

AMERICA, SOVIET UNION, THE CHINESE NATIONAL
GOVERNMENT, AND THE CCP: A STUDY OF
THEIR QUADRUPLE RELATIONS, 1945-49

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The essay is a study of the quadruple relationship among the four powers in postwar China: America, Soviet Union, the Chinese National Government, and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Heretofore, many studies in postwar Far Eastern international relations have concentrated on either Sino-American or Sino-Soviet relations; thus, they have not given an adequate study of the quadruple nature of the relationship among these four powers. This essay is a humble beginning.

The interactions among these four powers were intense and complex indeed. The following is a summary of the thinking and action (or interaction) of the four powers.

The U.S. postwar policy toward China was to establish a "strong, united, and democratic" China. But the success of this policy hinged upon two conditions: the establishment of a Chinese coalition government and a cooperative Soviet policy toward China. When General Marshall realized that these two conditions were not available and that nothing short of a U.S. assumption of direct responsibility of Chinese military, economic, and political affairs would save China, he left China and adopted thenceforth a negative and non-involvement policy toward China during his entire tenure as the Secretary of State. Dean Acheson, his successor, simply continued Marshall's policy.

The Soviet response to the China tangle was essentially a "two China" policy, juggling its own position toward the two Chinese factions in order to insure that whichever won the Chinese civil war the Soviet influence would be maintained. This highly opportunistic policy did yield results, though results somewhat unexpected, the major one being the establishment of a Communist government in China in October

1949. But during the Chinese civil war, Soviet feeling toward the Chinese Communist revolution had been very ambivalent and not that of unsuspecting welcome.

The CCP's strategy was threefold: military rebellion through initial peace offensive (1945-46); mass mobilization through land reforms; and United Front with all non-Kuomintang elements. Its singleness in purpose of overthrowing the existing government and its determination to struggle to the end were in sharp contrast with the vacillation and wishful thinking of the other three powers.

The National Government, while fully aware of the purpose and determination of its Communist enemies, made two major mistaken assumptions: That the U.S. would eventually come to its rescue and that it could defeat the Communists before other pressing national difficulties would cave in on it. These mistaken assumptions led to disastrous consequences.

While many of the conclusions emerging from the essay are commonplace, it is hoped that some are new and fresh. It is also hoped that even in arriving at those commonplace conclusions, the essay has succeeded in offering more cogent analyses of the many subjects discussed. Furthermore, this essay has used many sources that have become available only recently. They can be found in the footnotes.