American Delusions and The Russia-China Friendship Treaty

The United States of America cannot maintain its declining power and influence in the world unless it can dominate Russia and China and it cannot dominate them so long as they are allied. Each of the two nations is a major world power, and China is soon to become, if it is not already, the dominant economic power. Divided against each other they would make themselves more vulnerable to US imperialism that has the objective of splitting both nations into controllable and exploitable pieces. Together, their strategic economic, societal, cultural and military cooperation makes them as strong and stronger than the US and its allies in NATO, Australia and Japan and able to effectively resist and counter the increasingly hostile and threatening policies and actions of the Americans.

So it important to celebrate, as both Russia and China did this week, the Russia-Chinese Treaty on Good Neighbourliness, and Friendly Cooperation that was signed in July 16, 2001 by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Jiang Zemin. You can read the text here.

In 25 short paragraphs the two nations set out their intent to deepen and expand their cooperation in all spheres, and to base their policies and behaviour in international law and the quest for peace in the world. It specifically resolves any and all border disputes between the two.

Yet, the Americans are intent on trying to drive a wedge between Russia and China using border disputes as a hammer. A few days before the summit meeting between president Putin and President Biden the Washington Post in an op-ed piece, presented the hopes of the Americans, when Isaac Stone Fish, wrote,

‘Despite the countless irritants in the US-Russia relationship, ... there is now space to enlist Moscow as a silent but meaningful partner in the global campaign to curb the pernicious aspects of the Chinese Communist Party’s international influence.’
He went on to cite the reasons why the Americans think they can drive in that wedge; rival claims to territories in the east of Russia being the most important, stating,

“To begin with, Moscow has more to fear from Beijing than Washington. Like the Philippines, India and Bhutan, where Russia is vulnerable to Chinese territorial encroachment.”

But this writer is living in the past. He writes as if the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation does not exist. He forgets that the Sino-Soviet Border War of 1969 arose out of a complex of historical, geographical and political factors, none of which now exist.

Aside from border disputes, both then accused the other of being “revisionists,” that is, sliding back to capitalism, instead of maintaining socialism, and, indeed looking back, we can see that both were partly right, because the Soviet Union continued down the road towards the restoration of capitalism and, after Mao, China also went some way down that same road while maintaining the control of the Party.

And indeed, The Sino-Soviet War was a gift to the Americans who immediately used it to drive a further wedge into the socialist camp. Shortly after the war ended, the Americans sent Kissinger to Beijing followed by an opening of relations between the US and China which the Americans exploited to their advantage, against the USSR.

But for the Americans to hope that history can be repeated except as farce, as Marx said, that, once again, they can succeed in dividing Russia and China is futile. First of all the border disputes were all finally settled by a series of negotiations and agreements from 2003 to 2008 and these negotiations were a direct result of the Russian-Chinese Treaty signed in 2001. The border disputes are no longer an issue.

Secondly, the world situation is completely different. Russia now has a capitalist government but has experienced US influence in the early 90’s and rejected it as the disaster for the economy and the people it was. China under Xi Jinping is reasserting Marxism in every aspect of society. Yet, despite ideological differences, they share the desire to develop as sovereign nations on their own terms, share a long history of cooperation and cultural and economic exchange, and share a common self-declared enemy, which seems intent on making their association and cooperation even stronger.

Their common rival is far weaker than it was in 1969. We remember that America was defeated in the Vietnam War partly due to the crucial military assistance provided to Vietnam by both the USSR and China. It has been defeated in most of its wars since and expended vast sums of its national wealth for little concrete gain. Internally it is riven with factional infighting in the two major parties and between them, and the American people are forced to limit themselves to a choice between the two big business parties, are not permitted anything like a national labour party of any kind, and are told this rigged system is a democracy. Its infrastructure is falling apart, its education system, health care; homelessness is endemic, drug overdoses, and shootings on a mass scale are a daily routine, a symptom of a society tearing itself apart.

It commands the NATO war alliance but the alliance is divided and the real power is held in Washington with the other members so many vassals, afraid of what the big bully will do if they go their own way. Germany is trying to reassert its own power. France has always been a reluctant bride and Turkey uses it for its own best interests but is deeply suspicious of the US, while the UK, which has left the EU, dreams of ancient days of empire without the means to attain it, as London plays second fiddle to Washington.

The US has contempt for international law and the UN Charter. Russia and China regard them as the cornerstones of peace and diplomacy. The US issues diktats to the world; China and Russia seek dialogue and reason. The US constantly threatens war, or its substitute, economic embargo, against any nation refusing to accept its claim to world suzerainty. Russia and China are trying to build a multipolar world order where no nation can dominate the others, and insist on diplomacy and international law. The US insists on bombs and cruise missiles, on torture of prisoners, on assassinations, on the lies of its propaganda, on the pretence of democracy rather than its reality.

The Americans were deluded when they met with President Putin in Geneva, hoping that they could lure him into abandoning China. Their anger at not succeeding appeared very quickly after the summit with new sanctions imposed on Russia and multiple accusations, by sources linked to US intelligence, that both China and Russia have carried out cyber attacks on US and UK businesses and national systems. All this, along with the constant NATO military exercises, the increased preparations for war, the hostile rhetoric, serve only to reinforce the Russia-China relationship. The Americans seem to be making decisions and taking actions based on self-delusions. Only that can
explain the futile hope of being able to divide Russia and China when their every action succeeds in the exact opposite, proving to Russia and China that their strong relationship needs to be even stronger.

But other American commentators have expressed the same delusion as Stone does above. One writer in The Interpreter stated that despite the Treaty Russia should be ‘wary of China’, that Russia is the “junior partner” has conflicting interests in India, the Arctic and other places, is economically reliant on China and so on. He wrote:

“It is important at least to engage seriously and directly with Russia, encouraging Moscow to contemplate the risks of excessive dependence on its eastern neighbour.”

The chattering class in the US spends much of its time thinking of ways to divide Russia and China, and are clearly worried about the relative decline of US influence in the world and how to reverse it. Michael Pillsbury of the Rand Corporation, former under-secretary of defence under President Reagan and adviser to president Bush, and Senior Fellow and Director of Chinese Strategy at the Hudson Institute which has been very active with anti-Chinese propaganda, is worried that Russia has become a distraction and that Biden needs to "develop more leverage on China to make progress in confronting the top adversary.”

In other words, the American leadership is faced with a problem of its own making; two major powers driven together by their experience with US aggression, who are willing to stand up to the declining American hegemony, the existence of which alliance prevents the US from being able to solve its internal problems through the unchallenged exploitation of world resources and markets. The Americans have no solution to this dilemma except to increase their military power, build more weapons, spend more national wealth on arms and to threaten everyone, everywhere; the dead-end it has been in for a long time.

The world has great problems that need to be solved, if they can be, of human caused abrupt climate change, of the covid-pandemic, of poverty and food supply, of environmental collapse, all of which need international cooperation. Russia and China have shown the way forward, have shown what cooperation between nations and peoples can do, while the Americans wallow in delusions and dreams of a world that no longer exists. So we must, with the Russians and Chinese, all celebrate the Treaty signed on July 16, 2001 that ensured peace and cooperation between the two nations and hope that, one day, and it better be sooner than later, a world treaty of friendship and cooperation will be signed by all the nations of the world.

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