The State Council and the Cultural Revolution

By DONALD W. KLEIN

THIS article attempts to explore the status of the leading personnel in the State Council since the advent of the Cultural Revolution.[1] The State Council, of course, contains some of Peking's most famous personalities—such as Chou En-lai and Lin Piao—but my purpose here is to ignore for the most part the famed leaders and, rather, to dwell on a quantitative assessment of the entire body of 366 persons who were (in 1966) ministers and vice-ministers and chairmen of China's 49 ministries and commissions.[2] One might also describe this as a study of the focal point of "experts" in China, even though it is clear that the State Council does not have a monopoly on China's "expert" talents.[3]

The role of the State Council is too obvious to dwell upon at length, but a few remarks may be of use to give this paper its proper setting. Established in the fall of 1949, the State Council[4] has met more regularly and more "publicly" than any other body in China. To be more exact, the Council met 385 times between 1949 and March 1966, after which meetings were no longer announced (if, indeed, they have been held). Not surprisingly, it met more frequently in the takeover and consolidation years. Thus, from 1949 to 1954, sessions were held on an average of almost one a week, but since 1954 they have been convened slightly more than once a month. The overall average (1949–66) works out to almost exactly twice a month. As might be expected, the Council agenda items, numbering roughly 850, cover virtually every topic imaginable. They also reflect a preponderant concern with domestic affairs over foreign affairs (running roughly at 80 per cent. to 20 per cent). The State Council is perhaps unique

1 The date for the launching of the Cultural Revolution is a matter of dispute. For the purposes of this paper I have used the late spring of 1966 when large numbers of leaders fell from power, disappeared from the public scene, etc.

2 For the sake of simplicity the term "ministry" is used below to refer to both the State Council ministries *and* commissions. Similarly, the terms "minister" and "vice-minister" are employed to include also the commission chairmen and vice-chairmen.

3 It would have been useful to include the Academy of Sciences in this study, but a preliminary check revealed that there was too little biographic data about Academy personnel to draw meaningful conclusions.

4 The Chinese cabinet was known as the Government Administration Council from 1949 to 1954, and since then as the State Council. I have used the latter term throughout the article for the sake of simplicity.

among Chinese institutions in that its results, usually tersely stated, have been largely devoid of polemical or ideological content. The complete text of a hypothetical session would read as follows: "The State Council held its XXXth meeting today. Vice-Minister Li Li-li gave a report on coal production in the first half of the year, and after hearing a report by Vice-Minister Wang Wang-wang on the Sino-Soviet trade agreement for 1957, the agreement was ratified. The meeting also passed upon a number of appointments and dismissals." Taken individually, such information is of little value, but in aggregate terms it provides a considerable body of knowledge about the State Council and the specialities of the many ministers and vice-ministers.

The State Council is unique in another respect, and one which is pertinent to the methodology employed in this paper. It is the only institution that has regularly announced the appointment and dismissal of its subordinate personnel. While the record is not perfect, it approached the 99 per cent. mark until 1966—a fact which stands in contrast to the nightmarish problems of keeping abreast of personnel changes in the CCP, the PLA, and many of the mass organisations. Thus it is possible to have a virtually perfect record of the State Council's ministers and vice-ministers at the outset of the Cultural Revolution.

As suggested by the types of subjects dealt with, the subordinate organs of the State Council have a preponderant orientation towards economic issues, and thus some three-quarters of the ministries and commissions are directly concerned with economic questions. This was true when the Council was established in 1949, and it remains true today. The ministries have doubled since 1949 (from 24 to 49), but the total number of ministers and vice-ministers has increased fivefold from 76 to 366.

By and large, the State Council has been marked by a rather high degree of continuity in terms of its personnel. Of the initial 76 ministers and vice-ministers, nine have died, but in 1966 13 were still serving in the identical posts they held in 1949 and another 16 were ministers or vice-ministers in another ministry. In other words, 17 years after 1949 exactly half the original appointees were still senior officials in the Council's ministries. It should not be assumed that the other half had fallen from political power; on the contrary, aside from a few isolated purges, most of the remainder had advanced by 1966 to more senior posts in other political institutions, or, in the fashion of Premier Chou En-lai, had merely relinquished a concurrent ministerial portfolio (as foreign minister). This continuity of personnel, combined with the fact that the overwhelming majority of the appointees to State Council posts since 1949 gained on-the-job training in their special fields prior to their appointments, provides the rationale for

regarding this institution as one of the major focal points for "expert" talent in China.

Turning to the impact of the Cultural Revolution on the State Council, a few remarks must be made about methodological problems. This article, which attempts to assess the status of the 366 ministers and vice-ministers, is based primarily on the author's own files which have been richly supplemented by the biographic files of the American Consulate General in Hong Kong, a collection of data on some 30,000 Chinese leaders. If the Chinese press in the post-1966 period had been as "open" as in the mid-fifties, one could assume a very high degree of accuracy for the figures cited in the following tables. Similarly, it will be apparent to all readers that our knowledge of the activities of ministers is considerably more detailed than our knowledge of vice-ministers. And there is, of course, far more information available about some ministries than others (*e.g.*, the Foreign Ministry in contrast to one of the Machine Building ministries engaged in military production). Nonetheless, because virtually all ministers and vice-ministers work in Peking, we do not face the serious methodological problems encountered, for example, in attempting to assess the status of personnel in the provinces. In brief, although the numerous tables below tend to exude an air of statistical accuracy, it should be kept in mind that they are at best approximations.

One note on terminology should also be mentioned. I have used the word "criticised" to embrace all forms of accusations and the few cases where such criticism apparently ended in death or suicide. I have also used the word "rehabilitated" to cover the numerous situations where a man has been criticised but reappeared at a later date as a participant in the political processes. In a number of instances "rehabilitation" is clearly an exaggerated term, but I have used it consistently throughout this article in an attempt to capture some degree of statistical accuracy regarding the many cases where careers have fluctuated quite wildly through the stages of the Cultural Revolution.

Attacks on State Council Personnel—How Widespread?

We might begin the substance of this article with a consideration of the level of criticisms directed against the 366 ministers and vice-ministers. Through mid-February 1968, the aggregate figures are as follows:

Table I

Number of Men	Criticised	Criticised but Rehabilitated	Not Criticised
366	152	30	214

Combining the last two figures, it would appear that two-thirds of the ministers and vice-ministers are still working at their posts. In fact, however, this is almost certainly a distorted presentation—first, because data on criticisms is certainly not complete and, secondly, because excessive periods of time have passed since the final appearance of many of the allegedly "uncriticised" and "rehabilitated" ministers and vice-ministers. Further refinements of these figures should reflect a more accurate picture of the current viability of the State Council. The following chart, which gives the dates of the *final* appearances of the 49 ministers, is structured by time periods to reflect the various stages of the Cultural Revolution.

TABLE II

Final Appearances of the 49 Ministers

1965 (Jan.–June)	1965 (July–Dec.)	1966 (Jan.–May)	1966 (June–Dec.)	1967 (Jan.–June)	1967–68 (July 1967–Feb. 1968)
2	1	3	17	7	19
(4%)	(2%)	(6%)	(35%)	(14%)	(39%)

Thus nearly half of the ministers—a group of men who normally receive a great deal of attention in the press—have not been identified in public since the end of 1966. Moreover, and more important, some of the ministers who appeared in public *after* 1966 have been subsequently attacked (*e.g.*, the minister of the 7th Ministry of Machine Building). Therefore, it would be well to restructure these materials in the fashion set out in the following table.

TABLE III

Ministers (arranged by Ministries)

Uncriticised	Criticised but later "Rehabilitated"	Criticised but not "Rehabilitated"
Aquatic Products	Finance	Agriculture
Chemical Industry	Foreign Affairs	Allocation of Materials
Food	6th Min. of Machine Building	Building Construction
Foreign Trade	8th Min. of Machine Building	Building Materials
Forestry	National Defence	Coal Industry
Geology		Commerce
Internal Affairs		

TABLE III—*Ministers (arranged by Ministries)—continued*

Uncriticised	Criticised but later "Rehabilitated"	Criticised but not "Rehabilitated"
1st Min. of Machine Building	Petroleum Industry	Communications
2nd Min. of Machine Building	Public Security	Culture
5th Min. of Machine Building	State Farms and Land Reclamation	Education
Posts and Telecommunications	Comm. for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries	Higher Education
Textile Industry	Scientific and Technological Commission	Labour
Water Conservancy	State Planning Commission	2nd Min. of Light Industry
Comm. for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries	Overseas Chinese Affairs Comm.	3rd Min. of Machine Building
1st Min. of Light Industry		4th Min. of Machine Building
		7th Min. of Machine Building
		Metallurgical Industry
		Public Health
		Railways
		Nationalities Affairs Commission
		Physical Education and Sports Comm.
		State Capital Construction Comm.
		State Economic Commission
Totals: 15	12	22

In other words, nearly half of the State Council's ministries are without a politically active minister.

We can move to another level of refinement by considering the entire sample of 366 ministers *and* vice-ministers, although it is completely evident that vice-ministers, even in the best of times, receive less attention in the press than the ministers. Because 58 (16 per cent.) of the vice-ministers have not appeared in public since 1964 or before, I have eliminated them from the following table on the grounds that their long absence from the public scene may be the result of illness, lack of data, etc.

TABLE IV

Final Appearances of 49 Ministers and 259 Vice-Ministers
(308 Men)

1965 (Jan.–June)	1965 (July–Dec.)	1966 (Jan.–May)	1966 (June–Dec.)	1967 (Jan.–June)	1967–68 (July 1967–Feb. 1968)
42 (14%)	48 (16%)	49 (16%)	77 (25%)	31 (10%)	61 (20%)

The above modified sample demonstrates that roughly half of the ministers *and* vice-ministers have been missing from the public scene for about two years (*i.e.*, since the late spring of 1966). It would be tempting to conclude that the 30 per cent. who have not appeared since the end of 1965 provide us with a retrospective "signal" that the Cultural Revolution was in the offing. Lo Jui-ch'ing is a case in point. But I would caution against such a conclusion and would suggest instead that the 30 per cent. figure results in the main from the weakness of our data.

Reorganising the above materials, Table V (page 84) provides the final public appearance of *any* minister *or* vice-minister within a given ministry. It is, of course, virtually impossible to devise any chart that properly reflects the many complexities of the Cultural Revolution, and the following compilation is no exception. Therefore, it is important to make some qualifying remarks. No reader will be surprised to see that the Ministry of Education seems to be out of business as a political institution. On the other hand, whereas one of the vice-ministers of Public Health appeared in public as late as May 1967, neither the minister nor the five other vice-ministers have appeared since November 1966. Similarly, one of the vice-ministers of Culture appeared as late as October 1967, but the last appearance of *any* of the other 10 officials is December 1966.

We might make yet another attempt to gain insight into the viability of the 49 ministries by restructuring the material in still another manner. Table VI (page 85) is designed to answer the question: In which of the ministries have half or more of the personnel (*i.e.*, the minister and vice-ministers) become inactive because of Cultural Revolution-generated attacks? (Counting both the minister and vice-ministers, each ministry has an average of nearly eight men.)

Combining the two columns in Table VI, it seems evident that a number of vice-ministers were caught in the politically awkward position of serving under principal targets of the Cultural Revolution. This is particularly pointed in the Ministry of Culture (headed by Lu

TABLE V

Last Public Appearances (Ministers or Vice-Ministers)—by Ministries

1965	1966	1967 (Jan.–June)	1967 (July–Dec.)	1968
August:	October:	May:	July:	February:
Labour	Education	Commerce	4th Machine Bldg. Min.	Foreign Trade
	November:	1st Machine Bldg. Min.	6th Machine Bldg. Min.	Finance
	Higher Education	5th Machine Bldg. Min.	Textiles Ind.	Foreign Affairs
	Allocation of Materials	7th Machine Bldg. Min.	August:	National Defence
	Building Materials	Public Health	Metallurgical Industry	Petroleum Industry
	1st Min. of Light Industry	Nationalities Affairs Comm.	State Economic Comm.	Posts and Telecommunications
	2nd Min. of Light Industry	State Capital Construction Comm.	September:	Public Security
	2nd Machine Building Ministry	June:	Railways	Comm. for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries
	3rd Machine Building Ministry	Agriculture	October:	Comm. for Economic Relations with Foreign Countries
		Building Construction	Aquatic Products	Scientific and Technological Comm.
			Coal Industry	State Planning Comm.
			Culture	
			Food	
			Forestry	
			Internal Affairs	
			8th Machine Bldg. Min.	
			State Farms and Land Reclamation	
			Water Conservancy	
			Overseas Chinese Affairs Comm.	
			November:	
			Chemical Ind.	
			December:	
			Communications	
			Geology	
			Physical Culture and Sports Comm.	

TABLE VI [5]

Ministries in which More than Half of the Personnel have been Attacked	Ministries in which Exactly Half of the Personnel have been Attacked
Culture	Building Materials
Education	Coal Industry
Labour	Higher Education
3rd Min. of Machine Building	2nd Ministry of Light Industry
Public Health	
State Economic Commission	
Scientific and Technological Commission	
Nationalities Affairs Commission	
Physical Culture and Sports Commission	

Ting-i), the State Economic Commission (chaired by Po I-po), the Nationalities Affairs Commission (chaired by Ulanfu) and the Physical Culture and Sports Commission (chaired by Ho Lung). Lu's ministry reveals 9 of his 10 vice-ministers as "victims"; the figures for Po's commission are 7 out of 12; in Ulanfu's commission they read 3 out of 6; and in Ho Lung's commission there are 4 out of 7 vice-ministers out of operation. This correlation, however, breaks down in Nieh Jung-chen's Scientific and Technological Commission. Nieh has been under fire a number of times, but a strong case can be made that he has emerged during the Cultural Revolution in a political position of greater strength than before it began. Nonetheless, his commission has been one of the most severely hit, with seven of his nine deputies no longer in action. It is less easy to link ministers and vice-ministers in the other ministries included in Table VI, but in some cases (*e.g.*, the Ministries of Education and Higher Education) it seems evident that the institution rather than the man is under attack. On the more positive side, it appears that over half of the ministers/vice-ministers are politically active in about 32 ministries (*i.e.*, about 65 per cent. of all the ministries).

It should be clear, then, that a large number of men have been under fire based on their affiliation with the leading "victims" of the Cultural Revolution, and that another significant group have fallen because of their affiliation with "institutions" that have been under heavy attacks—particularly those associated with culture and education. Turning the question around, we might ask if any cluster of ministries has been "protected" during the Cultural Revolution.

[5] Because the 2nd and 7th Ministries of Machine Building had no vice-ministers as of 1966, they have been excluded from Table VI.

Efforts to manipulate the data have been uniformly uninstructive in this regard. For example, one might hypothesise that defence-related ministries were shielded. Assuming that 12 ministries represent the hard core of defence-related ministries (Chemical Industry, the eight Machine Building Ministries, Metallurgical Industry, Petroleum Industry and the Railways Ministry), we find about three-quarters of the ministers and vice-ministers still active in contrast to about two-thirds for the entire sample. In view of the fact that we have always had less data about defence-related ministries, I would assume that this rather slight statistical variation is without real meaning.

It would be particularly useful if we could draw correlations based on policy consideration, *e.g.*, emphases on heavy vs. light industry, the allocation of resources, agriculture vs. industry. There have, in fact, been some interesting suggestions in selected fields. For instance, in the culture-education sphere there was apparently a major debate centring around the issue of vocational schools (the Red vs. expert question). However, using our aggregate cases for the entire State Council, the attacks on the vast majority of the personnel are phrased in such polemical terms that it has not been possible to draw any correlations of significance. One presumes that a more detailed study of Red Guard materials in this connection may result in important findings.

Summarising the comments and tables thus far, we might make these generalisations. Something upwards of one-half of the State Council's ministers and vice-ministers seem to be politically active, although as time passes these figures will probably require revisions unless a genuine stability returns to the PRC. It is more difficult to make generalisations about the ministries, but one might hazard the opinion that at least a half-a-dozen are defunct and perhaps another dozen or so are perilously close to being inoperative or at least are severely lacking in day-to-day leadership.

I stated at the outset that it was not my purpose to dwell upon the more famed leaders who work in the State Council. However, it might be useful at this juncture to take note of the fact that Party Central Committee members and alternates in the State Council have fared somewhat less well than their non-Central Committee colleagues. It appears that only five out of 47 have escaped criticism. Sixteen more were criticised but later "rehabilitated." Most important, however, is the fact that over half of them (26 out of 47) were criticised and have subsequently disappeared from the public scene.

From this point we can move to a series of other considerations that will hopefully cast some light on the workings of the State Council since the Cultural Revolution began.

Party versus Non-Party Personnel

It is well known that the original (1949) Chinese cabinet contained a high percentage of non-Communists—presumably to demonstrate a united front posture and to draw on some highly qualified expert talent. Perhaps less well known, though hardly surprising, is the fact that after the consolidation years the number of non-Communists in the State Council dwindled sharply. Thus, in 1949, 58 per cent. of the ministers and vice-ministers were Communists, and 42 per cent. were non-Party persons. But in 1966 these figures read 87 per cent. and 13 per cent. for those on whom we have information about Party affiliation. (Inferential evidence suggests that the CCP percentage would be considerably higher if we had complete information.) Nonetheless, one of the most easily documented (and perhaps most ironic) facts about the Cultural Revolution is that the non-Party ministers and vice-ministers have come through the turmoil almost unscathed. To be exact, of the 38 men in question, only two of them seem to have been criticised and one of these was "rehabilitated" thereafter. In a period of such great strains and stresses, I would find it difficult to accept the notion that the powers-that-be would concern themselves with the niceties of maintaining the "united front" posture. Rather, it was probably a rather easy solution to short-term problems to maintain the talents of a group of men who do not aspire to political power (as opposed to administrative authority) and who, in any event, are quite elderly. In any case, it is evident that the non-Party "democrats" have fared remarkably well.

The Military Element in the State Council

In view of the vastly increased authority of the PLA, it is relevant to ask if this could have been anticipated by examining State Council appointees made on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. This is also prompted by the many raised eyebrows in the spring of 1965 when some military men were appointed to the Ministry of Culture. Or, to put this question in its bluntest form: is there any evidence suggesting that Lin Piao was able to "pack" the State Council? To test this proposition the careers were examined of the 60 men newly appointed as ministers or vice-ministers from January 1965 to March 1966.[6] Only five of these 60 men had been transferred from a military assignment to the State Council, whereas the balance (*i.e.*, 90 per cent.) could be described as normal career advances. Even among the five military men, common sense seemed to dictate the appointment in certain cases; thus Wang Ping-cheng, an Air Force deputy commander,

[6] No appointments have been made since the State Council held its last "formal" meeting on 9 March 1966.

was made Minister of the 7th Ministry of Machine Building which is responsible for the manufacture of aircraft. Moreover, at least three of the five "new" military men have already fallen victim to the Cultural Revolution. In short, there is strikingly little evidence to suggest that the PLA tried or was successful in infusing a significant element of military personnel into the State Council on the eve or in the earliest phases of the Cultural Revolution. In this respect the State Council stands in very sharp contrast to the provincial "revolutionary committees" which contain a very high percentage of career military officers. Or, to cast this in another fashion: Even though something on the order of half of the State Council's ministers and vice-ministers have become victims of the Cultural Revolution, there is little evidence to suggest that the PLA has served as a reservoir of personnel to replace the fallen ministers and vice-ministers.

Regionalism and the State Council

Because of the degree of "regionalism" that is now apparent, it may also be relevant to test this proposition in terms of the State Council. Regionalism, of course, can take many forms, but the purpose here is to test the proposition that one or more of the key regional leaders in the takeover period (*e.g.*, Teng Hsiao-p'ing in the south-west or Li Hsien-nien in Central-South China) was able to "pack" the State Council following his transfer to Peking. The first step was to ascertain the working locale of the 366 ministers and vice-ministers (information being available for 80 per cent. of the sample). Dividing China into the six administrative units that existed in the early PRC years, in addition to a category for those who worked in the central organs in Peking, we find the following percentages:

Table VII

Working Locale of the 366 Ministers and Vice-Ministers in the Early Fifties

Centre	East China	Central-South	North-East	North China	South-West	North-West
37%	16%	14%	11%	10%	7%	6%

None of these figures seems to suggest that a regional leader was able to place a disproportionate share of "his men" in Chou En-lai's State Council. Rather, they seem to reflect the spread of China's population density, as well as the presumed fact that a fairly significant number of men were assigned to Peking on the basis of the technical experience they gained in East and Central-South China (*e.g.*, Shanghai,

Wuhan and Canton). Turning this proposition around, we might ask if there were significant figures revealed by an examination of those "criticised" during the Cultural Revolution who were not later "rehabilitated." The first row of the following table repeats the percentages of Table VII, below which are placed the percentages of those criticised.

TABLE VIII

Working Locale of the 366 Ministers and Vice-Ministers Compared with those Criticised during the Cultural Revolution

Centre	East China	Central-South	North-East	North China	South-West	North-West
37%	16%	14%	11%	10%	7%	6%
31%	17%	11%	13%	13%	7%	9%

These percentages are so remarkably similar that they should lay to rest any notion that one particular group of regional leaders bore the brunt of the criticisms and purges resulting from the Cultural Revolution. One hastens to add, of course, that these figures are confined to the State Council, and consequently tell us nothing about possible regional factors in play in other key organs of power.

THE "DECEMBER 9TH CLIQUE"

Amidst the numerous charges and counter-charges, "criticisms" and "rehabilitations," it is not easy to identify specific groups that have been singled out as prime targets of the Cultural Revolution. There is, however, one very notable exception: the "December 9th Clique." A few words of explanation are required. On 9 December 1935, large numbers of students in Peking (at Peking University, Tsinghua, etc.) staged massive demonstrations against the steady Japanese encroachments upon Chinese sovereignty. From this date until the outbreak of war in mid-1937, the students formed a number of highly active organisations. Although the Communists almost certainly played no role in the initial demonstrations in 1935, they quickly moved in to rally the students to their cause. Among the key Party figures involved in the recruiting and the guidance of these students were P'eng Chen and Liu Shao-ch'i. When war erupted scores of the "December 9th" students went to Yenan, and in the early years of the PRC they more or less dominated the key organs of the New Democratic Youth League (later the Communist Youth League). Then, by the mid-1950s, presumably because they were among the best educated of the Communist

leaders, many of these men (then in their early forties) were transferred to the State Council. They also made progress in Party channels, and by 1958 six of their number were full or alternate members of the Party Central Committee.

For obvious reasons we do not know the complete "membership" of the "December 9th" group, but nonetheless about 60 have been identified as politically active since 1949. Their inability to survive the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution is striking. In general, the "December 9th" cadres have worked principally in technically oriented or educational posts. In view of the fact that practically all educational institutions have come under severe attack, it is not surprising that these former North China students have suffered politically. Perhaps more surprising, particularly in light of the widely held notion that science and technology have been largely shielded from the Cultural Revolution purges, a significant number of the "December 9th" group holding technically oriented posts have been attacked.

Turning in more specific terms to the State Council, at the outset of the Cultural Revolution 18 members of the "December 9th" clique were ministers or vice-ministers in the State Council. Thirteen of the 18 have been sharply criticised, and three of the other five have not made public appearances since the launching of the Cultural Revolution. A simple listing of the posts held by the 13 presumably purged men should suffice to indicate their importance:

Ministers	Vice-Ministers
Higher Education	
First Ministry of Machine Building	Petroleum Industry
	Scientific and Technological Commission (2 men)
Commerce	Public Health
	State Economic Commission (2 men, one of whom is concurrently a vice-minister of the Ministry for the Allocation of Materials)
	Higher Education
	Aquatic Products
	Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries
	Physical Culture and Sports Commission

It might be noted in passing that four of the above were Party Central Committee alternate members, and assuming their removal, the "December 9th" group had lost *all* its seats on the Central Committee. It is also of interest that another dozen men (who did not work in the State Council) have been specifically criticised, and not a single one has reappeared. Among them is Lu P'ing, who came into

instant fame in the late spring of 1966 as the President of Peking University, one of the chief targets of the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, with a few exceptions, another 30-odd men, although not specifically attacked, have disappeared from the public scene. Because of ties with Liu Shao-ch'i and P'eng Chen stretching back three decades, it is not surprising that many of the charges made against the "December 9th" group were directly linked to Liu and P'eng. In short, it appears that one of the most able and well-educated groups within the Chinese Communist leadership has suffered a severe blow.

Foreign Affairs

Because foreign affairs are the responsibility of the State Council in the most formal sense, we might examine briefly the impact of the Cultural Revolution on the Foreign Ministry. Foreign Minister Ch'en I has been under fire on numerous occasions, but he seems to have survived politically in spite of these attacks. One can make a persuasive case that Peking's foreign relations are in shambles, but the case is more complex than that. In early 1966, on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese had embassies in 48 nations. In terms of personalities, there were three vacant ambassadorial posts, 40 ambassadors abroad, and five chargés d'affairs abroad.[7] The recall of ambassadors (which must be distinguished from the formal removal of the ambassadors from their posts) coincides tidily with the various crucial stages of the Cultural Revolution. Thus, about 20 ambassadors returned home in the latter part of 1966, about 10 more returned in early 1967, and another handful returned in the spring and summer of 1967. In short, by the early fall of 1967 Peking had its ambassadors in only two nations—the United Arab Republic and India. (This situation had not changed by early 1968.) With the recall of ambassadors from all but two countries, we obviously cannot draw any conclusions in terms of policy considerations vis-à-vis any grouping of nations. The withdrawals were clearly based on domestic considerations. Since their return to Peking, 10 of the 45 ambassadors have since appeared in public—normally described simply as the ambassador to "X" country (and usually in connection with the visit to China of important leaders from that country). One might suppose that in the months to come more of these "ex-ambassadors" will again emerge, but as of early 1968 the situation is inconclusive.

[7] Three chargés d'affaires a.i. were in the U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia and India; it is clear, however, that the absence of an ambassador is the result of Peking's diplomatic "warfare" with these three nations over the past several years. For the purposes of this article I have regarded these three men as "ambassadors." Similarly, I have regarded the two men who head the "Offices of the Chargé d'Affaires" (in England and the Netherlands) as ambassadorial equivalents.

It may be more pertinent to ask if China's missions abroad are still operative—particularly in view of the many suggestions in the press (usually implicit rather than explicit) that a number of embassies have been closed. Here the answer is an unqualified "yes." With the exceptions of Ghana and Tunisia, both of which severed diplomatic ties with Peking, the Chinese have maintained their embassies in all other nations. They have, to be sure, cut their personnel to an apparent bare minimum, but in all cases their diplomats continue to operate. In this regard it is interesting to note that the quasi-official missions in Japan, Italy and Chile (devoted mainly to promoting trade) are also still operating. Parenthetically, it should be noted that the Ministry of Foreign Trade, which organisationally has fared reasonably well during the Cultural Revolution, has continued to conduct trade negotiations and has sent some of its vice-ministers abroad to conclude trade agreements. Obviously, however, this work has been impeded in a number of ways.

In the meantime, the Foreign Ministry in Peking has witnessed troubled days, particularly in the summer of 1967 when for a few days it appeared that some over-zealous Red Guards were in almost complete control of the ministry. Within a few days this chaotic situation was remedied (however imperfectly), and as of early 1968 the Foreign Ministry was operating with some degree of normality. Returning to our consideration of ministers and vice-ministers, we have already taken note of Ch'en I's status. Of Ch'en's 10 vice-ministers, three have apparently escaped criticism, and another three have been criticised but have subsequently returned to the political scene. Of interest in this connection is the fact that Chang Han-fu, one of Chou En-lai's oldest colleagues, has fallen victim to the Cultural Revolution.

The viability of Peking's foreign relations, as examined in the light of other State Council-controlled mechanisms, can be tested in still another manner. First, a word of explanation. Beginning in 1952 the Chinese began establishing bilateral scientific and technological committees with the other Communist nations. The committee sessions have alternated between Peking and the foreign capitals concerned, and they have normally met every six to 12 months. Each side has a chairman for its "group," and in the Chinese case this post has almost invariably been held by one of the vice-ministers of the State Council. As might be expected from the nature of the work (the exchange of technical personnel, blueprints, etc.), the ministries concerned have had a strongly technical orientation (*e.g.*, Petroleum Industry). In view of the seemingly chaotic state of Chinese Communist foreign relations, it would not be unreasonable to assume that these joint committees had ceased to function since the start of the

Cultural Revolution. In fact, however, no less than 14 sessions have been convened (some in Peking, some abroad) with 10 Communist nations.[8] Moreover, the time lapse since the previous meetings has been only slightly longer than normal. In all but one instance the Chinese chairman has been "predictable," *i.e.*, a vice-minister from one of the technically orientated ministries. In view of the above-mentioned severe attacks on the senior personnel of the Scientific and Technological Commission, it is noteworthy that the exception is the all-but-unknown Chang Pen, who is known to us only as the chairman of the commission's Revolutionary Committee.

Conclusion

Because the Cultural Revolution remains in full stride, no one can predict the ultimate fate of the Chinese cabinet. It is possible that the campaign might peter out in the near future, followed by a return to relative normality by the State Council. Another possibility would be further upheavals, coupled with a transfer of State Council authority to other more "revolutionary" organs. A third possibility might be a continued "limping along" upon the present lines, with the avenues of authority ill-defined and with some tasks usurped by other institutions.

In considering these possibilities, we might focus on two major considerations, one of them in terms of personalities and the other in terms of institutions and some tenets of political modernisation. The personality consideration naturally centres on Chou En-lai, who for 19 long years has headed the Chinese civil bureaucracy. Now in his 70th year, Chou has already managed to weather a succession of crises. If we can believe the numerous Red Guard accounts of his actions over the past two years, he has felt compelled to "defend" many of his key subordinates on countless occasions. But there is little to suggest that he has attempted (or perhaps dared) to defend those of his subordinates working in the critical "soft spot" of the State Council—the educational and cultural spheres. One might even speculate that as part of a bargain with the Mao-Lin elements, Chou was forced to sacrifice his educational-cultural specialists in favour of some degree of protection for his host of other specialists. But if the sanctity of the State Council rests upon the political agility of one man, then it is indeed in far greater trouble than any of the data suggest.

Turning to institutional considerations, we can note that the State Council continues to issue directives, usually in conjunction with the CCP Central Committee and the Party's Military Affairs Committee.

[8] Mongolia is the only Communist nation that has not held a meeting with the Chinese since the inauguration of the Cultural Revolution.

But it is difficult to know, in fact, if this is an indication of institutional viability or the personification of the dominant personalities of Mao Tse-tung, Lin Piao and Chou En-lai. It also appears that the State Council continues to hold meetings, but these are certainly less routinised than in the pre-1966 period, and we have virtually no idea of the specific agenda items. In terms of personnel, at the minister/vice-minister level the State Council is "frozen." As already noted, Chou En-lai seems to have been able to prevent the intrusion of new personnel from other organs of power, but there are absolutely no signs that he has been able to promote personnel within his own organ of power. This is best illustrated by the unprecedented delay in filling three ministerial vacancies (which presently exist in the Ministries of Foreign Trade and Textile Industry, and the Third Ministry of Machine Building).

At a broader level, we might begin with the proposition (however unlikely) that China could exist without a Communist Party, but it could not exist without a central civil bureaucracy. This, of course, is a very un-Maoist thought and the very antithesis of the spirit of the Cultural Revolution. Yet even Maoists must rely on more than the Little Red Book if they are to pursue the admittedly ill-defined goals generally subsumed under the concept of "modernisation." David Apter's comments, though somewhat out of context here, seem highly relevant: "Civil servants, through their expertise and the modes of organization, comprise the single most important group for the translation of government policy into social practice. But they are a difficult group for political leaders to deal with or assimilate because . . . they are generally better educated than the politicians . . . and . . . have a greater security of tenure, which creates a totally different outlook."[9] Apter also writes that "Ultimately, the modernizing elites must accept an ideology of science (whether or not they accept nationalism or socialism at the same time). This type of ideology is based on the need for information, verification, experimentation, and empiricism. Modernizing elites must also accept rules of eligibility based on technical expertize."[10] If one accepts these propositions, then one must also grant that the Chinese cabinet represents a permanent "opposition" group as opposed to an institutionalised "political opposition." In using these terms I rely on the subtle but highly useful distinctions drawn by Ionescu in his study of the European Communist states, as well as those discussed by Franz Schurmann. Ionescu's broad definition is subdivided into the "conflict of interest which originates from the friction and rivalry between groups within the community"

[9] David E. Apter, *The Politics of Modernization* (Chicago, 1965), p. 167.
[10] *Ibid.* p. 175.

and the "conflict of values, . . . which originates logically from the incompatibility of opinions, outlook and beliefs among people of different allegiances and mentalities." These are differentiated from "political opposition" which is "institutionalized, recognized and legitimate." [11] In a similar vein Schurmann distinguished between Kao Kang-type "factionalism" as opposed to "opinion groups" held by such alleged economic "conservatives" as Ch'en Yun.[12]

In assessing the future of the Chinese civil bureaucracy, these are useful tools of analysis. At a minimum they should be more fruitful than past analyses which have simply viewed the State Council as one of the major elements in the "power structure" or as the personification of Chou En-lai's role in Chinese Communist history. Returning to Apter's propositions, one might argue that the Chinese Communists could disband the central civil bureaucracy. But this would jeopardise many modernisation goals, and sooner or later some sort of "civil servant" institutionalisation would certainly reappear, whatever its nomenclature. Therefore, we can assume a basic continuation of an institution that will be characterised as a focal point of "expert" talent and will in varying degrees continue to express differing interests and values.

[11] Ghita Ionescu, *The Politics of the European Communist States* (New York, 1967), pp. 2–3.

[12] Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley, 1966), p. 56.