

OTHER NATIONS

miliation and establish China as an equal [power] in the world.”

Under Mao, China's foreign policy was characterized by “authoritative, programmatic statements” and slogans such as “World in Chaos; Situation Here Excellent” or “Down with Imperialism and Its Running Dogs.” Not until after Sino-Soviet relations soured during the 1960s did Beijing make overtures to Washington—as a counter to Moscow. Worried by the Soviets' growing military presence in Mongolia and the Far East, the Chinese relished Soviet-American tension.

China's foreign relations have grown more complex in the 1980s. The Washington-Beijing-Moscow “triangle” has been replaced by a strategic quadrangle that includes Japan, Asia's strongest economic power. And a new generation of leaders, under Deng Xiaoping (premier since 1978), now conducts the nation's foreign affairs.

Having suffered through such Maoist debacles as the Great Leap Forward (1958–60) and the Cultural Revolution (1966–69), these men, says Oksenberg, “appear less interested in heroics and immediate gratification on the international scene and more preoccupied with stability and economic growth at home.”

The confident current leaders are more sophisticated, less xenophobic, less paranoid. They see, for example, the Soviets mired in Afghanistan and Democrats squabbling with Republicans in Washington. They are willing to pursue their own interests, even when they irritate Americans—by protesting the Reagan administration's policy toward South Africa, for example, or by inviting Nicaragua's president, Daniel Ortega, to Beijing.

Unfortunately, Oksenberg says, history shows that reform-minded leaders in China seldom last long because “the Westernization that flourishes under their aegis creates a backlash.” Americans, therefore, should not be surprised when Deng Xiaoping warns his compatriots, as he did earlier this year, to beware of “bourgeois liberalism” and “complete Westernization.”

After Chernobyl

“Chernobyl and Soviet Energy” by Judith Thornton, and “Chernobyl and Ukraine” by David R. Marples, in *Problems of Communism* (Nov.-Dec. 1986), U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th St. S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

On April 26, 1986, 100 miles north of Kiev in the Ukraine, Unit No. 4 at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant exploded, sending windborne radioactive particles as far afield as Sweden. On April 27, reported the *Komsomol* (Communist Youth League) newspaper:

“A joyless dawn broke, and with it came very difficult problems. The party gorkom [city committee] had issued a request: Komsomol members must go and cover the reactor. Sand will be needed. Find volunteers . . . It would take a lot of sand . . . A boundless sea of sand. No one needed persuading. Well, hardly anyone.”

The Chernobyl explosion's economic consequences have been estimated (in *Pravda*) at two billion rubles—including loss of businesses, farms, houses, crops, and land, as well as the cost of relocating and com-

OTHER NATIONS

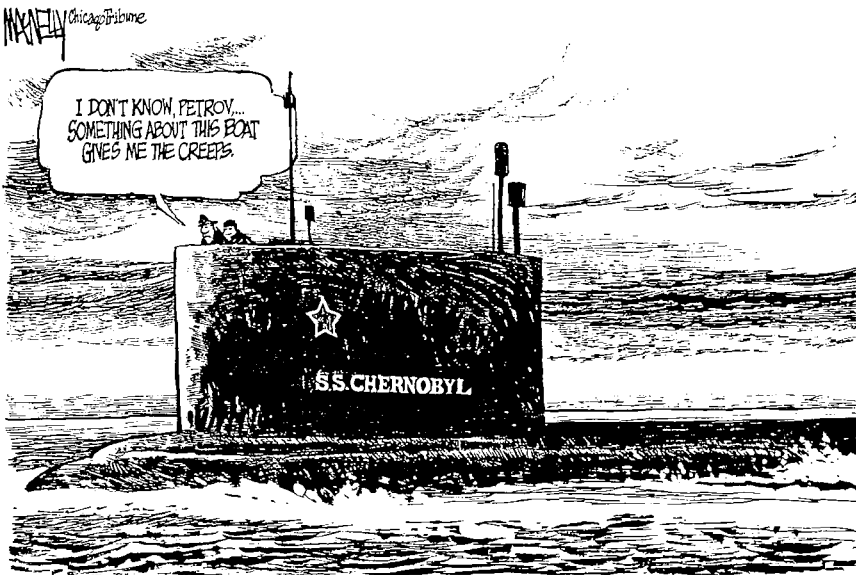
pensating some 135,000 evacuees from the 20-mile zone around the reactor. Thornton, an economics professor at the University of Washington, predicts that the impending deaths of at least 300 workers ill with radiation poisoning will cost an added 21 million rubles in loss of manpower.

The *human* consequences remain unclear. Marples, a research associate at the University of Alberta, notes that optimistic predictions made by American and Soviet scientists last August in Vienna were based only on the hazards of the explosion itself. Still at risk are thousands of Chernobyl plant employees, who only last December completed Reactor No. 4's protective concrete "sarcophagus."

Why? Unfortunately, plant authorities stopped enforcing health precautions soon after the immediate crisis ended. In June, Chernobyl employees could officially work only 30 days. Yet the 4,000 Estonians conscripted for cleanup operations in May (many taken by force at night, some ill or with wives about to give birth) worked for as long as six months. *Pravda* claimed that "the same staff" had to remain on the job until the cleanup was no longer "in a sensitive stage." By late summer, most of the 1,000 medical specialists present right after the explosion were gone.

A Kiev newspaper reported that many cleanup technicians did not receive protective clothing, despite working 10 to 12 hour shifts. Showers—a vital decontaminant—were located at a sanatorium a two-hour hike from the plant. Last October, as the Ukraine's coldest winter on record approached, most workers still lived in unheated "summer camps" named "Pioneer" and "Fairy Tale."

Environmental hazards from the Chernobyl disaster persist, says Mar-



Despite Chernobyl, the Soviets plan to increase nuclear power's share of electricity output from 10 percent in 1985 to 21 percent in 1990.

OTHER NATIONS

ples. In a televised address earlier this year, a Soviet Academy of Sciences official warned that 1987's heavy spring rains and flooding could wash radioactive material into the region's water supply.

The Greening of West Germany

"From Student Movement to Ecopax: The Greens" by Hans Joachim Veen, in *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 1987), 55 Hayward St., Cambridge, Mass. 02142.

West Germany's "Green" Party first captured international attention during the 1970s as a loose middle-class citizens' network of antihighway protesters, environmentalists, and antinuclear activists. At first politically conservative, the Greens rapidly became a catchall for stray radicals—unemployed Marxist academics, assorted anarchists and liberationists.

Today, the Greens are the nation's fifth largest party, holding office in nearly every state council. They have been represented (27 of 496 seats) in the federal parliament since 1983, and gained 15 more seats in last January's elections. Have they become a serious political force?

Veen, chief of social science at the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation in Bonn, West Germany, doubts it. Despite their growing prominence, the Greens' mistrust of institutions runs deep. So does their disdain for German traditions such as "duty, industriousness, self-discipline and material and professional success."

When polled, only 30 percent of Green Party members say they have faith in the judicial system; 60 percent of the German public does. Most Greens (two-thirds) distrust the police; the same percentage of other Germans trust them. More than half of the Greens would like to disband NATO; nearly 70 percent of Germans still support it. One in three Greens claims not to "feel free" in Germany. Only seven percent of the public at large shares that feeling.

Though the Green Party's social profile is increasingly diverse, a predictable majority are young (two-thirds under 35), well educated, and urban. Many have come from the ranks of the Social Democratic Party's left wing. Others are ex-student radicals from the 1960s, who "slept through" the Greens' grassroots days but woke up when it gained notoriety.

All Greens seem to share a sense of mental isolation that, despite its modern flavor, has deep national roots. Veen recalls what Madame de Staël, in 1810, wrote of the German mind: "an immense capacity for philosophical thought which loses itself in the indeterminate, penetrates and disappears in the depths."

This "psychological predisposition," says Veen, has enabled the most radical social critics within the Green Party to formulate the basic elements of Green ideology. However, Veen speculates that during the next few years, "confrontation with the [realities] of everyday life . . . may prove to be [the radicals'] undoing."

The Greens' most troubling political flaw, notes Veen, may be the hardest to remedy. Despite their spokesmen's advocacy of "boundless self-realization," they "lack belief in a fine new future." Without such a vision, it will be difficult for the Greens to persevere.