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SOVIET VIEWS ON SINKIANG

by ANN SHEEHY

In Sinkiang, according to the present Soviet version of events, Chinese persecution of the non-Chinese peoples and a local anti-Soviet campaign began in 1957-8. However, it was only in September 1963 that the Soviet press carried the first stories of this, in a brief flurry of articles in the metropolitan and republican papers. Even so, this was only by way of indirect reply to Chinese charges of Soviet subversion and coercion in connexion with the mass exodus of Uygurs and Kazakhs from Sinkiang to the Soviet Union in 1962. Chinese persecution of the national minorities was mentioned again in a report on a Kazakh Party plenum in March 1964. Two further articles on the subject (one a slightly modified version of one published in September 1963) appeared in September 1964, when the Soviet papers were full of protests against China's frontier claims.

After 1964, with Khrushchev's removal from power and the new leaders' hope that an improvement in relations with China might now be possible, all material critical of China disappeared from the Soviet press for some time. It was only at the beginning of 1967, when there was a sharp increase in Soviet coverage of events in China in the wake of some of the worst anti-Soviet excesses of the Cultural Revolution, that accusations of Chinese oppression of the national minorities in Sinkiang re-appeared, together with reports on the course of the Cultural Revolution there and elsewhere. There was then a fairly steady trickle of accounts on the plight of the non-Chinese peoples of the CPR, which turned into something of a spate in April 1969 and the following months, after tension between the Soviet Union and China rose to a new peak following the armed frontier clashes on the Ussuri and elsewhere.

At the time of writing (January 1970) nothing more on the subject has appeared since the decision to hold talks in Peking led to a sharp reduction in mutual polemics. However, with no sign of progress in the talks and with the Soviet press once again intensifying its hostile reporting in the face of continuing Chinese attacks, it seems only a matter of time before the matter is brought up again.

The gist of the newspaper reports that appeared in 1963-4 and 1967 (mainly the testimony of refugees) and of an article by T. Rakhimov on the national minorities of Western China as a whole in *Kommunist* in mid-1967 has already been given in *Central Asian Review*.¹ The present article will concentrate on material that appeared in 1968 and 1969.

A feature of Soviet newspaper reporting on Sinkiang has been that, while *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* have carried routine reports on the course of the Cultural Revolution in China, including resistance in Sinkiang, under the general rubric "Events in China", they have said scarcely anything about the persecution of the national minorities. Accounts of this have appeared mainly in *Literaturnaya gazeta*, the chief vehicle of Soviet attacks on China, and in the republican press.

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uprising, as a result of which "popular-democratic power was established on the liberated territory . . . and the rebirth of the free, independent East Turkestan Uygur Republic was proclaimed".⁵

Rakhimov contends that, in view of the oppression of the minorities under the old regime, it was particularly important that the Communists should adopt a correct approach on the national question. This Mao and the Chinese Communist Party did between 1921 and 1949, repeatedly declaring their support for the principles of self-determination and federation. This played an important role in mobilizing all the peoples of China to fight the imperialists and the Kuomintang; and when the Revolution triumphed in China, the non-Chinese peoples "justly considered that . . . they would now have a chance to revive and create their own national states as part of People's China".⁶ But they were deceived. Once in power, Mao abandoned the principles of self-determination and federation, and under the 1954 constitution China was proclaimed a unitary state. "The non-Chinese peoples were 'magnanimously' permitted to organize their life on the basis of 'territorial national autonomy', which in reality is only a screen for covering up a policy of forcible assimilation."⁷ The Chinese now say that, since the minorities lack territorial integrity, conditions are not right in China for federation or self-determination; either would undermine China's unity and provide favourable conditions for imperialist subversion. They even deny that such principles were ever in their Programme, and describe demands for self-determination and even federation as "counter-revolutionary" and "nationalistic". Furthermore, the equality and prohibition of national discrimination enshrined in various legislative acts, including the constitution, have since turned out to be empty words.

In spite of this, Rakhimov concedes, in the years up to 1957 the new regime did devote "due attention" to developing the economy and culture of the non-Chinese peoples and to training them and giving them posts in Party and state organizations. Feudal relations were abolished, agrarian reforms introduced, and a start made on industrialization. Attention was given to the development of culture and education, the improvement of medical services, the study of the national languages and the elimination of illiteracy. In Sinkiang Soviet assistance played a large part in all this, and particularly in industrial development. "Hundreds of highly qualified Soviet workers, engineers and technicians worked in Sinkiang plants and factories", and many Soviet scholars and cultural workers assisted in the development of education and culture.⁸

Although Rakhimov maintains that Chinese treatment of the non-Chinese peoples in Sinkiang was reasonably enlightened up to 1957, he quotes a certain Pulat Rakhim, one-time deputy-head of the Board of Public Safety of the Ili District, as saying that in "1952-7 under cover of a campaign 'against counter-revolutionary elements and Panturkists' there was a real massacre of all the active participants of the 1944-9 national liberation movement".⁹ According to Rakhim, things reached such a pass that "ordinary meetings of national cadres on business were declared secret Panturkic assemblages" and as a result people were afraid

Mao's Policy Towards the National Minorities

In so far as published material is a guide, the Soviet expert on the persecution of the national minorities in China is T. R. Rakhimov, an Uygur scholar who is described as head of the Far Eastern Institute's Sector on National Problems. Rakhimov came to notice in the 1950s as the editor of a Russian-Uygur dictionary published in 1956 (with the Uygur in both Arabic and Cyrillic so that it could also be used by the Uygurs of Sinkiang) and as the author of an article entitled "Successes in Solving the National Problem in the CPR" in 1959.² His 1967 article in *Kommunist*, which was in a very different vein, was essentially a foretaste of his book *Natsionalizm i shovinizm—osnova politiki gruppy Mao Tsze-duna* (Moscow, 1968), the main part of which is a general indictment of Mao's policy towards the national minorities in China. Rakhimov is also the author of articles in *Komsomol'skaya pravda* of 20th May 1969 and, together with V. Bogoslovskiy, in *Aziya i Afrika segodnya*, No. 7, 1969, both of which are largely summaries of his book.

Rakhimov starts his book by describing Marxist-Leninist teaching on the national question and the splendid results of its correct application in the Soviet Union, particularly in the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan. In China, on the other hand

Mao Tse-tung and his group . . . are revising Marxist-Leninist teaching on the national question. . . As a result of their chauvinistic policy such large nations as the Uygurs, Tibetans, Mongols, Dungans . . . and some others are deprived of the right to create their own national statehood and to develop their own national economy and culture. Behind the screen of "the unity of the country" and "territorial national autonomy" a policy of forcible assimilation of the non-Chinese peoples inhabiting the CPR is being carried out at a forced pace.³ . . . In the national question they [Mao Tse-tung and his group] are to all intents and purposes pursuing the Great Power nationalistic policy of the Old China, which has assumed a particularly naked character in the course of the so-called Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.⁴

Rakhimov argues that many of those peoples, including the Uygurs, who are described in Chinese official sources as "national minorities" do not deserve this designation. They number several millions, even according to the "deliberately understated" 1953-4 Chinese census figures; they live in compact groups; and they have their own ancient original culture, and centuries of experience of existence as an independent state. The minority territories were acquired by China through centuries of conquest which, as in Sinkiang in 1757-9, was accompanied by the annihilation of hundreds of thousands of the local population and great devastation. Under the emperors and the Kuomintang the non-Chinese peoples were cruelly oppressed, and Kuomintang China pursued a policy of assimilation, even denying that China was multi-national. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the history of the non-Chinese peoples is filled with the bitter struggle for their national independence. The Uygurs "conducted a continuous heroic struggle against their oppressors for their national freedom and independence . . . over the course of many centuries". Their last "major national liberation movement" was the 1944-6 Committee of the CCP which met from December 1957 to April 1958,

neither tells the whole story. However, by examining them together with such other evidence as is available, it is possible to gain a clearer idea of an episode which plainly still rankles with the Chinese.

Although Soviet sources are understandably reluctant to draw attention to the fact, there are, or were, in Sinkiang large numbers of Kazakhs, Uygurs and others, who had fled from Tsarist and Soviet Russia at various times, particularly during the 1916 revolt, the civil war and collectivization. From Borisov and Koloskov's account of the 1962 mass exodus it appears that those involved were mainly these people, who either held Soviet citizenship or were regarded as eligible for it by the Soviet authorities by reason of their place of birth. The two writers begin their account of the exodus by stating that

Several hundred thousand natives of Russia (*vykhodtsy iz Rossii*) (primarily Kazakhs and Uygurs) settled in Sinkiang at various times (mainly in the period of the civil war in our country); the majority of them were registered as Soviet citizens.

They then go on to say that in the early years of the CPR the Chinese authorities treated "Soviet citizens permanently resident in Sinkiang" well on the whole, but the situation changed drastically from 1958-9 on. Up to 1962, however, the Chinese apparently allowed those with Soviet papers to leave for the Soviet Union.¹³ Then, Borisov and Koloskov continue,

At the beginning of 1962 the Sinkiang local authorities almost completely stopped granting Soviet citizens wishing to return to their homeland permission to leave for the USSR. As a result in the spring of 1962 over 60,000 inhabitants of Sinkiang, unable to stand harsh living conditions, hunger, national discrimination, persecution and the anti-Soviet rampage, made a spontaneous dash for the Soviet Union.

According to Borisov and Koloskov, the Soviet authorities tried to persuade the refugees to return to the CPR and, if they were still bent on coming to the Soviet Union, to do this through the proper channels. The Chinese declined repeated Soviet invitations to send representatives to talk to the refugees and instead demanded that they should all be returned by force, which the Soviet government naturally could not agree to.

As a result the Chinese authorities themselves were compelled to take account of the desire of Soviet citizens and natives of Russia to leave for the Soviet Union. In September 1962 the Chinese Foreign Ministry requested the Soviet government to allow those who wished to leave for the USSR to do so with the minimum of formalities.

Rakhimov, who gives a figure of more than 65,000 for the Kazakhs and Uygurs who fled to Kazakhstan and Central Asia in 1962, also argues that material hardships and discrimination against the non-Chinese nationalities and "particularly Soviet citizens and natives of the USSR" were the main reasons for the mass exodus. But he then goes on, by way of refuting Chinese accusations of Soviet subversion, to make the seemingly surprising claim that "the local Chinese authorities knew of the intentions of the inhabitants of Sinkiang long before the mass cross-

even to gather for their traditional weddings and other national holidays. Rakhim also describes how an active participant of the national liberation movement, Abdugapur Sabirkhadzhiyev, who was shot in public on charges of Panturkism, left a letter saying that he did not even know what it was.¹⁰ But this incident may have occurred at a later date.

Rakhimov's description of the deterioration in the position of the national minorities in China from 1957-8 on follows the lines familiar from earlier accounts in the Soviet press given by refugees from Sinkiang. Its main points are: that, after an enlarged plenum of the Sinkiang Committee of the CCP which met from December 1957 to April 1958, there was mass repression and persecution of the minority Party and state officials and intelligentsia on charges of Right-wing deviationism, bourgeois nationalism and Panturkism; that this resulted in many prominent persons losing their posts and being sent to labour camps from which only a very small number managed to escape (some, including the talented Kazakh writer Kazhykumar Shabdanov and the former Mayor of Urumchi, committed suicide); that the Great Leap Forward and People's Communes campaigns had more disastrous effects in the national regions than elsewhere (in Sinkiang "famine mowed people down"); that the situation of the local population was aggravated by the huge influx of Chinese settlers; that there was discrimination against the minority cultures; that the unsuitable Latin alphabet designed to transcribe Chinese characters was imposed on the Uygurs and Kazakhs in 1959 against their will; and that a general policy of sinification and enforced assimilation was pursued.

Some more graphic details are provided by A. Mirov in *Literaturnaya gazeta* of 7th May 1969.¹¹ Mirov quotes various refugees as saying that at the coal mines where members of the national minorities were sent for "ideological re-education" conditions were so bad that dozens died daily; that writers in labour camps, when they returned to their stinking barracks after a day of backbreaking toil, were made to write books extolling someone, anyone Chinese; that the world-renowned Sinkiang apple trees were cut down for fuel to feed the primitive furnaces during the Great Leap Forward; and that Soviet books and the classics of Central Asian literature were also hurled into the furnaces, and the people were forbidden on pain of arrest to read Soviet books or listen to Soviet broadcasts.

The 1962 Exodus

The refugee stories published in 1963 were an oblique retort to the Chinese accusation that the Soviet Union had coerced large numbers of people to move from Sinkiang to the Soviet Union in 1962. They were plainly meant to suggest that, in view of Chinese treatment of the minorities, no coercion was necessary. In fact, they threw no direct light on the affair.

A brief but authoritative Soviet account of the incident was finally given in 1968 by O. Borisov and B. Koloskov, in a survey of Sino-Soviet relations from 1948-67;¹² and Rakhimov also provides some information in his book. These two accounts appear to conflict, and obviously

Russia (this would lend colour to the Chinese accusations that "in April and May 1962 the CPSU leaders used their organs and personnel in Sinkiang, China, to carry out large-scale subversive activities in the Ili region and enticed and coerced several tens of thousands of Chinese citizens into going into the Soviet Union"¹⁸); that this annoyed the Chinese, who finally decided to put a stop to it by announcing that all those already holding Soviet papers could leave (and assisting them to do so) and at the same time letting it be known that no one else would subsequently get exit permits; and that this was then followed by the protest demonstration in Kuldja and by the mass flight.

As regards the shooting, it is interesting to note that reports in the Western press stated that the demonstrators gathered outside the Soviet consulate calling for protection and that the Consulate refused to become involved. If the Consulate referred the demonstrators to the local Party authorities, this would accord with what appears to be the only Chinese version of the incident. This was given by Chou En-lai in his report to the National People's Congress on 21st-22nd December 1964:

In 1962, under the instigation and direct command of forces from abroad, a group of the most reactionary protagonists of local nationalism staged a traitorous counter-revolutionary armed rebellion in Ining [Kuldja], Sinkiang, and incited and organized the flight abroad of a large number of people near the frontier.¹⁹

The reluctance of the Soviet consulate to become involved would also fit with the apparently genuine Soviet attempts to persuade the refugees to return and regularize their departure from Sinkiang.²⁰ According to Borisov and Koloskov, even the Chinese government, in the shape of the First Deputy Foreign Minister, was originally prepared to consider the affair "an unfortunate incident", and only later, presumably when the Soviet authorities refused to return the refugees by force, did an official Note talk of Soviet subversion.

The final upshot of the whole affair was the closure of the Soviet consulates in Sinkiang. Borisov and Koloskov allege that Soviet diplomats were detained and searched, and that the societies of local Soviet citizens were closed and their leaders arrested on false charges of anti-government activity. "In these circumstances the USSR government had no choice but to close the Soviet Consulate General in Urumchi and the Consulate in Kuldja. Subsequently, on the insistence of the Chinese side, the USSR trade mission in Urumchi was abolished."

Soviet accounts do not seem to single out any specific instances of the persecution of the minorities in Sinkiang between the mass flight of 1962 and the onset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966. The implication is that the situation remained essentially the same, with Chinese settlers continuing to pour in—according to Rakhimov the proportion of Chinese in the total population rose from three per cent in 1949 to 45 per cent in 1966²¹—while the national minorities continued to seek refuge from the intolerable conditions in Sinkiang in the Soviet Union and other adjacent countries. Rakhimov states that in all in the period 1959-66 not less than 100,000 Uygurs moved (*pereselilos*) from China to the Soviet Union, over 30,000 of them in 1962 alone.²² No overall total has been given

ing", and that they let it be known that they "would not stand in the way of the departure of the Uygurs and Kazakhs for the USSR and in a number of instances assisted this crossing".¹⁴ Thus, according to one Uygur refugee, in the second half of May 1962 it was announced on the radio that tickets for the frontier were on sale in Kuldja. He and 500 others acquired tickets and on 27th May 1962 were transported in 17 vehicles to within five to six kilometres of the frontier and told to walk the rest of the way. Similarly, another refugee claimed that a Party secretary of the frontier district of Chimpantszy came to the village of Mukry on 26th May 1962 and made arrangements for transport for all those who expressed a wish to go to the Soviet Union. Rakhimov concludes:

Thus the Maoists tried to kill two birds with one stone: to get rid of the "unreliable" population and to make room in Sinkiang for the Chinese.¹⁵

It was immediately after these refugees had allegedly been assisted by the local Chinese authorities to cross the frontier that, according to other Soviet accounts, a crowd of local people demanding permission to leave for the Soviet Union was "mown down by machine-gun fire" in Kuldja. A recent eyewitness account, quoted by Mirov, gives the date as 29th May 1962. It says that about 2,000 people, unable to find work, came to Kuldja to get permission to join relatives in the USSR, and that over 200 people were killed. Former Major-General Zunun Taipov, on the other hand, who was not present, says that some 40 citizens of the Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Chou called at the local Party offices, and when they were refused a hearing over 300 people gathered on the square. He gives the total of dead as "several dozen".

It seems difficult to reconcile Rakhimov's story of the Chinese authorities actually assisting people to leave with the other accounts, but perhaps an answer can be found in the following report on the affair in *The Times* of 30th April 1964:

White Russian refugees arriving in Hongkong from Sinkiang recently . . . said that after the Chinese attempted to reduce the Russian influence in Sinkiang, Soviet authorities issued thousands of passports to Uighurs and Kazakhs. When the Chinese Communists blocked the departure of people without passports rioting occurred in Kuldja, in the Ili region, and troops fired on demonstrators, killing a number of them.

The *Boston Herald* of 16th April 1964 also reported that a White Russian refugee from Sinkiang in Hongkong had stated that Soviet consular officials issued thousand of passports to Uygurs and Kazakhs who were demanding them and that Soviet passports had even been available on the black market. The refugee recalled that, as these legal travellers began to cross the border in late May 1962, many other people without proper documents took advantage of this "relaxed situation" by fleeing from China.¹⁷

If these reports are reliable, it could be that the Soviet consulates in Sinkiang indulged in a wholesale distribution of Soviet passports to any Uygurs, Kazakhs and others who had been born in Tsarist or Soviet

get round Wang En-mao through lengthy manipulations. Evidently he was given a guarantee of personal safety, summoned to Peking and detained there for many months. Meanwhile, Gen. Lung Shu-chin, an intimate of Lin Piao, was transferred to Sinkiang from Hunan Province. With the support of crack troops that were brought to Sinkiang, he knocked together a Maoist "revolutionary committee" there and became its chairman. Nominally Wang En-mao is listed as Lung Shu-chin's deputy, but he has been increasingly deprived of influence. Things have gone so far that this year the *hung weiping* and *tsao fan* [Revolutionary Rebels], incited by the "revolutionary committee", have subjected Wang En-mao to fierce attacks.

Nevertheless the "old" troops in Sinkiang still offer resistance to the Maoists—to the "Left-support units", the *hung weiping* and others. Sinkiang continues to seethe. A savage undercover struggle is going on between the "revolutionary committee" and Wang En-mao's old cadres.

Fetov deduces that Peking still felt the need to propitiate the military leaders of Sinkiang, since their representatives were particularly prominent at a meeting of Mao, Lin Piao and other leaders with 40,000 representatives of the revolutionary masses on 25th January 1969.

As for the national minorities of Sinkiang, Rakhimov and Bogoslovskiy²⁴ assert that "the events of the Cultural Revolution have confirmed that the national policy of the present CPC leadership is aimed at the forcible assimilation of the non-Chinese peoples living on the territory of the CPR". According to Rakhimov, the Cultural Revolution began in Sinkiang with the arrival of Red Guards from the central provinces of China who, together with local Red Guards, set about destroying local organs of power, publishing houses and radio stations, abolishing Uygur and Kazakh-language newspapers, and closing national (non-Chinese) schools. "Unbridled Maoist thugs" forced the Uygurs and Kazakhs to violate their religious customs, and everywhere the mosques were pillaged.²⁵ Mirov quotes a refugee's description of how prisoners in dunce's caps, with placards on their chest reading "revisionist", "nationalist" and "Soviet spy", were paraded round the streets by jeering Red Guards.

The Cultural Revolution is said to have brought a further assault on the national cadres of the non-Chinese peoples of the CPR. According to Rakhimov and Bogoslovskiy, "virtually the whole of the national intelligentsia and all the national cadres in Party organs and administrative agencies . . . were accused of counter-revolutionary activity and complicity with imperialism and 'Soviet revisionism'". Among those subjected to repression were Burhan Shahidi,²⁶ former Chairman of the People's Government of Sinkiang and Vice-Chairman of the CPR People's Political Consultative Council, and Iminov, a leader of the national liberation movement in Sinkiang and Deputy Chairman of the SUAR People's Committee. The forcible setting up of Revolutionary Committees, headed by Chinese, in the national regions "spells the liquidation of the last vestiges of the autonomy of the peoples which was formally guaranteed by the CPR constitution",²⁷ and "at the present

for the other nationalities who went to the Soviet Union in these years, but by inference a good 30,000, probably mostly Kazakhs, must have crossed into the Soviet Union in 1962 alone. In view of Western reports of frequent uprisings in Sinkiang in the period after 1949, it is noteworthy that Soviet accounts make no mention of any kind of revolt or armed resistance between the establishment of the CPR and the Cultural Revolution.

The Cultural Revolution

The main themes of Soviet writing on the Cultural Revolution in Sinkiang have been the opposition of Gen. Wang En-mao, former Commander of the Sinkiang Military Region and First Secretary of the SUAR, and various military units in Sinkiang to the Maoists; further oppression of the national minorities; and increasing resistance to Peking's policy on the part of the latter, often with resort to arms.

An account of Wang En-mao's independent stand and how Peking dealt with it is given in an article entitled "Is the Army a Reliable Support for Mao?" by V. Fetov in *Literaturnaya gazeta* of 2nd July 1969.²³ According to Fetov.

Of the eight regular army divisions in the Sinkiang Region, only one actually supported the "Cultural Revolution" from the very start. As for the so-called Sinkiang Production and Construction Corps, which is made up of 500,000 soldiers, all its divisions have been and remain anti-Maoist. Tao Chih-yueh, the commander of the corps, even gave out that he was an anti-Maoist.

Fetov then goes on to say that "the history of 'the rifle's struggle for power' in Sinkiang" is closely bound up with the name of Wang En-mao. Wang, his deputy Kuo Peng and other army leaders in Sinkiang had served for a long time under Ho Lung and Peng Teh-huai, two of the founders of the Chinese Red Army and national heroes, who were subjected to repression. It was because of this that

at the height of the "Cultural Revolution", Wang En-mao and his comrades-in-arms were showered with accusations that they had created an "independent principality" in Sinkiang. Wang En-mao kept himself independent from Peking and was in no hurry to execute the imperial edicts of the "great helmsman" nor those of his first deputy, Lin Piao. This is confirmed by the fact that military units in Sinkiang regularly administered rebuffs both to local *hung weiping* [Red Guards] and those sent out from Peking. Peking, faced with the fact that "an enormous army controlling an area of exceptional importance" (Fetov mentions that the principal centres of China's nuclear missile industry are in Sinkiang) was in the hands of disobedient individuals, decided to use cautious tactics.

Emissaries from Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao attempted—and not without success—to split Wang En-mao's supporters. Some of them, first of all Tao Chih-yueh, Commander of the Production and Construction Corps, were subjected to repression, while others were "pampered". Among the latter group was Kuo Peng, in particular. At the Ninth CPC Congress he was even included in the membership of the new Central Committee.

As for Wang himself, particular caution had to be exercised as his real power in Sinkiang was too great. . . It was decided to

that 'fusion' (i.e. their forcible assimilation) has already occurred."

Maoist policies have inevitably provoked resistance on the part of the non-Chinese peoples, as Rakhimov wrote in mid-1968:

The intensification of the policy of assimilation, the new wave of repressions and mass outrage against the religious and national feelings of the non-Chinese peoples could not but arouse their profound resentment. . . The situation in Sinkiang, which Mao Tse-tung and his group blazen as the forefront of the struggle with imperialism and "Soviet revisionism", became strained. Thus, in June-July 1967 in all the major towns and regions of Sinkiang armed clashes took place between the Red Guards and local population, in which in Urumchi alone, according to the evidence of the Red Guard press, over 100,000 of the local population took part.³²

To prevent things getting worse Wang En-mao was forced to limit somewhat the actions of the Red Guards. It was because of the difficult situation in Sinkiang that it was one of the last regions in which a Revolutionary Committee was set up, "but even now the Maoists are compelled to admit that they are still very, very far from a 'great victory'. And they have to admit that 'reactionary elements still exist, although the class enemies have been routed'."³³ Resistance still continues, often with resort to arms, and mention has been made in particular of "serious clashes and anti-Maoist demonstrations in many districts of Sinkiang in January 1969", in one of which over 4,000 people were killed.³⁴ "Grapes of wrath are ripening in Sinkiang, wrath against Peking's chauvinistic course, against the rabid anti-Sovietism of the present Chinese leadership", warns Taipov,³⁵ and Rakhimov and Bogoslovskiy claim that "there is every reason to suppose that the 'disturbed' national regions will cause Mao Tse-tung and his group a lot of trouble in the future too".

Although Soviet writing on recent and current developments in Sinkiang is extremely uncomplimentary, it seems obvious that very much more could have been said, at least on events up to 1962. As it is, reporting is still relatively thin and intermittent, and the articles tend to be repetitive and the information they impart scrappy, being based mainly on the odd statements of refugees (there seem to have been no specific instances quoted of refugees arriving later than the end of 1966 or early 1967) or reports in the Western press on the Cultural Revolution.

The main intention of these articles is not to inform, and they no doubt serve their real purposes well enough. These are, firstly by describing the persecution of the national minorities in China, particularly as evidenced by the influx of refugees from Sinkiang, to have a useful weapon for anti-Chinese polemics when Moscow feels the need to retaliate. Secondly, allegations that Mao Tse-tung has abandoned Marxist-Leninist teaching on the national question and that "what is happening in the Sinkiang Uigur Autonomous Region today surpasses anything ever done under the Tsing dynasty or the Kuomintang"³⁶ could be seen as providing justification in advance for Soviet support for any national liberation struggle that might arise in Sinkiang, although this seems an unlikely possibility at present. Harrowing tales of the fate of the Uygurs and Kazakhs in Sinkiang, often contrasted with the happy,

time virtually only Chinese are represented in all the Party, administrative and economic bodies of Sinkiang".²⁸

As for culture, "in the course of the Cultural Revolution . . . the culture, literature and art of the non-Chinese peoples is being destroyed".²⁹ According to the Uygur Dr. Murat Khamrayev, head of the Department of Uygur Studies of the Kazakh Academy of Sciences, even the outstanding Uygur poet and national hero Lutfulla Mutallip, who was brutally killed by the Kuomintang in September 1945 and whose family was given a diploma signed by Mao himself testifying to his exploits in the revolutionary struggle, has been described as a bourgeois writer and a Panturkist and his work banned. His only crime was that he loved the Russian language and Russian literature.³⁰ Anathemas have also been pronounced against such outstanding Uygur writers as Zunnun Kadyri, Nim Shakhid and others, and many Uygur writers are in labour camps. According to Khamrayev, the whole of the literature of the SUAR, which developed under the direct influence of Soviet literature, has been destroyed, and all the efforts of the poets who still live in Sinkiang are reduced "to the exaltation of the personality of Mao Tse-tung, and even the words of ancient Uygur folk songs have been replaced by a new version singing the praises of 'Chairman Mao'. Uygur literature with its centuries-old tradition is under ban today beyond the frontier."³¹

The Cultural Revolution is also said to have led to a further collapse of the economy in the national regions of the CPR. Rakhimov and Bogoslovskiy declare that "the only form of construction at present is strategic roads, aerodromes and atomic test sites, where the forced labour of the non-Chinese peoples is widely used". They also maintain that "on the whole the economy of the national regions of the CPR is colonial in character. The few industrial undertakings either work for military needs or their production is exported to the central regions of the country." The specialists and skilled workers are entirely Chinese.

Another consequence of the Cultural Revolution was a renewed flood of Chinese settlers from the interior. Mirov, who claims that Chinese now make up more than half the population of Sinkiang, says that they were given the best housing, land and jobs, and "now in these areas one encounters at every step hungry, ragged people roaming the roads of their homeland in a fruitless search for work". Furthermore, as Rakhimov and Bogoslovskiy point out, "the official press does not conceal the fact that a substantial part of the 25 million citizens now being sent to the country-side will go to the national region". Colonization of the national regions is, they say, not only designed to relieve the pressure in the central provinces or get rid of troublesome elements, but also "to ensure the predominance of the Hans and thus create favourable conditions for the final assimilation of the non-Chinese peoples". Already there have been numerous cases of Uygur and Kazakh girls being forced to marry Chinese, and further confirmation that assimilation is the order of the day can be seen in the fact that the nationalities policy and the non-Chinese peoples were not even mentioned in the new CPC charter adopted by the recent 9th Party Congress. "The Maoists want to give the impression that non-Chinese peoples no longer exist in the CPR and

- 18 *People's Daily and Red Flag* 6.9.63.
- 19 NCNA 30th December 1964.
- 20 Anuar Alimzhanov in "Tragicheskaya istoriya odnogo lozunga", *Literaturnaya gazeta* 25th January 1967, describes Soviet officials at the frontier requesting refugees from the Cultural Revolution in Sinkiang to return to their homes in China.
- 21 Rakhimov, p. 78.
- 22 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- + 23 Translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXI, No. 27, of 30th July 1969, pp. 19-20.
- 24 T. Rakhimov, V. Bogoslovskiy, "Velikoderzhavnyy shovinizm Mao Tsze-duna", *Aziya i Afrika segodnya*, 1969, No. 7, pp. 28-30.
- 25 Rakhimov, *Natsionalizm . . .*, p. 91, and "Troubadours of Chauvinism", *Komsomol'skaya pravda* 20th May 1969 (translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXI, No. 21 of 11th June 1969, pp. 17-18).
- + 26 Biographical details of Shahidi taken from an article by Hans de Weerd were given in *Central Asian Review*, Vol. VII, 1959, No. 1, pp. 93-6.
- 27 Rakhimov, "Troubadours . . .".
- 28 Zunun Taipov, "Maoist Outrages on Uygur Soil", *New Times*, 1969, No. 27, p. 11. "Radio Peace and Progress" in Mongolian on 18th September 1968 stated that, whereas the minority representatives had held five and the Chinese three seats in the former Sinkiang People's Council, in the new Sinkiang Revolutionary Committee 10 leading posts were held by Chinese and only one by a minority nationality.
- 29 Rakhimov, *Natsionalizm . . .*, p. 91.
- 30 *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92, quoting *Vechernyaya Alma-Ata* 11.1.68.
- 31 Quoted by P. Sabitova in a review of a history of Uygur literature by Khamrayev in *Voprosy literatury*, 1969, No. 7.
- 32 Rakhimov, *Natsionalizm . . .*, p. 93.
- 33 Mirov, *Literaturnaya gazeta* 7.5.69.
- 34 Rakhimov, "Troubadours of . . .", and Rakhimov and Bogoslovskiy, p. 30.
- 35 Taipov, pp. 11-12.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

fulfilled existence of the peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, are also no doubt intended to remind the latter which side their bread is buttered, if they should feel dissatisfied with their present lot and ever be tempted to look to China for support against their Russian rulers.

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- 2 *Problemy vostokovedeniya*, 1959, No. 4.
- 3 T. Rakhimov, *Natsionalizm i shovinizm - osnova politiki gruppy Mao Tsze-duna*, Moscow, 1968, p. 6.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 43.
- 5 *Ibid.*, p. 49.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- 7 *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7.
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 76.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 85. Makhmud Kutlukov in "Narody ne obmanut'", *Pravda Vostoka* 17th September 1964, also talks of the persecution of the national minorities in 1952.
- 10 Rakhimov, p. 85.
- X¹¹ A. Mirov, "Sinkiang Tragedy", *Literaturnaya gazeta* 7th May 1969, p. 15. Translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXI, No. 19 of 28th May 1969, pp. 5-6.
- 12 O. Borisov and B. Koloskov, "Politika Sovetskogo Soyuza v otnoshenii KNR", in M.I. Sladkovskiy, ed., *Leninskaya politika SSSR v otnoshenii Kitaya*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 208-10. A slightly abridged version has already been given in *Mizan*, 1969, No. 1, pp. 1-2.
- 13 It seems possible that former Major-General in the Chinese army Zunun Taipov may have been one of these. In his articles in *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda* of 29th September 1963 and *Izvestiya* of 13th September 1964 he spoke of the Soviet Union as his mother country and of himself as hailing from Semirech'ye. He said he had returned to the Soviet Union in late 1960 or thereabouts, having spent "a good half of my life" in China. This suggests that he may have come to Sinkiang at the time of collectivization in the Soviet Union. Also he does not appear to have crossed the frontier illegally, although he had difficulty in leaving. "It was not easy for my family to leave China for the Soviet Union. Firstly, as someone holding a responsible post in the Chinese People's Republic, they put all sorts of obstacles in my way. Secondly, it was very difficult to part from . . . friends."
- 14 Rakhimov, p. 87.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 88.
- 16 *Kazakhstanskaya pravda* 29th September 1963; *Izvestiya* 13th September 1964; "Maoist Outrages on Uygur Soil", *New Times*, 1969, No. 27, p. 11.
- X¹⁷ Quoted by George Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Chou*, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, p. 108.