

The purpose of this study is to examine the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China (PRC) during the four-modernisation period and its impact on the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). The study covers developments prior to this particular phase of Chinese foreign policy but the primary emphasis is on factors influencing changes in the PRC's (and the Chinese Communist Party's) policy during that period and their consequences for the CPT.

The approach adopted for this study relies on both historical investigation and linkage theory or linkage politics. The latter mode of enquiry aims to delineate the relevance of internal as well as external factors.

It was found that the evolution of the relationship between the Chinese foreign policy and the CPT during 1942-1976 (that is, prior to the introduction of four-modernisation efforts) had been largely determined by on-going adjustments of the Chinese policy towards external powers. The Chinese reaction to Japanese, U.S., and Soviet imperialisms was also felt periodically by the CPT. In any event, given the Chinese attempt to separate state-to-state from party-to-party relations, the Chinese party continued its support for the CPT even while China pursued economic development-oriented policy and peaceful co-existence and while in Thailand the CPT underwent severe suppression by the country's military regime. Hence, China's domestic developments characterised by cyclical shifts back and forth between economic-development bias and revolutionary fervour did not always have any real impact on the CPT.

Factors influencing changes in Chinese foreign policy during the four-modernisation period. (i.e., since 1977), especially those with a strong impact on the CPT, were to be found in both internal and external settings. Most notable in this respect was the success of the four modernisation faction in toppling the permanent-revolution group and in pushing for economic development policy in cooperation with the outside world, which resulted in the decline in China's party-to-party support for the Third World together with the identification of the Soviet Union as a common threat to international peace and security.

The analysis of the impact of the Chinese policy during the four-modernisation period on the CPT has come to conclusion that the impact accounted much for the eventual demise of the latter. Here again both internal and external factors were relevant. External influences include the impact of the PRC's policy during this period towards the communist parties in Indochina and its posture towards the Thai government, whereas internal conditions were conflicts and dissension within the CPT and its united fronts. The PRC reduced its support for the CPT, as evidenced in its decision to close down the CPT radio station in southern China, while at the same time pressuring the CPT to come into united-front collaboration with the Thai government in return for the latter's acquiescence in the transfer of Chinese supplies through Thai territory to the Khmer Rouge who were resisting the Vietnamese in Cambodia. Understandably, Laos and Vietnam terminated all forms of its assistance to the CPT. All these developments were weakening the Thai communists steadily. In-fighting and internal differences on both revolutionary lines and relationship with China led to the failure of the fourth congress in 1982. In particular, the resolution characterising Thailand as a

semi-depenent society with expanding capitalism and feudal vestiges
instead of semi-capitalist, semi-dependent society with feudal
vestiges instead of semi-capitalist, semi-dependent society with
feudal vestiges meant in practice rejection of the proposal for
united-front expansion and urban activities, coupled with the
introduction of a new strategy by the government as embodied in the
66/2523 directive which focused on political rather than military
operations, led to the eventual demise of the CPT.

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