

Khrushchev seemed to be suggesting that the President of the United States, the hand-picked executor of the interests of the American bourgeoisie, was interested in co-operating with the world's foremost workers' state. How were such statements to be reconciled with the major tenets of the official doctrine? Did it not make a mockery of the traditional understanding of imperialism to suggest that tension between the two camps could be relaxed and that the American capitalists were prepared to co-operate in good faith with the Soviet Union?

The leaders of the Communist Party of China certainly thought so, and they wasted no time in raising these embarrassing questions. Chinese spokesmen charged that Khrushchev was allowing himself to be led astray by the West's cynical "peace gestures" and was neglecting Lenin's analysis of the inherent and immutable aggressiveness of imperialism. According to the Chinese, American imperialism was innately aggressive, and it could no more change its nature than a tiger could change its stripes. The only way to respond to this threat was by energetically rallying the peoples of the world in a united effort to isolate and weaken American imperialism. The present apparent "moderation" of the United States was viewed as a deliberate deception which in no way reflected the existence of a more reasonable group within the Western camp. The Chinese asserted that from a revolutionary standpoint none of the minor differences of opinion that might exist within the ruling circles of a country such as the United States were of any real significance.<sup>46</sup> This strident response of the Chinese, which was a faithful reiteration of the Stalinist view, provides a graphic illustration of just how far Khrushchev had moved in his revision of traditional perspectives on East-West relations.

The Soviet leadership responded to the Chinese ideological assault not by retreating, but by broadening and buttressing its new doctrinal position. As a result, a fundamentally new view of

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<sup>46</sup> The Chinese position is set forth in the documents reprinted in G. F. Hudson, et al., *The Sino-Soviet Dispute*, New York: Praeger, 1963, pp. 72-77, 94-99, 139-140.