had governed China for 3,000 years.

Dr. Sun saw the founding of the American republic as the most advanced expression of the effort to create a society governed by *agapē*, the Christian notion of the love of God, truth, and mankind. He compared it to the Confucian notion of a "Great Commonwealth," where man would govern himself on the basis of "jen," the Confucian term that approximates the Greek *agapē*.

A Christian world view

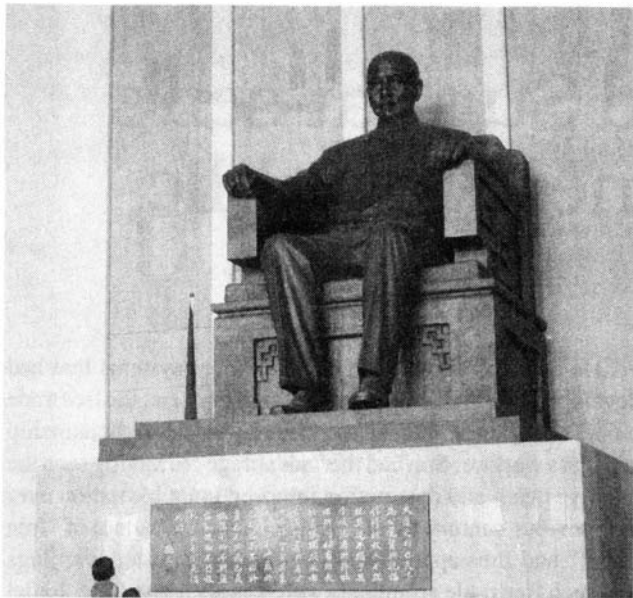
Sun gave primary credit for the successful development of the United States to the work of Alexander Hamilton, both in his role as the head of the Federalist fight for a Constitution and for his economic policies. He believed that responsibility rested with the government for the development of the physical infrastructure and the creation of a credit system necessary for successful agricultural and industrial progress. The success of such a system had proven itself in the progress of the United States. Said Sun: "The U.S.'s wealth and power have not come only from the independence and self-government of the original states, but rather from the progress in unified government which followed the federation of the states."

A Christian, Dr. Sun shared the Renaissance view of the American Founding Fathers that the role of science was found in the command in Genesis for mankind to "bring dominion over nature." He wrote: "The advance of science has made it possible for man to usurp the powers of nature and to do what natural forces have done." This, he believed, is the basis for social progress.

He attacked equally the two dominant systems that had developed in opposition to the American system: the free trade model of Adam Smith and the Marxist model of dictatorship and class warfare. Sun had the "advantage" of having seen the massive death and destruction imposed upon his nation over the previous century by the British under the banner of "free trade," and thus appreciated Hamilton's repeated warnings that such free trade arguments were simply a ruse for colonial economic domination and looting. Hamilton, said Sun, was concerned about "liberty and equality pushed to excess," and "founded the Federalist Party which advocated the centralization and not the diffusion of sovereign power." He described the U.S. Constitution as "the first complete constitution in human history," and adopted the policy of strong centralized government with a separation of powers in his own proposed Constitution for the struggling Chinese Republic.

In his highly developed programmatic proposals for the *International Development of China* written in 1921, Sun reflected the Hamiltonian rejection of Adam Smith's free trade dogma: "All matters that can be and are better carried out by private enterprise should be left to private hands, which should be encouraged and fully protected by liberal laws. . . . All matters that can not be taken up by private concerns and those that possess monopolistic character should be taken up as national undertakings." For these major projects, especially, "foreign capital, foreign experts and organizers, and gigantic methods have to be adopted." He added that the unbridled competition of the Adam Smith school had proven to be "a very wasteful and ruinous system. . . . It has been discovered by post Darwinian philosophers that the primary force of human evolution is cooperation, and not struggle as that of the animal world. . . . If we still retain the custom of free competition or *laissez-faire*, it will be like encouraging a lame man to contend with an automobile in a race."

Sun did not merely plead for assistance from the developed nations for the development of China. Like the circles around Hamilton and Benjamin Franklin, who saw that the building of a true republic in the New World was a step toward saving Europe from the impending Dark Age under the destructive oligarchical forces centered in England, so Dr. Sun saw that the western nations were on a suicidal course, and that unless the rapid technological development of the poor nations of the colonial world were taken on as a priority by the



Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founding father of the Republic of China, modeled his treatise *The Three Principles of the People* on Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address*.

West, then further self-destruction was in store. Like Lyndon LaRouche, Sun recognized that the massive development of the Third World was the necessary centerpiece for any serious effort to stop the cycle of depressions and wars in the West.

The U.S. had the potential, following World War I, to replace the British imperial system and return to American System principles, consistent with those of Hamilton. "But unfortunately," said Sun, "the U.S. has completely failed in peace, in spite of her great success in war. Thus the world has been thrown back to her pre-war condition. The scrambling for territories, the struggle for food, and the fighting for raw materials will begin anew." The West refused to heed his advice, or to support his proposals—and, as he had warned, a new, more horrible depression and war ensued.

'A sheet of loose sand'

Sun also studied the heated debates by Hamilton and his collaborators with the spokesmen for "pure democracy" and libertarianism. He had seen how the British, under Bertrand Russell's direction, had moved into China in 1919 after the Versailles Treaty had sold out China and inflamed the Chinese people. Using the arguments of the British liberals and the French Enlightenment, Russell helped create a counterculture, a "new age" cult of irrationalism, and a terrorist movement which ultimately produced the horror of Maoist China. Sun warned against "a group intoxicated with the new culture which has begun to reject the old morality."

He attacked Thomas Jefferson for accepting similar arguments from J.S. Mill, Rousseau, and others. The application of Mill's "extreme liberty for the individual" would create a society that is like "a sheet of loose sand," said Dr. Sun. He

praised the U.S. for following the Hamilton model, while pointing out that libertarian "pure democracy" had seized control of the French Revolution. In a haunting passage, almost a premonition, of the Maoist Cultural Revolution 50 years later, Sun describes the French Revolution: "No one in the country dared to say that 'the people' did not have intelligence and power; if one did he would be accused of being a counter-revolutionist and would be immediately brought to the guillotine. The result was that a mob tyranny was instituted. Anarchy followed, society was panic stricken, no one was sure of his life from morning till evening. Even a member of the revolutionary party might, because of a careless word which offended the multitude, be sentenced to death."

Class war a 'disease'

This "tyranny of the mob," like the bestial Darwinian notion of "survival of the fittest," could only lead to a false materialist sense of reality and to the collapse of society, Sun warned. "From ancient times until now, man has exerted his energies in order to maintain his existence. And mankind's struggle for continuous existence has been the reason for society's unceasing development, the law of social progress. Class war is not the cause of social progress, it is a disease developed in the course of social progress." Marx thus knew nothing of the real process of social progress, concluded Dr. Sun: "Marx can only be called a social pathologist, not a social physiologist."

Dr. Sun published his economic policies under the title *Plans of National Reconstruction*, with the dirigist measures developed by Hamilton as his model. The "regulation of capital" was his central conception, utilizing both regulated private capital and the development of state capital to promote industry and launch large infrastructure programs in communications, railways, waterways, mining, and manufacturing.

With the vision of the expansion in the western U.S. as a guide, Sun mapped out the criss-crossing of the vast Chinese interior with railroads. Dams across the great river systems would provide power and eliminate the massive death and destruction of recurring floods. These plans are still largely untouched, 70 years later, and are still today the core necessity for preventing yet another holocaust upon the Chinese people.

The current regime in Beijing is clinging to power through terror, while "opening up" to the West by adopting the same failed form of free trade policies which Hamilton attacked 200 years ago. Under the tutelage of Henry Kissinger and associates, Deng Xiaoping and the reformers have created free trade zones for unregulated exploitation of cheap labor and speculation, while the basic industry and agriculture of the nation slides into collapse. In explicating his "Three Principles of the People," Sun Yat-sen defined the "nurture of the people," rather than short-term profit, as society's true aim.