

Party member in good standing, despite the nation-wide vilification poured upon him by the radical-fundamentalists last year. Somehow he will have to be eased back into some top leadership role without creating insoluble problems for the new Chairman.

The economy

If he can resolve these political problems, Chairman Hua must get the economy going again and establish the goals for the new regime. And this he has already done, at an extensive industrial conference in Taching, the model industrial complex, and in Peking, which ended in mid-May. Here the new leadership in effect reaffirmed the goal set by the late Premier Chou En-lai in 1975 — a two-stage plan to mechanize Chinese agriculture by the 1980s and to put China into the front rank of industrial nations, like the U.S. and the Soviet Union, by the year 2000.

Digging back into Chairman Mao's old works, of which he is now editor-in-chief, Hua Kuo-feng reminded the conference that in 1956 Mao had asserted that China could and should surpass the United States economically in 50 years. To do so today, however, apparently will require not only Mao's idealistic incentives but also some of Teng Hsiao-ping's pragmatism. The conference was told that the "Gang of Four" were wrong to oppose the promotion of production and the establishment of rules and regulations in factories, to incite factionalism in political debate, to oppose "socialist accumulation" for expanded reproduction, and to prevent the development of factory experts and refuse foreign technology.

Material incentives are still officially frowned on, but overtime pay is admitted to be occasionally necessary and there is no longer any talk about eliminating the eight-grade wage system that provided those capitalistic pay differentials in the factories. In the communes, sideline production is not encouraged, but whether the new regime can boost production enough for the big new industrial base without such farm incentives is another question. After all, what is being asked of China's 800 million people over the next 23 years is a quantum leap forward, far surpassing the very creditable advances they have made in their first 28 years as the New China. And no longer will there be the living voice of the great revolutionary leader to make exhortation a sufficient incentive for such a massive undertaking.

For what Chairman Hua would seem to face is that classic dilemma of the Communist state, about which Mao warned and against which he fought all his life. With the slackening of revolutionary fervour and the growth of the desire for material incentives, the rise of the bureaucracy becomes inevitable — and probably an "elitist" society like that which developed when the Soviet Union lost its revolutionary zeal. Given the apparent desire of the new Hua leadership to modernize and industrialize China in a hurry, the need for an educated, technically-advanced bureaucracy may well be forced upon it unless the leadership is prepared, as Mao was, to encourage cultural revolutions every decade to promote class struggle and keep the leadership pure. And, if it does continue to follow that Maoist line, can the goals of the new leap forward ever be accomplished with such destabilizing rectification programs always going on?

Soviet relations

Another factor that should encourage the new regime to opt for stabilizing programs is the need to present a united front to the Soviet Union. The new regime has already made it very clear that ideologically there is no way the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties are likely to get together in the near future. The negative example of Soviet backsliding from the true faith is the inspiration of Chinese Party righteousness. At the same time, the Russian military threat and territorial intransigence do not encourage early diplomatic relations. The question may arise if there should be in the future Army leaders who want to obtain some Soviet modern military technology, for keeping the Army happy, and on his side, may be another of Hua's major problems.

Since the Hua regime appears to be ready to open more doors to the outside world, the opportunities to improve its relations with China will be available to the United States, but still only on the same old terms of ending its ties with Taiwan.

If Chairman Hua can remove some of the excesses of the cultural revolution of the past decade, relax the rules a little without losing the ideological goals, hold his Party Congress, and perhaps a National People's Congress too, he may manage to survive and, with his native cunning, apparent ruthlessness and careful planning, even to outlast Teng Hsiao-ping and all the rest of the old-line leaders.

*Need to present
united front
to Soviet Union*