

**PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON'S  
CHINA POLICY**



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PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON'S CHINA POLICY

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An Abstract  
Presented to  
the Graduate Council of  
Austin Peay State University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
Hsin Mei Chen  
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## ABSTRACT

Since the establishment of the communist regime in China in 1949, the United States has adopted a hostile policy toward Communist China for two decades. However, in 1969, a drastic shift of America's China policy occurred. The United States began to seek improvement of relations with Communist China. To the surprise of the world, it was President Richard Nixon, an ardent anti-communist fighter, who initiated the policy of détente with China.

From the very beginning of his political career, Nixon had devoted himself to urging the American people to realize the threat of communism to world peace. Regarding Red China as an aggressor and international outlaw, he persistently opposed recognizing it or admitting it into the United Nations, and supported the policy of defending Taiwan from the invasion of communist forces. He argued that the Korean War and Vietnam War would never have happened if China had not been communized. He remained firm in this attitude toward China until the end of the 1960's.

Nixon changed his mind about Communist China for several reasons. First, he was convinced that the world could not afford to let China, a country with 800 million people and great nuclear potentiality, remain in "angry isolation," and it was the United States' responsibility to induce China to change its aggressive policy. Second, since he considered China a real supporter of North Vietnam and a common threat to all other Asian countries, he thought it was necessary to deal with China in order to bring an end to the Vietnam War and create a peaceful



Asia. Third, the Sino-Soviet split provided him a great opportunity to reach a double détente with Moscow and Peking. He believed that the improvement of relations with Peking could soften Moscow's attitude in negotiation with Washington. In the meantime, cooperation with China could balance the power in East Asia and counter Soviet expansion in the world. Consequently, as soon as he was elected President, he started to move toward a policy of détente with China.

After two years of patient initiatives, the hostility between China and the United States began to thaw. In February, 1972, President Nixon visited China for a week and talked with the Chinese Communist leaders. They held extensive and earnest discussions about the normalization of relations between the two nations and many other matters of interest to both sides. The statement in the Shanghai Communique, which was issued at the end of his visit, that Taiwan was a part of China and the problem of Taiwan would be solved by the Chinese themselves became the guiding principle of American administrations toward China until formal diplomatic relations were established in 1979.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine Nixon's changing attitude toward China in the late 1960's, the initiation of the policy of détente with China, and the impact of his China policy to the world. It is hoped that this examination will shed some light on the development of Sino-American relations during the 1970's.



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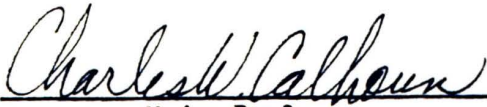
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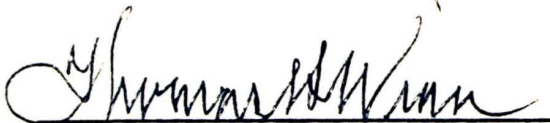
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To the Graduate Council:

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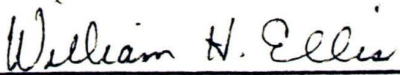
  
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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In February, 1972, the President of the United States flew to Peking to meet the Chinese Communist leaders. The historic moment marked the reduction of long-standing hostilities and signaled the opening of the gate toward normalization of relations between China and the United States. Though the two countries were still divided by an enormous ideological, political, economic, social, and cultural chasm, they had agreed to talk and bridge those differences between them in order to reach some understanding which they thought would be helpful to world peace.

When the Chinese Communists won control of the mainland and the Nationalist Government removed to Taiwan in December, 1949, a dramatic change occurred in Sino-American relations. At first, the United States Government expressed willingness to consider diplomatic recognition of the Chinese Communist regime "under appropriate circumstances," but Chairman Mao Tse-tung decided that China should "lean to one side," that is, toward the Soviet Union, and the subsequent hostile treatment toward American officials and property hardened U.S. attitudes.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, the Truman administration decided to withdraw from any further involvement in the Chinese civil war and announced in January,

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<sup>1</sup>William J. Barnds, "China in American Foreign Policy," in W. J. Barnds (ed.), China and America: The Search for a New Relationship (New York: New York University Press, 1977), p. 203.

1950, that the United States would not defend Taiwan. It refused to give any further support to the Nationalist Government and excluded the island from America's primary defense perimeter in Asia.<sup>2</sup> The outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, caused the United States to alter its evaluation of its interests in Taiwan. Two days later, President Truman ordered the American Seventh Fleet to protect Taiwan from the Communist forces because "the occupation of Formosa by Communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to the United States forces performing their lawful and necessary function in that area."<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the United States resumed its programs of economic and military aid to the Republic of China, expanding them rapidly after Peking's forces intervened in Korea.

When Eisenhower became President, he inherited and continued to harden Truman's anti-Communist China policy. In December, 1954, the United States signed a mutual defense treaty with Taiwan. The two countries pledged to "maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and communist subversive activities," and they agreed that an armed attack on either of them would endanger the peace and safety of the other. In addition, a "Formosa Resolution" was passed by Congress at Eisenhower's request. The resolution authorized the President to "employ the armed forces of the

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<sup>2</sup>"United States Policy toward Formosa, address of President Truman," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, LXIV (January 16, 1950), 79-81.

<sup>3</sup>"The Korean Situation: Its Significance to the People of the United States, address of President Truman," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, LXIV (July 31, 1950), 165-69.



United States as he deems necessary for the specific purpose of securing and protecting Formosa and the Pescadores against armed attack."<sup>4</sup>

Though Eisenhower acted harshly toward Communist China, improved relations between the U.S. and China had also been a goal of his administration. At the Bundung Conference, held in Djakarta, Indonesia, in the spring of 1955, Chou En-lai first proposed diplomatic talks with the United States. In the same year, ambassadorial level talks began in Geneva and later moved to Warsaw, but no progress was made since the U.S. and China adopted irreconcilable positions on the issue of Taiwan.<sup>5</sup>

President Kennedy was at first willing to improve American relations with China. He had been critical of the rigidity of past American policy toward China and had favored the evacuation of the offshore islands. But China's bitter hostility and opposition at home made him realize that he could do little to change America's policy.

If no significant changes in policy were feasible, there was the beginning of a changed atmosphere in the United States regarding China, starting around 1960. American scholars specializing on China increasingly stressed that the Sino-Soviet split offered the United States an opportunity to deal with China. Moreover, the explosion of China's first nuclear device in October, 1964, heightened the need to think in terms of some sort of accommodation with China. As a consequence, President Johnson stated that the United States' ultimate policy goal was "reconciliation" with Communist China.<sup>6</sup> However, with the growing U.S.

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<sup>4</sup>Fu-mei Chiu Wu, Richard M. Nixon, Communism and China (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., 1978), p. 41.

<sup>5</sup>Arthur Doak Barnett, A New Policy toward China (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1971), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

involvement in the Vietnam War and China's entering into the Cultural Revolution, during which she called home her ambassadors and entered a period of extreme isolationism, no improvement of relations was possible until the end of the 1960's.

Before then, few would believe that the initiator of the new China policy and the first American President to visit Peking would be Richard Nixon--once the most famous anti-communist figure within the United States. From the time he was first elected to Congress in 1946, Nixon was an outspoken crusader against communism. In his mind, communism was an insidious evil whose aggressive ambition to conquer the world had destroyed world peace and whose precepts threatened American ideals of freedom and justice. He believed that all communists were supported by the Soviet Union in an international conspiracy to overthrow the democratic governments of the world. He condemned President Truman's China policy as weak and erroneous and averred that it had led to the loss of China to the Chinese Communists.

During his years as congressman, senator, and vice president, Nixon steadfastly opposed recognizing Communist China and felt it was impossible to improve relations between the United States and China, which he considered an international outlaw. If China had remained in the hands of the Nationalists, he thought, there would have been no Korean War or Vietnam War.

The old crusader Nixon began to change his mind about Red China in 1967. He became convinced that it was not wise to keep China from the family of nations if the U.S. were to pursue an end to the Vietnam War and world peace. The existence of a nation with more than 800 million population was a reality that could not be ignored. He perceived that the hostile, sterile confrontation between Washington and

Peking which had prevailed for so many years did not serve national interests in the circumstances of the 1970's. Peking, now confronted by a hostile Soviet Union, was not in a position to pose a military threat to its neighbors. The opening of communication with Peking, as Nixon saw it, would improve prospects for creating an enduring equilibrium of the world and would strengthen the U.S. position in détente with the Soviet Union.

Nixon was unquestionably the initiator of the idea of negotiations with China, but Dr. Henry Kissinger also deserved credit in the fulfillment of the new policy. In July, 1971, Kissinger visited China secretly and held several talks with Chou En-lai. Through their arrangements, President Nixon's dream of visiting China came true. During the week-long summit in China in February, 1972, Nixon and Kissinger and Mao and Chou held extensive discussions about the normalization of relations between China and the United States and many other matters of interest to both sides. When Nixon left China on February 28, he was so pleased at the accomplishments of the negotiations with the Chinese that he called his visit "the week that changed the world."

Nixon's policy of détente with China caused a worldwide impact. China's prestige increased because of the improvement of relations with the United States. It was admitted to the United Nations in October, 1971, and replaced Taiwan as the representative of the whole China. Other countries in the world also began to change their policies toward the People's Republic of China. More and more countries severed their diplomatic relations with the Republic of China and recognized the Communist regime as the only legitimate government of China, as Japan had done in December, 1971. In the meantime, the Soviet Union became



more willing to conciliate in negotiating with the Americans in order to stop a Peking-Washington collusion against Moscow. Most important of all, Nixon's China policy had also accelerated the end of the Vietnam War.

## CHAPTER 2

### NIXON--ANTI-COMMUNIST CRUSADER

#### Years in Congress

The end of World War II did not bring about a peaceful world as the American people had expected. Immediately after the war American policymakers began to sense a twin threat from Russian expansion in Europe and support of Marxist revolution in Asia. In 1949, when the Chinese Communists drove Chiang Kai-shek and his troops off the Mainland and established a communist regime in China, the American people were shocked. Many Americans were convinced that they were in a world threatened by communism which they perceived as more dreadful and aggressive than fascism. The issue of communism became inextricably enmeshed in the domestic politics of the United States for almost two decades.

Richard Nixon shared this fear of communism. It was Winston Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech, delivered in Fulton, Missouri, in March, 1946, that profoundly affected Nixon's attitude toward communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular. He tells in his memoirs:

. . . But as the communist subjugation of Eastern Europe became more and more apparent--with the takeover of Hungary in 1947 and Czechoslovakia in 1948--I realized that the defeat of Hitler and Japan had not produced a lasting peace and freedom was now threatened by a new and even more dangerous enemy.<sup>1</sup>

Since the beginning of his political career, Nixon's name had been a staple among whole-hearted anti-communist fighters. Not only did he believe that communism stood for ideas opposed to American ideals of freedom and justice, but he also suspected that an international conspiracy backed by Moscow threatened democratic governments around the world.<sup>2</sup> He urged Americans to realize the danger of communism which, he said, had "a tremendously malignant and potent appeal all over the world and right here in the United States of America." Real peace and real security in the world would not come, he argued, "until we begin to win the conflict that is going on through the world today for the minds, for the hearts, and for the souls of men."<sup>3</sup>

In the 1946 political campaign, the issue of communism was one of the greatest concerns in the nation. A hard-driving attack upon communism helped Nixon win election in the 12th Congressional District of California and sent him to the House of Representatives. His strategy was to label his Democratic opponent Jerry Voorhis as a supporter of communism. Since Voorhis had gained the endorsement of the local chapter

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<sup>1</sup>Richard M. Nixon, RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosett and Dunlap, 1978), p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Nixon, The Challenges We Face: Edited and Compiled from the Speeches and Papers of Richard M. Nixon (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>Nixon, "The Challenges of 1952: An Address to Members of the Young Republican National Federation," Appendix to the Congressional Record, 82nd Congress, 1st Session, (1951), XCVII, Part 3, p. A4109.



of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' (CIO) Political Action Committee (PAC) which Nixon thought was openly manipulated by communists, Nixon charged that Voorhis was the PAC candidate and communists' friend, and declared that "a vote for Nixon is a vote against the Communist-dominated PAC with its gigantic slush fund."<sup>4</sup> This successful exploiting of the mood of the American people gained Nixon an overwhelming victory. He was one of seven Republicans who unseated incumbent Democrats in California that year. Republicans also won control of the Eightieth Congress by picking up fifty-five House seats.<sup>5</sup>

Soon after Nixon had entered Congress, he was appointed a member of the Select Committee on Foreign Aid to study the Marshall Plan. With eighteen other members of the committee, he visited Europe to study economic conditions. During the visit he insisted upon meeting with the Communist Party leaders in each country and came away with the conclusion that the Communists throughout the world owed their loyalty not to the countries in which they lived but to Russia.<sup>6</sup> Returning to the United States, Nixon became an ardent advocate of the Marshall Plan and supported the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In the meantime, he favored measures to control and eliminate the activities of American Communists at home. In the spring of 1948, he co-sponsored the Mundt-Nixon Bill which would have required Communist Party members to register and established a Subversive Activities Control Board to identify and investigate alleged communist-front organizations. Although the bill

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<sup>4</sup>Earl Mazo, Richard Nixon: A Political and Personal Portrait (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1968), p. 46.

<sup>5</sup>Wu, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 50.

died in the Senate, many of its premises were embodied in the McCarran Internal Security Act two years later.<sup>7</sup> During the notorious Alger Hiss case, Nixon was one of the few who doubted Hiss' honesty, and as a member of the House Un-American Activities Committee, he pursued the case with furious zeal. In Six Crises, Nixon wrote: "The Hiss case was the first major crisis of my political life. My name, my reputation, and my career were ever to be linked with the decisions I made and the actions I took in that case . . . ."<sup>8</sup> Later, in 1950, Hiss was found guilty of perjury, and the exhaustive crusade against the alleged communist spy brought Nixon national fame in the first years of his congressional service.

In mid-1949, when the Chinese civil war became more serious, Nixon urged Congress not to overlook the fact that the Communists were winning a great victory in the Far East. He condemned as erroneous the idea believed by many Americans that the Chinese were somehow different from communists in other countries and would not owe allegiance to the Russians. He asked for American aid to China to stop the expansion of communism in Asia.<sup>9</sup> After the evacuation of Chiang's troops from the Chinese mainland Nixon began to attack President Truman's policy toward China. He charged that while the communists were marching to victory in the Far East, the Truman administration seemed content to sit by and wait for the dust to settle.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-47.

<sup>8</sup>Nixon, Six Crises (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1962), p. 1. The Hiss Case, for further information, see Allen Weinstein, Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case (New York: Knopf, 1978); John Chabot Smith, Alger Hiss: The True Story (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975).

<sup>9</sup>U.S., Appendix to the Congressional Record, 81st Congress, 1st Session, (1949), XCV, Part 14, p. A5 871.

<sup>10</sup>U.S., Appendix to the Congressional Record, 81st Congress, 2nd Session, (1950), XCVI, Part 14, p. A3342.

Why, he asked, was the United States spending billions of dollars to prevent the spread of communism in Europe through the Marshall Plan, but unwilling to give enough aid in an anti-communist effort in Asia? He was convinced that Truman's refusal to give more help to the Nationalist Government caused the loss of China to the communists. The communization of China, he said, was the first step of the Soviet Union to communize the world, and Asia was, therefore, the key to the world struggle.<sup>11</sup>

Nixon revived the tactics he had used in his Congressional campaign in his race for Senator in 1950. He accused the Democratic candidate, Mrs. Helen Douglas, of being procommunist. He charged that "Mrs. Douglas gave comfort to the Soviet tyranny by voting against aid to Greece and Turkey. She voted against the President in a crisis when he most needed her support and most fully deserved her confidence."<sup>12</sup> The issue worked again and carried him to the Senate.

In the same year came the outbreak of the Korean War. Nixon believed that the Korean War would never have happened had China not gone communist, because the North Koreans would never have dared to move south without a friendly government on their northern border.<sup>13</sup> He denounced the State Department's announcement that Korea and Taiwan lay outside the defense perimeter of the United States. "Once Formosa goes and Korea goes, it means Japan becomes untenable and all Asia goes. Once

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. A3343.

<sup>12</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup>U.S., Congressional Record, 82nd Congress, 1st Session, (1951), XCVII, Part 3, p. 3653.



Asia falls, war becomes inevitable so far as the United States is concerned, and it will be a war which we will eventually lose . . . " he said.<sup>14</sup> To defend the future security of the United States, the United States had to win the Korean War.

Nixon made several recommendations which he thought could bring the war to a successful conclusion. He supported General Douglas MacArthur's suggestion to bomb the Chinese bases across the Yalu River and called for a total embargo on shipments of arms and strategic materials to China, the employment of the Nationalist forces in Taiwan to divert the Chinese Communist forces from Korea, lifting the Seventh Fleet guaranty on the Taiwan Straits, and using the United States' strength in air and naval power.<sup>15</sup> He believed these measures would save free Asia and the free world from further communist expansion. But Nixon's hawkish recommendations went unheeded by the Truman administration.

Nixon did not stay in the Senate long. In 1952 Republican presidential nominee Dwight Eisenhower chose him as his running mate. In the campaign, Nixon denounced Democratic presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson's Far East program as "suicide for America," and declared that he opposed recognition of Red China, supported free China, and opposed giving Formosa to the Communists.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, Nixon also

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 3654

<sup>15</sup>U.S., Congressional Record, 82nd Congress, 1st Session, (1951), XCVII, Part 4, p. 5091.

<sup>16</sup>New York Times, October 29, 1952.



criticized the Truman administration whose policies toward international communism, he thought, "had lost us China, much of Eastern Europe, and had invited the Communists to begin the Korean War."<sup>17</sup> Nixon maintained this hostile attitude toward Red China and communism for a long time to come.

### Vice President Nixon

Nixon became Vice President of the United States in 1953. He maintained his inflexible stance on communism and continued to warn that the most important threat to freedom in the world was the international communist movement. For eight years Nixon faithfully supported the Eisenhower-Dulles foreign policy, particularly the anti-communist China policy.

In the spring of 1953, at Eisenhower's request, Nixon undertook a trip to Asia and the Far East. He met and talked with the heads of governments and with communist leaders as well. On this trip he visited Taiwan and met President Chiang Kai-shek for the first time. They talked and exchanged ideas on the international situation. Nixon later wrote of Chiang: "Although I felt his plans to return to the mainland were totally unrealistic, I was impressed by his high intelligence and his total dedication to the goal of freeing the Chinese people from Communist domination."<sup>18</sup> The experience he got from this trip reaffirmed his belief that

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<sup>17</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 110.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 126.

. . . the only way to deal with Communists is to stand up to them. Otherwise, they will exploit your politeness as weakness. They will try to make you afraid and then take advantage of your fears. Fear is the primary weapon of Communists.<sup>19</sup>

Nixon also concluded that Red China's influence was already being spread throughout the Asian area by the student exchange program under which large numbers of students were sent to Red China for free college training.<sup>20</sup>

In the two Quemoy Crises of 1954 and 1958,<sup>21</sup> Nixon strongly urged aid for the Chinese Nationalist Government in the defense of the offshore islands--Quemoy and Matsu--and applauded President Eisenhower's emphasis of America's responsibility to defend them. On March 16, 1955, Eisenhower told the reporters that he might use tactical atomic weapons "in a general war in Asia against a strictly military target." Seizing the opportunity, Nixon made a speech on the next day warning the Chinese Communists in the bluntest of terms that they would be met with atomic weapons if they embarked on any new aggression. His warlike tone far surpassed that of President Eisenhower.<sup>22</sup> When Eisenhower's policy faced severe criticism from the Democrats, who called it "clumsy, erratic, and self-righteous," Nixon sprang to the President's defense. "Now, what do

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>21</sup>In the summer of 1954, the Chinese Communist Government decided to fulfill the goal of "liberation of Taiwan." The action took place on August 26, 1954, when Chinese Communist raiders struck Quemoy. The crisis did not end until an informal cease-fire on the Taiwan Straits was reached on May 22, 1955. The second Quemoy crisis began on August 23, 1958, when the Chinese Communists again shelling Quemoy and set up a naval blockade to cut it off from all supplies or other assistance.

<sup>22</sup>New York Times, March 18, 1955.

the Chinese Communists want? They don't want just Quemoy and Matsu. They don't want just Formosa. They want the whole world," he said. He predicted that the surrender of these two islands would not bring about peace because Communist China's aim was to expel the United States from all of Asia. Only a policy of firmness would ensure peace while weakness would invite war.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Nixon's uncompromising demand for an absolutely no surrender and no concession to the Chinese Communists of any free territory was far more outspoken and hawkish than President Eisenhower's policy.

Nixon advocated a firm policy toward China and steadfastly opposed recognizing China and admitting it to the United Nations. In his mind, there was no greater outlaw nation in the world than Red China. He felt Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese Communist chief, might welcome a third world war as a means to spread communism. He noted that the Soviet Union under Khrushchev recently had become milder, but the Chinese Communists had renewed emphasis on the orthodox communist philosophy of the need for force as an essential ingredient in world communist tactics.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, at a time when Chinese policies were apparently much more aggressive than those of the Soviet Union, it was unwise for Americans to assume that recognizing Red China would improve the relations between China and the United States. As for the United Nations, since its charter

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<sup>23</sup>Nixon, "Nixon's Policy for U.S.--Firm Line on Reds . . . Strong Defense . . . No Appeasement," U.S. News and World Report, LVII (September 14, 1956), p. 106.

<sup>24</sup>Nixon, "Why U.S. Does Not Recognize Red China, an Address, August 29, 1955," U.S. News and World Report, LVII (September 9, 1955), p. 109.



states that membership "is open to all peace-loving states who accept the obligations imposed by the Charter,"<sup>25</sup> Nixon insisted that all attempts to bring an aggressive Communist China into the family of nations be stopped with all means at American disposal. He argued that Formosa "is more than a military bastion, it is a rallying point for 13,000,000 overseas Chinese, who play a significant part in the affairs of other Asiatic states." Recognition of Red China, he believed would consequently hand these expatriate Chinese over to the communist world.<sup>26</sup>

During the presidential campaign in 1960 Nixon took a firm stance on China again. He blasted the Truman administration's "loss" of the mainland and praised the Eisenhower administration's stopping Communist expansion in Quemoy and Matsu.<sup>27</sup> The problem of Quemoy and Matsu became a major issue in the television debates between Nixon and John F. Kennedy.

The second debate on October 7, 1960 focused on foreign affairs, and the question of whether Quemoy and Matsu should be drawn within the defense line of the United States in the Far East became the central argument between the two candidates. Kennedy's answer was negative. He said that the United States had never promised to defend these two offshore islands in the event they were attacked; America would do so only if it was part of a general attack on Formosa.<sup>28</sup> He continued:

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Nixon, "Nixon's Secret Report Warns: Don't Recognize Red China," Newsweek, XLIII (January 4, 1954), p. 17.

<sup>27</sup>Sidney Kraus (ed.), The Great Debate (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1962), p. 385.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 386.



. . . I think it is unwise to take the chance of being dragged into a war which may lead to a world war over two islands which are not strategically defensible, which are not, according to their testimony, essential to the defense of Formosa.<sup>29</sup>

Nixon challenged the point that Quemoy and Matsu were strategically indefensible. He reminded Kennedy that South Korea was once supposed to be indefensible and that Secretary Acheson had even made a famous speech at the Press Club indicating in effect that South Korea was beyond the defense zone of the United States.<sup>30</sup> He went on:

Now I think as far as Quemoy and Matsu are concerned that the question is not these two little pieces of real estate--they are unimportant . . . . It's the principle involved. These two islands are in the area of freedom. The Nationalists have these two islands. We should not force our Nationalist allies to get off them and give them to the Communists. If we do that, we start a chain reaction; because the Communists are not after Quemoy and Matsu, they are after Formosa.<sup>31</sup>

The third debate took place on October 13, 1960. Nixon was asked whether, in the event the Red Chinese invaded Quemoy and Matsu he would, as President, launch the United States into a war by sending the Seventh Fleet and other military forces to resist this aggression.<sup>32</sup> He again declared that such an attack would be only a prelude to an assault on Formosa, since "the Chinese Communists say over and over again that their objective is not the offshore islands, and they consider them only stepping stones to taking Formosa." Hence, the United States should honor its treaty obligation and stand by Formosa.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore,

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 387.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 395.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

he criticized Kennedy for apparently suggesting "that we will surrender these islands or force our Chinese Nationalist ally to surrender them in advance." This idea, he thought, would eventually lead to war because the Chinese Communists "don't want just Quemoy and Matsu, they don't want just Formosa, they want the world."<sup>34</sup>

The impact of the issue on the election is difficult to judge, but it is clear that Nixon clung tenaciously to his public view of Red China as bent on world revolution and conquest.

#### Years as a Private Citizen

In November 1960, Nixon lost to Kennedy by a small margin. But even though he left public office and became a private citizen, there was no diminution in Nixon's anti-communist spirit. When the Bay of Pigs invasion failed in 1961, Nixon was invited to the White House for advice. Kennedy asked: "What would you do now in Cuba?" Nixon replied without hesitation: "I would find a proper legal cover and I would go in." He believed that the United States should do whatever was necessary to get Castro and communism out of Cuba.<sup>35</sup>

As a private individual, Nixon made several trips to Asia and Eastern Europe, and his crusading spirit against communism was reinforced. In 1963, he visited Taiwan for the second time and was the house guest of Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang was critical of America's Vietnam policy and suggested an invasion of North Vietnam. Though economic aid might help to defeat the communists, Chiang thought, "only bullets will really

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Nixon, "Cuba, Castro and John F. Kennedy," Reader's Digest, LXXXV (November, 1964), p. 291.

defeat them!"<sup>36</sup> Nixon agreed with this point and thought the United States should use military power to maintain the independence of South Vietnam.

The overseas trips confirmed Nixon's notions about communist expansion. Communism had extended its power to over a billion people and a third of the world in 40 years while it had not yet given up an inch of territory any place in the world, he noted.<sup>37</sup> Since the communist goal was to impose slavery on the Free World, he thought, America's goal should be nothing less than to bring freedom to the communist world--"a free Cuba, a free Eastern Europe, a free Russia, a free China."<sup>38</sup> He urged the American people to play the role of savior in rescuing the world from communist slavery.

In the mid-1960's Nixon viewed the war in South Vietnam, like the war in Korea, as merely one battle in a longer campaign of an American worldwide struggle against communism.<sup>39</sup> Again he was convinced that the real enemy facing America was the Chinese Communists. He warned:

. . . the confrontation in Vietnam is, in the final analysis, not between the Vietnamese and the Viet Cong, nor between the United States and the Viet Cong, but between the United States and Communist China. If Communist China were not instigating and supporting the Viet Cong, there would be no war in Vietnam today . . . . Now is the time to face the fact that what we are dealing with in Vietnam is Chinese Communist aggression.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 258.

<sup>37</sup>Nixon, "American Policy Abroad," Vital Speeches, XXIX (June 1, 1963), p. 487.

<sup>38</sup>Nixon, Khurushchev's Hidden Weakness," Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXVI (October 12, 1963), p. 24.

<sup>39</sup>Nixon, "Needed in Vietnam: The Will to Win," Reader's Digest, LXXXV (August, 1964), p. 39.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.



Vietnam must not be lost, he argued, because all of Southeast Asia might also go communist, thus making the Pacific a "Red Sea."<sup>41</sup>

According to Nixon's idea, to save Asia, the United States should win the war "now and only now," that is, winning the smaller war in Vietnam was the only way to avoid a major war later. He argued that to achieve victory it was necessary to use American air and sea power to cut supply lines and destroy guerrilla staging areas in North Vietnam and Laos.<sup>42</sup> "Compromise, vacillation, accommodation, and appeasement could not win in Vietnam," he said. Consequently, he condemned any move toward negotiation. To negotiate now, he believed, would be "negotiating of the wrong kind, at the wrong time, at the wrong place."<sup>43</sup>

Negotiating with the enemy before they had been driven from Vietnam would be like "negotiating with Hitler before the German armies had been driven from France."<sup>44</sup> In a speech to the Sales Executives Club of New York on January 26, 1965, Nixon warned:

. . . We must not delude ourselves with schemes of coalition governments or neutralization. Neutrality where the Communists are concerned means three things: we got out; they stay in; they take over. Any negotiation settlement would inevitably lead only to further communist demands.<sup>45</sup>

Nixon was afraid that if the United States could not win the war immediately, it might lose the chance because time was on Red China's side. In a few years, he predicted, China would become both a nuclear

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Nixon, "Why Not Negotiate in Vietnam?" Reader's Digest, LXXXVI (December, 1965), p. 51.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 270.



and an industrial power. Mao was determined to use this new power to win a long war to conquer Asia, after which China would pose a direct risk to the United States. Therefore, the United States should "stop Chinese Communist aggression in Vietnam now, and not wait until the odds and the risks are much greater."<sup>46</sup>

Since President Johnson's policies were not seeking the kind of military victory in Vietnam as Nixon expected, he urged the President in 1966 to take stronger actions to bring the North Vietnamese to the conference table. However, Johnson pointed out that China was the problem in Vietnam: "We can bomb the hell out of Hanoi and the rest of that damned country, but they've got China right behind them, and that's a different story."<sup>47</sup> Johnson was sure that China would become a serious problem for the next president. Consequently, Nixon urged a diplomatic communication with China because "time is on their side," and "now is the time to confront them on the diplomatic front."<sup>48</sup> But Johnson did not respond to his suggestion.

In 1967, Nixon took another trip around the world, which influenced him greatly, particularly in his changing attitude toward Communist China. In Europe, Nixon found a similar concern about Soviet strategy expressed by almost every political leader he talked with. Those NATO leaders felt that the primary threat from communism was in Europe rather than in Asia. Konrad Adenauer of Germany urged that the

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<sup>46</sup>Lloyd Gardner, ed., "An Address to the Commonwealth Club of California, April 2, 1965," The Great Nixon Turnaround (New York: New Viewpoints, 1973), p. 52.

<sup>47</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 272.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

United States tilt its policy toward Communist China to counterbalance the growing Soviet threat.<sup>49</sup> In Romania, Nixon had a long talk with the Romanian Communist Party's Secretary General Nicolae Ceausescu on East-West relations. It was at this time that Nixon began to doubt that any true détente with the Soviet Union could be achieved until some kind of rapprochement could be reached with Communist China. If China's 800 million people remained isolated, he thought, within twenty years China could pose a grave threat to world peace. But he still thought that the United States could do little to establish effective communications with China until the Vietnam War was ended. After that, he said, America could take steps to normalize relations with Peking.<sup>50</sup>

Nixon visited several Asian countries in April to evaluate the situation in Vietnam and the importance of the war to Vietnam's neighbors. He also particularly wanted to learn how Asia leaders were viewing China and its future relationship with the rest of Asia and the world.

In Vietnam, Nixon was convinced that continuation of the American administration's policy of fighting a defensive war of attrition would inevitably lead to defeat. He thought the war had become America's war, and the South Vietnamese were not being adequately trained and equipped to defend themselves. "The Communists were willing to continue fighting regardless of losses. They had a total commitment to victory. We had, at most, a partial commitment to avoid defeat. If this situation continued, in the end they would win," Nixon thought.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 282-283.

Talking about Communist China with Asian leaders, Nixon found among them a growing concern. Some Asian leaders who had ardently opposed any change of American policy toward Red China had accepted the idea that some new and direct relationship between the two nations was essential if there were to be any chance at all after the Vietnam War was over to build a lasting peace in Asia in which free nations would have a chance to survive.<sup>52</sup>

Apparently, the old anti-communist crusader was convinced that this was the time to face the reality of the existence of Communist China and dealing with it had become a necessity in order to build a lasting peace in Asia and to counter Soviet expansionism in the world.

In the fall of 1967, Nixon published in Foreign Affairs an article entitled "Asia After Vietnam." In it he argued that it was not wise to keep China from the family of nations, and in the interest of world peace, the United States should move from confrontation to negotiation with the Asian super power. Thus, the anti-communist fighter became publicly an advocate of a policy of negotiation with Communist China.

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 283.



## CHAPTER 3

### REMAKING CHINA POLICY

#### A New Policy Toward China

In October, 1967, Nixon published an article entitled "Asia After Vietnam" in Foreign Affairs. It contains a refreshing departure from his former rhetoric on the monolithic doctrine of communism, and marks a significant break in his attitude toward China. He was convinced that the United States had already lost the chance to win the war in Vietnam and now it could no longer afford to play the role of world policeman. The war in Vietnam should be localized, he said, and the American forces should withdraw from Indochina as soon as possible. Under the changed circumstances, Nixon thought that Vietnam should no longer occupy the epicenter of America's policies in Asia. Instead, the United States should focus on the problems beyond Vietnam.<sup>1</sup> American policy toward Asia, according to Nixon's idea, must come urgently to grips with the reality of China, because China had already become a common threat to all the Asian governments. Moreover, in the near future, China's development of nuclear weapons would be great enough to threaten the security of the world. To avert future crises in Asia, Nixon argued that the United States had to recognize the present and potential danger from Communist China and take measures designed to

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<sup>1</sup>Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, XLVI (October, 1967), p. 111.



meet that danger. He explained:

Taking the long view, we simply cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbors. There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation.<sup>2</sup>

However, Nixon did not recommend at this point rushing to grant recognition to Peking, to admit it to the United Nations and to ply it with offers of trade--all of which, he believed, would serve to confirm its rulers in their present course. Concrete changes should come only after Peking modified its present course. Since the world would not be safe until China changed, the United States should aim to induce change, by persuading China that it could not satisfy its imperial ambitions, and that its own national interest required renunciation of foreign aggression and concentration on the solution of its own domestic problems.<sup>3</sup>

Then Nixon suggested that American policies toward China could be distinguished between long-range and short-range, and fashioned short-range programs so as to advance America's long-range goals. He said:

For the short run, then, this means a policy of firm restraint, of no reward, of a creative counterpressure designed to persuade Peking that its interests can be served only by accepting the basic rules of international civility. For the long run, it means pulling China back into the world community--but as a great and progressing nation, not as the epicenter of world revolution.<sup>4</sup>

At the end of the article, Nixon concluded that dealing with Red China was "something like trying to cope with the more explosive ghetto

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

elements in our own country." But once again he emphasized that the United States could not "afford to let those now self-exiled from society stay exiled forever." Consequently, the United States had to "proceed with both an urgency born of necessity and patience born of realism, moving step by calculated step toward the final goal."<sup>5</sup>

Nixon's new attitude was undoubtedly surprising for most of the American people who had been used to hearing his harsh anti-Communist China tone. People still remembered the argument between Nixon and Kennedy about Chinese affairs in the great debate of 1960. However, his idea of pulling China back to the world community caused little resentment; actually, it was applauded by many politicians, scholars, journalists, and businessmen. As the 1968 presidential campaign started, Nixon called for a reassessment of America's China policy. In his acceptance speech at the Miami Beach convention he showed that he was ready to extend "the hand of friendship to all people, to the Russian, to the Chinese, to all the people in the world."<sup>6</sup>

When Nixon assumed the Presidency in January, 1969, conditions were favorable for the initiation of a policy of détente with Communist China. On the American domestic scene, many Sinologists urged the President to effect a change in American policy toward China, that is, the recognition of the Peking Government. They argued that the United States had historically tended to respect the territorial integrity of states in general and the theoretical unity of China in particular (notably in the Cairo Declaration of 1943 and President Truman's statement of January 1950). It was within this tradition that the United

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Lloyd Gardner, p. 28.

States should have simply withdrawn recognition from Taipei and extended it to Peking as Britain had in 1949, after the removal of the Nationalist capital from the mainland, they thought.<sup>7</sup> In Congress, many of the old so-called "China Lobby" were either dead or retired, and the leadership of the new Congress lay with liberal Democrats who joined with moderate Republicans in urging a review of China policy.<sup>8</sup>

The chief foreign policy goal of most Americans at this time was to end the Vietnam War. Having been disillusioned by the war and frustrated by economic problems and division at home, they wanted to pull back from overextended commitments in Asia and in the world as a whole.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, fundamental changes were under way in the general public attitude toward Communist China. Many Americans began to accept the idea that China was no longer a puppet of the Soviet Union and was indeed hostile to Russian influence; it was not an aggressive expansionist power but rather a defensive and weak nation. Those who held this view were prepared to accept the argument that the United States needed to find some way to help bring China into the world community.<sup>10</sup>

To bring the war to a conclusion was also Nixon's immediate goal and he tried to lay down a new policy direction that he thought would achieve that end without the loss of American prestige. If the United

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<sup>7</sup>Allen S. Whiting, "What the US Can Do to Improve Relations-- Negotiating with China," New Republic, CLXV (July 10, 1971), pp. 16-19.

<sup>8</sup>James C. Thomson, Jr., "Nixon on China: Time to Talk," Atlantic Monthly, CXXIII (February, 1969), p. 71.

<sup>9</sup>Wu, p. 102.

<sup>10</sup>Roderick MacFarquhar, (ed.), Sino-American Relations, 1949-71 (New Abbot, Great Britain: David and Charles Ltd., 1972), p. 6.



States were to end the war and to reduce its military presence in Asia, he thought, at least a minimal Sino-American understanding was essential since that nation of eight hundred million people had influence in the Asia area that could not be ignored.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Nixon was in a particularly favorable position to effect a change in Sino-American policy. As James C. Thomson, an East Asian specialist, pointed out, "Democratic Presidents were acutely gun shy on China policy while Republicans, in the late forties and fifties, had a political field day with the issue of the loss of China. A Republican President, and preeminently this Republican President, brought to the China problem some very special assets. Who, for instance, could pin the label of softness of communism on Richard Nixon when he made overtures to Peking?"<sup>12</sup>

Nixon realized his advantages and was ready to improve Sino-American relations. In his inaugural address on January 20, 1979, he said:

After a period of confrontation, we are entering an era of negotiation.

Let all nations know that during this administration our lines of communication will be open.

We seek an open world--open to ideas, open to the exchange of goods and people--a world in which no people, great or small will live in angry isolation.

We cannot expect to make everyone our friend, but we can try to make no one our enemy.<sup>13</sup>

Hence, as soon as Nixon came to office, he undertook a series of initiatives toward opening a dialogue with Communist China, though he

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<sup>11</sup>Lloyd Gardner, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup>Thomson, p. 73.

<sup>13</sup>Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States--Richard Nixon, 1969 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 3.

still publicly insisted that until some changes occurred on the Chinese side, the United States should continue to oppose Communist China's admission to the United Nations. However, whenever the leaders of Communist China chose to abandon their self-imposed isolation, he said, the United States was ready to talk with them in a "frank and serious spirit."<sup>14</sup>

To Nixon, there was another advantage in the United States' changing its attitude toward China. He continued to view Moscow as America's most important adversary, and if China could be used to check the power of the Soviet Union, it might help in the creation of a Soviet-American détente and a balance of power in East Asia.<sup>15</sup> But both China and the Soviet Union were communist countries. Could the United States play the two communist giants against each other? With the increasing hostilities between China and the Soviets, especially as their border military confrontations became more frequent, Nixon believed that it would be possible for the United States to do so.<sup>16</sup>

### The Sino-Soviet Split

To the Chinese Communist leaders, in 1949, the Stalinist thesis that the world was sharply divided between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp must have seemed only too accurate. In a hostile world

<sup>14</sup>George E. Johnson (ed.), The Nixon Presidential Press Conferences (New York: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, Inc., Publisher, 1978), p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), p. 728.

<sup>16</sup>Tad Szulc, The Illusion of Peace (New York: Viking Press, 1978), p. 103.



environment, the Communist Government in China needed protection which only the Soviet Union was willing to provide. In addition, ideology doubtless played a vital role in predisposing China's new leader toward seeking an alliance with the Soviet Union. Soviet aid could make China strong and a strong China would reduce Soviet vulnerability to American power and hasten the decline of imperialism which threatened them both. As a result, in 1950, China and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty of Alliance which was designed against the United States and Japan.<sup>17</sup>

But, gradually, China became doubtful about its friendship with the Soviet Union. At first, the Chinese were displeased with the reduction of Soviet aid and Soviet imperialist behavior in Manchuria. Then, the Chinese dissatisfaction was compounded by the increasing Soviet unwillingness to support China's foreign policy goals in the Taiwan Straits and the Sino-Indian border region and by conciliatory Soviet policies toward the United States (Stalin's death brought an apparent thaw in the cold war, as Khrushchev expressed the desire for a reduction of international tension.)<sup>18</sup>

The development of the Sino-Soviet split was virtually complete by 1961. One of the contributing factors was Chinese disappointment at not getting more Soviet assistance in developing their nuclear capacity. With the abrupt withdrawal in 1960 of Soviet technicians from China, many development projects were left uncompleted. Following this break,

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<sup>17</sup>Michel Oksenberg and Robert B. Oxnam, Dragon and Eagle: United States--China Relations: Past and Future (New York: The Asia Society, Inc., 1978), p. 241.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 243.



the ideological warfare between these two communist giants grew more intense, as did their rivalry on the international scene.<sup>19</sup>

Great pressure for war came from conflicts along the border, the longest between two nations in the world. Sharing a frontier of 4,500 miles, both Russia and China considered their own frontiers inviolable. As relations between them grew worse in the 1960's, the clashes along the border became more frequent. Military confrontation had happened several times on Chenpao Island, a small Chinese island in the Usuri River. Soviet military planes often violated China's air space over Heilongkian Province. In the west, along the border of Sinkiang Province, the disputes were equally severe.<sup>20</sup> As the border clashes reached a peak in mid-1969, the Soviets denounced the behavior of Red China's guards as savage and avowed that the Soviet forces would give the Chinese a thrashing if they continued to prod and probe the vast frontier.<sup>21</sup>

From Nixon's point of view, the Sino-Soviet split was the most significant geopolitical event in the world since World War II. But its inevitability was not apparent to most Americans, including Nixon himself, during the first decade of communist rule in China. People were convinced that there had emerged an aggressive, monolithic

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<sup>19</sup>Wu, p. 104.

<sup>20</sup>"Why Russia and China Prepare for War?" U.S. News and World Report, LXXI (September 15, 1969), p. 32; Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, Kissinger (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), p. 225.

<sup>21</sup>Kissinger, p. 763.

Sino-Soviet bloc, a new and menacing force on the world scene, and China was considered even more implacably hostile toward the West than were the Soviets.<sup>22</sup>

It was the border clashes in 1969 that made Nixon reverse his ideas about China and the Soviet Union. Before then, Communist China had always been considered more aggressive than the Soviet Union. From examining those events, both Nixon and Kissinger drew the conclusion that the Soviet Union was the more aggressive and that the Russians were on the verge of making a preemptive strike against China's nascent nuclear arsenal.<sup>23</sup> Such an assault, they feared, could upset the global balance of power, for if Moscow succeeded in humiliating Peking and reducing it to impotence, the whole weight of the Soviet military effort could be thrown against the West with resulting Soviet dominance of the world. Hence, it was imperative to curb Moscow's geopolitical ambitions, and a Sino-American détente could further this goal. As for the Chinese, Nixon and Kissinger believed that they would now welcome American friendship because of the growing Soviet threat.<sup>24</sup>

Since May 1966, China had suffered tremendous economic destruction and political instability as a result of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. As this period drew to a close in 1968-1969, China confronted a serious setback in its foreign relations, as Sino-Soviet affairs went from bad to worse. For the first time since the Korean War,

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<sup>22</sup>Richard M. Nixon, The Real War (New York: Warner Books Inc., 1980), p. 134.

<sup>23</sup>Szulc, p. 103.

<sup>24</sup>John G. Stoessinger, Henry Kissinger, the Anguish of Power (New York: W. W. Norton and Company Inc., 1976), p. 117.

the Chinese felt their national security and their very survival were directly threatened. China began to fear that it was being encircled by the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, and India, and might be attacked jointly by them any moment.<sup>25</sup> In October, 1969, a joint editorial of the People's Daily, Liberation Army Daily, and Red Flag read:

U.S. imperialism and socialist imperialism are now intensifying their collaboration and are wildly plotting to launch wars of aggression against China. They have even spread talk for nuclear blackmail against China. . . .<sup>26</sup>

The fear of encirclement, coupled with the ending of the Cultural Revolution, pushed China to change its foreign policy. It began to take steps to strengthen its diplomatic front by appointing in rapid succession a number of ambassadors and sending them to their posts overseas. (Ambassadors had been called back home during the Revolution.) At the same time, it also assumed a friendly posture toward foreign diplomatic missions in Peking. Moreover, China expressed its willingness to develop friendly relations not only with socialist countries but also with those with different social systems.<sup>27</sup>

Thus, just at the moment when China needed friendship from any country, the new President of the United States offered it. Although notions of American imperialism still worried the Chinese, they no longer viewed the United States as China's "Public Enemy No. 1."

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<sup>25</sup>Wu, p. 93.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>28</sup>"Big Changes Inside Red China," U.S. News and World Report, LXXII (June 22, 1970), p. 53.



The Soviet Union was now cast in that role.<sup>28</sup> The Chinese began to think it was necessary to be friendly to its second enemy in order to deal with its first.

### From Confrontation to Negotiation

Immediately after his inauguration Nixon took steps toward his goal of improving relations with China. On February 5, 1969, Nixon ordered the National Security Council staff to prepare the administration's first major study on China to find whether any changed relationship was possible with China as long as Washington maintained support for the Nationalist regime on Taiwan. Indeed, Nixon now sought to provide a formula that would be acceptable to Communist China as well as to Taiwan--a two-China policy, whereby the United States would preserve ties with Taiwan while gradually establishing a better understanding with Peking.<sup>29</sup>

To lay the groundwork for approaching Peking, Nixon first of all wanted to convince the Chinese Communists that the United States was changing her consistent policy of containment toward China by Vietnamizing the war in Indochina. After making a trip to the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, South Vietnam, India, and Pakistan, Nixon met with his accompanying press corps in the Navy Officer's Club in Guam on July 25, 1969, where he issued the famous "Nixon Doctrine."<sup>30</sup> The major elements of the doctrine were:

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<sup>28</sup>"Big Changes Inside Red China," U.S. News and World Report, LXXII (June 22, 1970), p. 53.

<sup>29</sup>Szulc, p. 112.

<sup>30</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1969, p. 548.

First, the United States will keep all its treaty commitments.

Second, we shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security.

Third, in cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense.<sup>31</sup>

Nixon thought that the United States should continue to play a significant role in Asia and help Asian countries fight for their freedom but not fight wars for them. "In the previous administrations," said Nixon, "we Americanized the war in Vietnam. In this administration, we are Vietnamizing the search for peace."<sup>32</sup>

Meanwhile, Nixon started initiatives which could show America's determination to improve relations with China. On July 21, 1969, the State Department announced a slight easing of travel and trade restrictions toward China. American tourists and residents abroad were allowed to bring into the United States goods of Chinese Communist origin worth \$100 for noncommercial purposes. In addition, scholars, professors, journalists, and scientists were all entitled to have their passports validated for travel to mainland China.<sup>33</sup> In November, 1969, the administration quietly ended the regular two-destroyer patrol of the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Straits. In December of the same year, the United States announced that all nuclear weapons on Okinawa, which reportedly had been installed as a deterrent against

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 905-6.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, China and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1971), p. 12.

China, would be removed by the end of 1969.<sup>34</sup> On December 19, 1969, the U.S. Government lifted the \$100 limit on purchases of Communist Chinese goods by individuals and permitted foreign subsidiaries of American companies to trade in nonstrategic goods with Communist China, thus bringing to an end the two-decades old total embargo toward Communist China.<sup>35</sup>

Nixon's next step was to open direct dialogue with the Chinese as soon as possible. On his tour during the summer of 1969, he asked the President of Pakistan, Yahya Khan, and Romanian President Ceausescu to relay a message to China that the United States had a serious interest in an improved relationship with Peking.<sup>36</sup> From another direction, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, instructed Walter Stoessel, American Ambassador in Poland, to begin contact with Chinese officials there. They hoped to resume talks with the Chinese in Warsaw, where representatives of the two nations had met 134 times after 1955 before the meetings were stopped in 1963. The main point of the Warsaw discussions had been America's relationship with Taiwan. No solution had been reached because the Chinese Communists had insisted on the withdrawal of American forces from Taiwan, and the United States had insisted that the Chinese promise not to invade Taiwan by force.<sup>37</sup> With the Taiwan issue unsettled, the hostility between the United

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Szulc, p. 118.

<sup>37</sup>Kissinger, p. 664.



States and Communist China persisted. Now, Stoessel began his task and in December, 1969, the Chinese agreed to another meeting in Warsaw within one month.

The first meeting was set for January 20, 1970, in the Chinese Embassy, and the second talk was held on February 20, 1970, in the American Embassy. Nixon was anxious to use the occasion to tell the Chinese that the United States "would not participate in a US-Soviet condominium in Asia or anywhere."<sup>38</sup> The issue of Taiwan was still a major concern in these two meetings, although the war in Vietnam attracted equal attention. In addition, the United States expressed its desire to dispatch a "high level emissary" to Peking to pursue the new discussions on a more elevated level.<sup>39</sup> The third session scheduled for May was cancelled by the Chinese three weeks after the American invasion of Cambodia on April 30.

While Nixon spoke of "an era of negotiation," the Chinese remained suspicious. To them, the new "imperialist chief" was no different from his predecessors; they all were "the tools of the American monopolistic capitalist class and number one war criminals. Internally, they exploited the American people; externally, they implemented aggressive war policies."<sup>40</sup> The reason that Nixon wanted to negotiate was that he was "unable to produce any solution for the terrible mess both at home and abroad." When the Nixon Doctrine was issued in July, 1969, the Chinese responded:

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 686.

<sup>39</sup>Kalb and Kalb, p. 203.

<sup>40</sup>"Nixon Doctrine," Peking Review, XXXIII (February 6, 1970), p. 26.

. . . this "new policy" means nothing more than finding a fall guy to pull U.S. imperialism's chestnuts out of the fire, a scheme to make Asians fight Asians so that U.S. imperialism can maintain its colonial interests in Asia without bringing casualties to U.S. soldiers while it still enjoys the "fruits" of aggression.<sup>41</sup>

The Chinese considered Nixon's move to improve relations with China "hypocritical," because Nixon still asserted that he wanted to maintain the treaty commitment with "the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang in Taiwan." Thus, Nixon's policy "has further exposed the aggressive nature of U.S. imperialism in its plot to occupy China's sacred territory Taiwan permanently, revealed its criminal scheme to create 'two Chinas' and bared its feeble nature as a paper tiger."<sup>42</sup> China harshly attacked the Cambodian invasion, and Mao Tse-tung made a strong statement asking the people of the world to "unite and defeat the U.S. aggressors and all their running dogs."<sup>43</sup> At the same time, the third Warsaw talk was canceled.

Despite the hostile reaction from China, Nixon persisted in moving toward his goal. A new approach was executed in October, 1970, through the Presidents of Pakistan and Romania when they visited the United States for the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. On October 25, Nixon told Yahya Khan of Pakistan that the United States had decided to try to normalize its relation with China and asked for his help as an intermediary. Thus, the "Pakistani Channel"

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>"Nixon's 'New Strategy for Peace' Cannot Save U.S. Imperialism from Doom," Peking Review, XXXIII (March 16, 1970), p. 35.

<sup>43</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "People of the World, Unite and Defeat the U.S. Aggressors and all Their Running Dogs!" Peking Review, XXXIII (May 23, 1970), p. 1.

was established.<sup>44</sup> On the next day, at the state dinner to welcome Romanian President Ceausescu, Nixon toasted the many common interests of the United States and Romania, and praised the good relations Romania had with the United States, the Soviet Union, and "the People's Republic of China." It was the first time an American President used China's official name.<sup>45</sup>

Returning to his country, Yahya Khan served as Nixon's confidential courier to Peking. On December 9, the first message from Chinese Premier Chou En-lai reached the White House. It said that a representative of the American President would be welcome in Peking for a discussion of the question of Taiwan.<sup>46</sup> Nixon replied that any meeting should not be limited to discussion of Taiwan, and he proposed that Chinese and American representatives meet in Pakistan to discuss the possibility of a high-level meeting in Peking in the future.<sup>47</sup> The exchange of notes between the Chinese leaders and American President via Pakistan lasted several months.

As another year came, Nixon moved further to show that the United States wanted China's friendship. On February 25, 1971, in his foreign policy report to Congress, Nixon said that the United States had been prepared to establish a dialogue with Peking, and "to see the People's Republic of China play a constructive role in the family of nations."<sup>48</sup> In March the State Department removed all restrictions on

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<sup>44</sup>Kalb and Kalb, p. 234.

<sup>45</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1970, p. 946.

<sup>46</sup>Kissinger, pp. 700-701.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 702.

<sup>48</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 548.



the use of American passports to travel to China. In the next month, the controls over trade between China and the United States were officially lifted by the U.S. Government.

In the meantime, China apparently began to soften its suspicious attitude toward Nixon's friendly gestures. "At present, the problems between China and the USA would have to be solved with Nixon," said Mao in an interview with Edgar Snow on December 18, 1970. Therefore, if Nixon visited China, he should be welcome.<sup>50</sup> However, before any representative of the President or Nixon himself could visit China, the United States ping-pong team had gone first.

In April, 1971, while the American ping-pong team was in Japan to participate in the world table tennis championship, the leader of the Chinese delegation suddenly approached the Americans and invited them to come to play in China as soon as the games in Japan were over. The Americans accepted. On April 4, the U.S. team, together with the players from Canada, Colombia, England, and Nigeria, were received by Premier Chou at a reception in Peking. Chou informed the American delegation and newsmen--unexpectedly invited to visit China--that the people of the two countries "will in the near future be able to have many contacts. I believe it will not be slow in coming."<sup>51</sup>

The invitation pleased both American officials and people, and it was obvious to Nixon that it was a subtle but unmistakable response to the patient United States overtures for the last two years. He was

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<sup>50</sup> Edgar Snow, "A Conversation with Mao," Life, LXX (April 30, 1971), p. 38.

<sup>51</sup> "U.S. and China--The Thaw Starts--How Far Will It Go," U.S. News and World Report, LXXIII (April 26, 1971), p. 15.

convinced that the invitation was not an isolated episode but the long-awaited start of a serious diplomatic process.<sup>52</sup>

### Kissinger's Trips to Peking

On April 27, 1971, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Agha Hilaly, delivered a handwritten note from Chou En-lai to Nixon. In this note the Chinese extended an invitation to a special envoy of the President or "even the President of the U.S. himself" to visit Peking for a direct meeting and discussions.<sup>53</sup> On May 9 Kissinger gave Hilaly a message from Nixon formally accepting the invitation to President Nixon to visit Peking and proposing "a preliminary secret meeting between his Assistant for National Security Affairs, Dr. Kissinger, and Premier Chou En-lai or another appropriate high level Chinese official."<sup>54</sup> Nixon and Kissinger were relieved when China's note accepting Kissinger as Nixon's representative to Peking arrived on June 2.

Evidence indicates that President Nixon should be viewed as the "major engineer" in the initiatives toward better Sino-American relations. Henry Kissinger, whose expertise was concentrated in Russian and European affairs and who had less confidence in dealing with China, was skeptical and worried about Nixon's game of "pitting Russia against China." Later, Kissinger was convinced that the Soviets were more aggressive in the Sino-Russian border disputes, and he began

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<sup>52</sup>Szulc, p. 398.

<sup>53</sup>Stoessinger, p. 120.

<sup>54</sup>Kissinger, p. 724.

to accede to Nixon's idea.<sup>55</sup> Since Kissinger had participated in every detail of the exchange of notes between Nixon and Chou En-lai, he was, consequently, chosen to take a secret trip to Peking to talk with the Chinese.

After further negotiations to set arrangements, the Chinese firmed up the date for Kissinger's visit on July 9 to 11, 1971. Kissinger left Washington on July 1, allegedly on a round-the-world trip. At the same time, Yahya Khan helped him camouflage the real purpose of his tour. When Kissinger arrived in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, it was announced that he had come down with a slight case of intestinal flu and would have to rest for a few days in a mountain resort near the capital. In fact, however, Kissinger was in excellent health, and he flew to China on July 9.

Kissinger spent seventeen hours of his two-day visit in conversations with Chou En-lai. Chou and Kissinger immediately developed a superb personal relationship--they admired each other from the outset--and this helped to ease the negotiating process.<sup>56</sup> They engaged in a wide-ranging discussion of Sino-American relations. They agreed that in principle Taiwan should be considered as a part of China and that the political future of the island should be settled peacefully by the Chinese themselves rather than remain an international issue. As to the problem in Vietnam, Kissinger sought some commitment from Chou for Chinese assistance in his efforts to negotiate a peace settlement, but was refused. The Chinese insisted that the political

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<sup>55</sup>Kalb and Kalb, p. 226.

<sup>56</sup>Szulc, p. 410.



future of Vietnam would have to be settled by the Vietnamese without outside interventions.<sup>57</sup> But the most important and specific argument reached between Kissinger and Chou was an invitation to Nixon to visit China in early 1972.

To the astonishment of the world audience, Nixon, upon Kissinger's return from Peking, read the historic announcement on July 15 that

Premier Chou En-lai and Dr. Henry Kissinger . . . held talks in Peking from July 9 to 11, 1971. Knowing of President Nixon's expressed desire to visit the People's Republic of China, Premier Chou En-lai . . . has extended an invitation to President Nixon to visit China at an appropriate date before May, 1972. President Nixon has accepted the invitation with pleasure.

The meeting between the leaders of China and the United States is to seek the normalization of relations between the two countries and also to exchange views on questions of concern to the two sides.<sup>58</sup>

Most of the initial reactions to President Nixon's announcement were overwhelmingly positive. In Congress, Democrats as well as Republicans were nearly unanimous in praising the President's initiatives. But some strong anti-communist Republican members warned against changes in the long-standing U.S. policy toward Communist China and charged that the trip was "actually a diversionary tactic to get people's minds off inflation and the high cost of pork chops."<sup>59</sup>

Several days later, Nixon ordered a reduction of the 9,000-man American garrison on Taiwan, and Secretary of State William Rogers declared in August that the United States was adopting a new policy in dealing with the issue of the U.N. seat--dual representation; that is,

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<sup>57</sup>Kissinger, p. 862.

<sup>58</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1971, pp. 821-22.

<sup>59</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 549.

it would support Peking's admission to the United Nations but rejected the idea of expelling Taiwan.<sup>60</sup> However, American efforts to retain Taiwan's seat had been badly hurt by the White House's dispatch of Kissinger to Peking in the middle of the China debate and his presence there at the actual time of the vote on October 25, 1971.<sup>61</sup>

On October 20, 1971, Kissinger made a second trip to Peking to prepare for Nixon's visit. The next day the People's Daily carried two photographs of Chou and Kissinger; it was the first time in twenty years that an American official had been pictured with a Chinese leader.<sup>62</sup> The details of the Nixon trip were settled very rapidly. They agreed that the date would be February 21. Chou and Kissinger again spent over twenty-five hours together reviewing the world situation, another fifteen hours working on the problems of normalization. Chou had explained that China would not establish full relations with the United States so long as Washington went on recognizing the Nationalist regime. But Kissinger told Chou that it was politically impossible for the Nixon administration to withdraw recognition of Taiwan in the foreseeable future. The two men then concluded that Taiwan need not be an obstacle to the evolution of a Sino-American relationship.<sup>63</sup>

After Kissinger's second trip to Peking, on November 29, the White House announced the date of Nixon's visit to China--February 21, 1972. The mutual hostility between China and the United States was softened and was about to thaw after Nixon's two-year efforts toward

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<sup>60</sup>Congressional Quarterly, China and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1971, p. 17.

<sup>61</sup>Wu, p. 146.

<sup>62</sup>Kissinger, p. 779.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 780.

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that goal. Nixon understood that differences between these two nations still existed, but they now agreed to talk about the differences. He was full of hope because he believed that "the later generations will have a better chance to live in peace."<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 421.



## CHAPTER 4

### PEKING MISSION

#### The Week That Changed The World

After Kissinger's discussions with Chinese leaders, the stage was set for Nixon's trip. Since the time of his election, Nixon had frequently referred to his intention to visit China in his press conferences, magazine interviews, and public addresses. However, it had seemed an impossible dream until he made the surprising announcement on July 15, 1971--after three years of patient effort to pierce the isolation of decades. Though the announcement was surprising and dramatic, Nixon realized that it should not create very great optimism. Twenty years of hostility and virtually no communication between China and the United States, except minor contacts like those at Warsaw, would not be swept away by one week of talks. But he believed that what had to be done was to find a way to see if the two countries could have differences without being enemies in war.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Nixon thought, the major objective of his trip to China was "the realization of an open communication--to set up some method of communication better than we currently have."<sup>2</sup> In addition to the open communication, the most significant aspect of the trip, he believed, was that both sides

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<sup>1</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1972, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

had agreed to talk about the differences between them. In a speech delivered to the AFL-CIO Convention, Nixon said:

. . . Do we talk about our differences or do we fight about our differences? With the advent of nuclear warfare, a President of the United States, with an obligation to future generations, has no choice but to talk about those differences, talk about them with this goal in mind: not of giving in on our system, not of making concessions at the expense of our friends, but talking about them with the great goal of seeing that the peoples of this world can have different systems but will not be engaged in nuclear destruction. That is why I am going; we are going to try.<sup>3</sup>

President Nixon arrived in Peking at 11:40 a.m. on February 21, 1972. At the Peking airport, he received "a studiously correct" welcome as the beginning of his eight-day visit. A 500-man honor guard of the People's Liberation Army was on hand, and Premier Chou-En-lai with foreign correspondents and their interpreters and a few dozen Chinese officials were there to greet Nixon and the ranking members of his entourage. The flags of both the United States and China flew at the airport, but there were no special decorations visible in the city, nor were any crowds assembled for the welcome.<sup>4</sup> However, when Nixon grasped the hand of Chou, which Secretary of State Hohn Foster Dulles had spurned at the Geneva Conference in 1954, it symbolized the beginning of the thaw of mutual hostility and the improvement of relations between the two nations.<sup>5</sup>

Just three hours after his arrival, Nixon was invited for a session with Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Though the President had expected to be received by Mao, the Chinese had never hinted exactly when it

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<sup>3</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1971, p. 1121.

<sup>4</sup>New York Times, February 21, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>Wu, p. 152.

would happen. Taking only Kissinger with him, Nixon met Mao in his large study in the Forbidden City. The topics of the conversation in this meeting centered on international problems including Soviet expansion, the Taiwan issue, and the Vietnam War. Apparently, the Soviet Union was clearly Mao's principal security concern. Mao believed that Soviet nuclear power was the biggest problem in the world. It was a great threat to both China and the United States. Therefore, he thought, China and the United States should stop the further expansion of the Soviet Union.<sup>6</sup> As to the issue of Taiwan, Mao considered it just a small problem. He believed that China would get Taiwan sooner or later. But he did not set any time limits, or make any threat because "We can do without them for the time being, and let it come after 100 years."<sup>7</sup> Talking about the Vietnam War, the Chinese removed the nightmare of the Americans that China might intervene in Indochina militarily. Mao even told Nixon that Peking would not challenge vital American interests in Japan and South Korea. The Nixon-Mao summit lasted for a little more than an hour.

Within a few hours, the Chinese Government distributed to the foreign press photographs and films of a smiling Mao and Nixon. The next day, news of the Mao-Nixon meeting appeared on the front page of the People's Daily to show the highest seal of approval for the new relationship.<sup>8</sup>

If the muted greetings at the airport failed to persuade the guest that his visit was welcome, the banquet held that night did not.

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<sup>6</sup>Kissinger, p. 1062.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Szulc, p. 516.



In his exceptionally warm welcoming toast at the first state dinner, Chou En-lai proclaimed that despite ideological differences, normal state-to-state relations could be established on the basis of the five principles of coexistence: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.<sup>9</sup> Nixon replied in a more emotional vein. He stressed that China and the United States shared common interests that transcended the ideological gulf. He even quoted Mao's words to show the good feelings. He said:

There is no reason for us to be enemies. Neither of us seeks the territory of the other; neither of us seeks domination over the other; neither of us seeks to stretch out our hands and rule the world.

Chairman Mao has written, "So many deeds cry out to be done, and always urgently. The world rolls on. Time passes. Thousand years are too long. Seize the day, seize the hour."

This is the hour. This is the day for our two peoples to rise to the heights of greatness which can build a new and a better world.<sup>10</sup>

Following this, as the Chinese Premier began circling the tables to toast each American member of the official party individually, the Chinese band played "America the Beautiful." At this moment, as Kissinger later wrote, both Nixon and Kissinger were deeply moved.<sup>11</sup>

The next four days in Peking were spent in intense private negotiations, public events, and sightseeing. Kissinger shouldered the task of working out a statement which would be announced before the

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 519.

<sup>10</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1972, p. 369.

<sup>11</sup>Kissinger, p. 1070.

end of the visit. He spent most of his time discussing the differences point by point with the Chinese, but the final decision on each point was made by Nixon. The sightseeing schedule emphasized the architectural and artistic monuments of China's past: the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Ming Tombs, the Summer Palace, and the Temple of Heaven. Sightseeing during the daytime, the Americans spent the evenings in banquets, an exhibition of gymnastics and revolutionary ballet entitled the Red Detachment of Women.<sup>12</sup>

On February 26, the Americans departed for Hanchow, one of the most beautiful cities in China. After an overnight stay in a lakeside guesthouse there, Nixon flew on to Shanghai, from which city a communique was issued at the conclusion of the week of negotiations. The American party attended a final banquet given by the Municipal Revolutionary Committee of Shanghai on the last night of their visit. It was at that banquet that the President proclaimed: "This was the week that changed the world." He said to Chou En-lai:

Mr. Prime Minister, our two people tonight hold the future of the world in our hands. As we think of that future, we are dedicated to the principle that we can build a new world, a world of peace, a world of justice, a world of independence for all nations. If we succeed, . . . generations in the years ahead will look back and thank us for this meeting.<sup>13</sup>

It was exaggerating to say that talks of a week could change the world, but Nixon believed that the understanding achieved in this journey would contribute to a more peaceful world.

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<sup>12</sup>Kalb and Kalb, p. 273.

<sup>13</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1972, p. 379.

Shanghai Communiqué

On February 27, on the eve of Nixon's departure, the two parties issued a joint statement known as the Shanghai Communiqué. The importance of this communiqué was that it would become a touchstone of the relationship between the two countries. Their diplomatic ties would remain unconventional as long as the United States continued to maintain diplomatic relations with the Republic of China. It would also serve as the guide for the U.S. Government in its new China policy.<sup>14</sup>

In fact, the first draft of the Shanghai Communiqué had already been drawn during Kissinger's second trip to China in October, 1971. But three paragraphs had remained unsettled, one dealing with Indo-Pakistani relations, a second with trade and exchanges, and the third with Taiwan. These sections required four late-night sessions between Kissinger and the Chinese leaders to complete.<sup>15</sup>

The whole process of negotiations could be divided into three levels. First of all, there were meetings between the Secretary of State, William Rogers, and the Chinese Foreign Minister, Chi Peng-fei, and their staffs to discuss the promotion of more trade and exchanges of scientists, students, scholars, and so forth between the two countries. The second level of meetings was the daily sessions between President Nixon and Premier Chou in the afternoons, following the mornings of sightseeing. They reviewed the international situation and sought more cooperation between China and the United States. The third level was

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<sup>14</sup>Barnett, China Policy: Old Problems and New Challenges, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup>Kissinger, p. 1069.



the drafting of the communique, which involved primarily Kissinger and Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister Chaio Kuan-hua.<sup>16</sup>

The issue of Taiwan was the biggest obstacle during the process of working out the communique and prevented the two sides from reaching an agreement. The Chinese were determined to use the communique to assert their unequivocal claim to the island and refused to promise a peaceful solution to the question of that island. But the American side insisted on affirming that it was the American interest to continue the commitment toward Taiwan. The Chinese wanted to see the total and unconditional withdrawal of American forces from Taiwan. However, the United States was willing to go no further than to describe its withdrawal as an objective, and linked it both to a peaceful solution of the Taiwan problem and to the easing of tension in Asia in general, that is, the end of the Vietnam War.<sup>17</sup> At last, both sides decided to maintain their respective basic principles toward the issue of Taiwan. They did not want the different points of view about Taiwan to upset their common concern about a Soviet threat to the global balance of power.

The United States and China had a common interest in preventing the Soviet Union from destroying the global balance of power by any means, including an attack on China. China undoubtedly hoped that the United States would adopt a firm attitude to confront Soviet expansion. But the United States did not want to be hostile to Moscow unless it challenged the international equilibrium.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, on this point the

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 1070-1072.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 1076.

<sup>18</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1972, p. 376.

communiqué exhibited a mild tone: both countries should not seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and would oppose efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony.<sup>19</sup>

Besides the issue of Taiwan and the Soviet Union, China and the United States held conflicting views on a whole host of issues including Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. Separate statements on these differences were therefore necessary. Thus, in the Shanghai Communiqué, both sides offered statements of support for the rival positions of Hanoi and Saigon in the deadlocked negotiations for a settlement in Vietnam. They recited support for South and North Korea, with the United States stressing the need for "relaxation" of tensions and China stressing the aim of "unification." They recorded Washington's preeminent desire of "friendly relations" with Japan, and China's concern about Japanese "militarism."<sup>20</sup> In all, the American position was phrased in conciliatory fashion, stressing the United States' commitment to its allies and urging peaceful solutions for international problems. The Chinese rhetoric was more militant and sounded a conventional, revolutionary style.

Following these contrasting statements, the two sides expressed their common ideas in the communiqué. China and the United States in effect renounced the use of force in settling disputes with each other. They announced their common opposition to the hegemonic aspirations of others. They agreed not to enter into any agreements aimed against the other. They expressed a desire to promote exchanges and trade between their two nations.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 377-378.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 378.

The most important part of the communique dealt with the issue of Taiwan. The sections concerning Taiwan were worded with particular care. The Chinese side reaffirmed its position:

The Taiwan question is the crucial question obstructing the normalization of relations between China and the United States; the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government of China; Taiwan is a province of China. . . . the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere; and all U.S. forces and military installations must be withdrawn from Taiwan. The Chinese Government firmly opposes any activities which aim at the creation of "one China, one Taiwan," "one China, two governments," "two Chinas," and "independent Taiwan" or advocate that "the status of Taiwan remains to be determined."<sup>22</sup>

The U.S. side also accepted the "one China" policy but declared:

The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. . . . It affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes.<sup>23</sup>

The final section of the communique was highly positive. It described agreement on broadening contacts in "people-to-people" exchanges and improving relations in bilateral trade, science, technology, sports, and journalism. The two nations agreed that they would stay in contact through various channels, including the sending of U.S. representatives to Peking to further the normalization of relations and exchange views on issues of common interest.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 379.



Nixon returned home with great satisfaction. He believed the major goal of his trip--to reestablish communication with the People's Republic of China after a generation of hostility--had been achieved. When he arrived at Andrews Air Force Base on February 28, he cheerfully told the American people that a bridge across the gulf of differences had been built. He said:

Not only have we completed a week of intensive talks at the highest levels, we have set up a procedure whereby we can continue to have discussions in the future. We have demonstrated that nations with very deep and fundamental differences can learn to discuss those differences calmly, rationally, and frankly, without compromising their principles. This is the basis of a structure for peace, where we can talk about differences rather than fight about them.<sup>25</sup>

Talking about the Shanghai Communique, Nixon insisted that the United States did not give up its principles in dealing with the issue of Taiwan. Though it recognized that Taiwan was a part of China, the United States would still keep its commitment toward that island and would work for a peaceful solution by the Chinese themselves of both sides.<sup>26</sup>

Nixon hoped that normalization between China and the United States would be completed in his second term. But as long as the United States continued to maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan, China would not establish formal relations with the U.S. Nevertheless, by deciding to visit China, President Nixon had implicitly acknowledged the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government of China, a fact he

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 381.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 382.

denied for more than two decades. And this acknowledgement of legitimacy would be followed by diplomatic recognition.<sup>27</sup>

### Beyond Peking Visit

At the end of his trip, Nixon was satisfied with the accomplishments he had gained from the Peking summit, but he also expressed great anxiety about the critics he was going to face at home.<sup>28</sup> Immediately after the Shanghai Communique was issued, the Washington Post began its attack on February 28:

President Nixon has acceded to Chinese Communist demands by publicly pledging, for the first time, to withdraw all American forces and military installations from Taiwan. . . . The considerable concessions by the President appeared to have been made in return for a relatively minor Chinese agreement to "facilitate" bilateral scientific, technological, cultural, sports, journalistic, and trade exchanges between the United States and China.

Weighing the concessions made by the President, many observers here feel that the Chinese got the better of the bargain. . . .<sup>29</sup>

Some other newspapers lamented that there was no written mention or affirmation of the American defense commitment to Taiwan. The Boston Globe headlined: "Nixon Makes Concessions on Taiwan, Pledges Pullout," and quoted an Australian reporter's words that "Chou battled all week" for the Taiwan section "and got what he wanted."<sup>30</sup> And the Oakland (California) Tribune said that the people of Taiwan had reason to react nervously "as did the people of Czechoslovakia after Britain's Prime

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<sup>27</sup>Wu, p. 154.

<sup>28</sup>Kissinger, p. 1086.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 1091.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 1092.

Minister Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich with the proud announcement of his 'peace in our time' deal with Chancellor Adolf Hitler of Nazi Germany."<sup>31</sup>

Despite the negative press criticism, Nixon felt greatly relieved when on the day after his return he met with the bipartisan leadership of Congress, and received strong support, especially among Democrats and liberal Republicans. Mike Mansfield, the Senate Majority Leader, praised Nixon's visit as opening "the possibility of a better relationship between China and the United States and the beginning of a peaceful era in that part of the world."<sup>32</sup> Frank Church, one of Nixon's sharpest critics on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thought that Nixon's greatest accomplishment was that he had changed the public image of China. He said, "No secondary emissary could have achieved what the President did, coming back with a new political posture toward China and Asia as a whole."<sup>33</sup> Edward Kennedy acknowledged that the Shanghai Communique would be recorded as one of the most progressive documents "in the long and distinguished tradition of American diplomacy and foreign affairs." He welcomed the American attitude toward Taiwan announced in the communique and expressed hope for an early and rapid withdrawal of American forces from that island.<sup>34</sup> Hugh Scott, the Senate Minority Leader, said that the charge that the United States had betrayed Taiwan

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<sup>31</sup>U.S. Congress, Congressional Record, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session (1972), CXVIII, Part 5, p. 7438.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 5731.

<sup>33</sup>William E. Griffith, Peking, Moscow and Beyond (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1973), p. 197.

<sup>34</sup>U.S. Congress, Congressional Record (1972), p. 5757.



was untrue. He argued that the United States had not given any concession and had not broken faith with its treaty commitments with Taiwan.<sup>35</sup> In addition to the support from liberals, some leading conservatives also expressed approval of the President's visit. Both Governor Ronald Reagan of California and Senator Barry Goldwater promised their support if the President had not deviated from the commitment to Taiwan expressed by the President at Andrews Air Force Base.<sup>36</sup>

However, the Congressional attitude was not unanimous in praise. Nixon's acknowledgement that Taiwan was a part of China and that its future was a matter to be determined by the Chinese evoked bitter criticism from some sources. Some conservatives such as Rep. John M. Ashbrook, who was challenging Nixon for the Republican presidential nomination, believed Nixon was abandoning the Republic of China. He said:

For over two decades, it is we who have fostered and supported both by words and deeds, the concept of an independent Republic of China on Taiwan. Now in a single week, we have abandoned that position--and in so doing we have set up the framework to abandon 15 million people to the tender mercies of a regime that during its tenure in office--its 23 years of enlightenment and progress--has managed to slay, at conservative estimate, 34 million of its own citizens.<sup>37</sup>

From the liberal side, Hubert Humphrey also attacked the "sold-out" policy of Nixon toward Taiwan. But his concern was more for the native Taiwanese, as distinct from the Nationalist Chinese who came from the mainland. "It is now clear," he said, "that the rug has been

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 6533.

<sup>36</sup>Kissinger, p. 1093.

<sup>37</sup>U.S. Congress, Congressional Record (1972), p. 5768.

pulled out from under the Taiwanese, though the people of the island of Formosa once aspired to determine their own destiny."<sup>38</sup> Further criticism came from two other candidates for the presidency, Rep. Paul McCloskey, Jr. and Senator Henry Jackson. McCloskey welcomed the limited renewal of relations with China but said that, despite Nixon's trip, "we did not progress one inch toward settling the major problem of today, ending the Vietnam War." Jackson likewise expressed disappointment that Nixon had not gained concessions on Vietnam from the Chinese Government.<sup>39</sup>

As for the American people, Nixon found out that he had won the approval of a substantial majority. According to a nationwide Louis Harris Survey, 73 percent of the American people approved of the trip.<sup>40</sup> For at least a week, Nixon appeared as "a man of peace" in the television and press coverage. Many Americans for the first time saw him as their president, not merely "the politician in the White House," and found themselves rooting for him to succeed.<sup>41</sup> His mission unquestionably boosted his reelection campaign.

After the China visit of February, 1972, the new relationship between the United States and China entered into a period of "honeymoon." A series of bilateral efforts marked the development of friendship. On March 10, 1972, White House Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler announced that Paris was chosen as a "mutually convenient location" to discuss

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 5780.

<sup>39</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, China and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1973), p. 4.

<sup>40</sup>"First Steps of a Long March," Newsweek, LXI (March 6, 1972), p. 15.

<sup>41</sup>Frank Van der Linden, Nixon's Quest for Peace (Washington: Robert B. Luce, Inc., 1972), p. 165.

the problems between China and the United States. Three days later, Arthur M. Watson, American Ambassador, and Huang Chen, Chinese Ambassador, met in the Chinese Embassy in Paris for the first of a series of private discussions on matters of interest to the two countries.<sup>42</sup> From April 19 to May 3, the Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield and the Minority Leader Hugh Scott, visited six Chinese cities; and the House Majority Leader Hale Boggs and the Minority Leader Gerald Ford made a similar trip in June and July. These high-level visits to China by congressional leaders had been arranged during Nixon's visit.<sup>43</sup>

On June 19, 1972, Kissinger again arrived in Peking and held talks with Chou En-lai on the Vietnam War. After four days of meetings, an official joint statement was issued simultaneously in Washington and Peking on June 24. It stated that those meetings "consisted of concrete consultations to promote the normalization between the two countries."<sup>44</sup>

After the end of July, the Associate Press and Hsin Hua, the official Chinese press agency, agreed to an exchange of news and photographs. It was the first regular news contact with mainland China for a U.S. organization since December, 1949. Late in 1972, a group of American newspaper editors under the auspices of the American Society of Newspaper Editors visited China.<sup>45</sup>

Sino-American relations continued to develop satisfactorily in early 1973. On March 9, the White House announced that the last three

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<sup>42</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, China and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1973, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>"Text of Communique," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, LXVI (July 17, 1972), p. 85.

<sup>45</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, China and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1973, p. 5.



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Americans held prisoner in China would be set free. Among them was John T. Downey, an admitted CIA agent, whose sentence was commuted at the personal request of President Nixon to Chou En-lai.<sup>46</sup>

In mid-February, 1973, Kissinger took his fifth trip to Peking and spent five days there in conferences with Premier Chou, Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei, and other senior Chinese officials. He also met with Chairman Mao for a long conversation. A joint communique reported that the two governments had found that the progress in their relations during the past year was "beneficial to the people of their two countries." Most important of all, the two sides agreed that the time was appropriate for accelerating the normalization of relations; consequently, each side would establish a liaison office in the capital of the other "in the near future."<sup>47</sup> On March 15, 1973, President Nixon announced at a news conference that he had selected Ambassador David K. E. Bruce to head the U.S. liaison office in Peking. China experts Alfred Jenkins of the State Department and John H. Holdridge of the National Security Council were assigned to that staff.<sup>48</sup> The U.S. liaison office was officially opened on May 15 when Bruce arrived in Peking. Two weeks later, the chief of the Chinese liaison mission, Huang Chen arrived in Washington to resume official contact with the United States.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Downey, 42, had been imprisoned by the Chinese since 1952. He and Richard Fectean disappeared on a plane in 1952 during the Korean War. In November, 1954, the Chinese announced that Downey had been sentenced to life imprisonment on espionage charges. Fectean, who had received a 20-year sentence, was released on December 12, 1972. The other two prisoners were American pilots, Maj. Philip E. Smith of the Air Force and Lieut. Comdr. Robert J. Flynn. They were captured in 1965 and 1967 when they strayed over China during raids on North Vietnam.

<sup>47</sup> "Text of Communique," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, LXVII (March 19, 1973), p. 313.

<sup>48</sup> Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1973, p. 202.

By late 1973 and early 1974, there were signs that the normalization process had begun to slow down, although the U.S. Government continued taking small steps to demonstrate its commitment to implement the Shanghai Communiqué. In November, 1973, Kissinger visited Peking for the sixth time and saw Chairman Mao and Premier Chou. But they could not reach any new agreement since Washington's continued recognition of Taiwan made normal diplomatic relations impossible.<sup>49</sup> In early 1974, with the administration's blessing, the U.S. Congress repealed the 1955 Formosa Resolution, and Washington reduced the number of American military men on Taiwan to under four thousand.<sup>50</sup>

Peking clearly continued to hope for further U.S. steps toward normalization, but the Taiwan problem still posed the crucial obstacle to normal relations. In nonofficial exchanges, the Chinese showed increasing sensitivity on the Taiwan issue, and they began raising problems that they had been willing to overlook in 1972-1973.<sup>51</sup> With his increasing anxiety over the Watergate crisis, Nixon feared that further improvement of relations at Taiwan's expense would irritate those conservative senators who were his hope of defeating a possible impeachment conviction in the Senate.<sup>52</sup> Thus, the normalization of relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China could not be completed in his second term, as Nixon hoped.

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<sup>49</sup>Szulo, p. 753.

<sup>50</sup>Barnett, China Policy: Old Problems and New Challenges, p. 8.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>52</sup>Michel Oksenberg and Robert B. Oxnam, p. 267.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE IMPACT OF NIXON'S CHINA POLICY

#### Taiwan

When Nixon was elected President in 1968, the Nationalist Government in Taiwan expressed happiness and expected that the United States would maintain the existing relations, or even better relations, with the Republic of China. However, soon after he assumed office, President Nixon ordered a general review of America's China policy, and in mid-1969, he began unilaterally to take a series of small but symbolic steps to reduce U.S. restrictions on trade and travel with Communist China. Before the end of that year, the United States had ended active naval patrolling in the Taiwan Straits. The secret trip of Kissinger to Peking and the announcement of Nixon's visit to China in July, 1971, were peculiar shocks to Nationalist China. Unwilling to believe that there was a drastic shift of policy toward China, the government of Taiwan tried to minimize the importance of the American rapprochement. The Taiwanese anxiously warned the United States that it would be a mistake and would not serve American interest to deal with Communist China and stressed that Taiwan's future could not be decided by others.<sup>1</sup> Though Taiwan had pretended that it would not be influenced

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<sup>1</sup>"What Now for Nationalist China--Interview with Taiwan's Ambassador to U.S.," U.S. News and World Report, LXXIII (August 2, 1971), p. 42.



by the new policy of President Nixon, its position in the world did begin to change under the impact of Nixon's policy. The immediate important event was the expulsion of Taiwan from the United Nations in late October, 1971.

Despite the Chinese Communists' taking over the mainland in 1949, the Nationalist Government in Taiwan had maintained that it was still the legitimate government of China and represented the whole Chinese people. In the meantime, the government in Peking made the same claim since it actively controlled the mainland.<sup>2</sup> The struggle for Chinese representation in the United Nations started when the Chinese Foreign Minister Chou En-lai raised the question in 1949. It came before the Security Council in January, 1950, and the General Assembly in late 1950.<sup>3</sup> The Korean War swung the mood of Washington toward branding Communist China as an aggressor. From 1951 through 1960, the United States was able to keep the issue off the official UN agenda by sponsoring a so-called "moratorium" resolution each year, which declared simply that the General Assembly would not consider the issue during the current year.<sup>4</sup> When this tactic faced possible defeat, the United States adopted a new approach designed to achieve the same goal. Since 1961 the United States had introduced a resolution each year stating that the Chinese representation issue should be treated as an "important question," whose passage required a two-thirds vote. This resolution received majority support till 1969, though opposition to it had increased greatly

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<sup>2</sup>Wu, p. 142.

<sup>3</sup>Barnett, A New Policy Toward China, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

over the years.<sup>5</sup> In November, 1970, at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Albanian resolution--recognizing Communist China as the sole legal representative of China in the United Nations and at the same time expelling Taiwan--drew 51 votes in favor and 49 against.<sup>6</sup> Although the Albanian resolution failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority vote, many delegates believed that it would succeed in the coming year or two.

In the first two years of his administration, Nixon was steadfast in upholding the seating of Taiwan in the UN. Besides, Communist China continued to call for expelling Taiwan from the UN, which, he thought, would be a mistake because Taiwan had a larger population than two-thirds of the countries which were members of the organization. Therefore, Nixon opposed any proposal to admit Communist China into the UN.<sup>7</sup>

Shortly after the encouraging "ping-pong diplomacy," Nixon began to change his mind. At a press conference on April 29, 1971, he revealed that he was considering the recommendation made by a special presidential commission that the United States should support Communist China's entry into the UN as soon as possible without the expulsion of Nationalist China.<sup>8</sup> On August 2, 1971, Secretary of State Rogers made an announcement that the United States would no longer stand against Communist China's entry into the United Nations, but the U.S. would oppose

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>6</sup>Wu, p. 143.

<sup>7</sup>Szulc, p. 403.

<sup>8</sup>Johnson, p. 162. The commission was appointed by President Nixon for the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, chaired by Henry Cabot Lodge.

expulsion of the Republic of China from the UN.<sup>9</sup> On August 17, George Bush, the U.S. representative to the United Nations, submitted a resolution supporting a dual representation formula to the General Assembly agenda. But the Peking regime repeatedly expressed its opposition to the idea of dual representation and stated that it would not accept membership in the UN as long as Nationalist China held a seat.<sup>10</sup>

The question of Chinese representation came to a vote in the General Assembly on October 25. Up to the last minute, American delegates thought they could prevent Nationalist China's expulsion by persuading the General Assembly to make it an "important question" requiring a two-thirds majority vote for approval.<sup>11</sup> Instead, the "important question" move lost by 59 votes to 55, with 15 nations abstaining. Afterwards, a resolution sponsored by Albania and others to expel the Nationalists and seat Communist China had easy sailing. The vote was 76 in favor, 35 against and 17 abstaining--more than a two-thirds majority of those members voting.<sup>12</sup>

The government of Taiwan blamed President Nixon for Taiwan's expulsion. It pointed out that while Bush was fighting to keep the Republic of China in the United Nations, Henry Kissinger had gone to Peking to arrange Nixon's visit to the mainland. It believed that

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<sup>9</sup>"Secretary Rogers Announces U.S. Policy on Chinese Representation in the UN," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, LXV (August 23, 1971), p. 193.

<sup>10</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, China and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1971, p. 15.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>12</sup>William H. Overholt, "President Nixon's Trip to China and Its Consequences," Asia Survey XIII (July, 1973), p. 713.



Kissinger's presence in Peking assured the Nationalist defeat in the UN because it might well have persuaded some wavering delegations that Washington was not really serious about its campaign to save a seat for Taiwan in the world body.<sup>13</sup>

Nixon's visit in February, 1972, was another blow to Taiwan. Taipei was furious over America's promise in the Shanghai Communique to withdraw American forces and military installations from the island. Though Rogers did hold a special briefing on March 2, for Ambassador Shen to assure him that the United States remained committed to the 1954 defense treaty, Taiwan was convinced that the United States would eventually yield to Communist China's request of abandoning Taiwan in seeking the normalization of relations with Communist China.<sup>14</sup>

After Communist China replaced Taiwan as the Chinese representative in the United Nations and President Nixon visited China, country after country shifted diplomatic ties from Taipei to Peking. Taiwan was expelled also by many other international organizations. Facing the series of blows, President Chiang Kai-shek called upon the people in Taiwan to unite and strengthen its economic and military power in order to survive.<sup>15</sup> As a foreign observer in Taipei said: "The Nationalists are becoming less and less political and more and more economic in their outlook." Taiwan has decided to pursue its objective

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<sup>13</sup>"Why Majority in UN Turned on U.S.?" U.S. News and World Report, LXXIII (November 8, 1971), pp. 17-18.

<sup>14</sup>Szulc, p. 527.

<sup>15</sup>"Deepening Gloom in the 'Other China,'" U.S. News and World Report, LXXIV (February 28, 1972), p. 22.

of creating a "Little Japan" or an "Asian Netherlands" so that its economic success could convince the world that the existence of Taiwan was a reality.<sup>16</sup>

### Japan

Nixon's new China policy had an important impact in world politics. As for Japan, it apparently accelerated Japan's rapprochement with China. As early as 1951, Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida had made a realistic remark: "Red or White, China remains our next door neighbor. Geography and economic laws will prevail in the long run over any ideological differences and artificial trade barriers."<sup>17</sup> Since then, the question of whether to recognize the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate government of China had been one of the most explosive issues in Japanese foreign policy. However, the Japanese administrations were unable to solve this problem partly because of Japan's self-interest in Taiwan for both economic and political reasons.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, Japan persistently maintained a "two-China" stance--trying to improve relations with Communist China without abandoning existing political and economic ties with Taiwan.

When President Nixon entered office and expressed his desire to reach a détente with Peking, Japan welcomed this new attitude. Prime Minister Eisaku Sato even suggested that the whole China problem should

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<sup>16</sup>"Taiwan, Scorned by UN, Still Has a Lot Going for It," U.S. News and World Report, LXXIII (November 8, 1971), p. 23.

<sup>17</sup>Gene T. Hsiao, "The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence," in Gene T. Hsiao (ed.), Sino-American Détente and its Policy Implication (New York: Praeger Publisher, Inc., 1974), p. 160.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

be solved in the 1970's. But before the United States made its policy intentions clear, Sato hesitated to change his "two-China" policy for fear of irritating the U.S. Government.<sup>19</sup>

The failure to consult Japan before Kissinger's secret trip to Peking and the announcement of Nixon's China visit brought a harsh reaction from Japan. The Japanese thought that as America's principal ally in Asia, they should at least have been informed that such a momentous policy shift was under way. The China announcement became known in Japan as the first "Nixon shock," to be followed a month later by the "second shock" of the emergency economic program that imposed wage-price controls at home and trade and currency restrictions abroad.<sup>20</sup> Sato frankly admitted later: "I had not been able to fully trust the United States since the sudden announcement of the President's plan to visit China and its dollar defense measures." For this reason he requested the installation of a "hot line" between Tokyo and Washington "so that Japan will not be unprepared to receive shocks."<sup>21</sup>

Under an overwhelming domestic pressure for a drastic reorientation of Japan's China policy and the rapidly deteriorating relationship with the United States after the two "Nixon shocks," Sato was ready to change the "two-China" policy. He supported the two American resolutions concerning the representation of China in the United Nations. His stance was no longer "two-China" but "one China and two governments."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>20</sup>Nixon, Memoirs, p. 258.

<sup>21</sup>Hsiao, p. 165.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 164.



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As Sino-American détente seemed to have achieved great progress, Sato was anxious to improve relations with China. He expressed publicly his wish to visit China and on one occasion, personally asked a Chinese official to convey "my best regards to Premier Chou En-lai." But Chou ignored Sato's overture, saying that he would welcome a new Prime Minister of Japan who had due respect for "Chinese principles."<sup>23</sup> Then on the eve of Kissinger's second trip to Peking (October 19, 1971), Sato delivered a policy speech in which he for the first time accepted the People's Republic of China as the legitimate representative of China and expressed the hope that the fate of Taiwan would be settled "through negotiations between the parties concerned."<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the defeat of the American resolutions in the United Nations convinced Sato that this would inevitably lead to Japan's formal recognition of China. Accordingly, he sent a special envoy, Shigeru Hori, to Peking to deliver a message to Chou. Again, Chou refused to accept Sato as a negotiating partner, primarily because he considered Sato the embodiment of the old anti-Communist China attitude. "However," Chou said, "any successor of Sato will be welcome in Peking as long as he accepts the three basic principles."<sup>25</sup> The three principles, as the Chinese stated, were: there was only one China, and the government of People's Republic of China was the sole legitimate government representing the Chinese people; Taiwan is a province of China and an inalienable part of Chinese territory; and the "Japan-Chiang" peace treaty was illegal and must be abrogated.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Richard Halloran, "Japanese to Seek Closer China Ties," New York Times, October 20, 1971, p. 14.

<sup>25</sup>Hsiao, p. 165.

America's attitude toward the problem of Taiwan in the Shanghai Communiqué greatly influenced Japan's decision to normalize relations with China. The United States declared that it did not intend to challenge the Chinese position on either side of the Taiwan Straits that "there is but one China and Taiwan is a part of China," and affirmed the "ultimate objectives of the United States to withdraw its forces and military installations from Taiwan." These statements showed that the American administration decided to reach a rapprochement with China and leave the Taiwan question to be solved by the Chinese themselves. It provided the Japanese the idea that they too could use the same principle in seeking improvement of relations with China.<sup>26</sup>

When Kakuei Tanaka succeeded Sato on July 6, 1972, Japan's recognition of the People's Republic of China was already a foregone conclusion, since Sato had already accepted a "one-China" policy. What Tanaka had to do was to translate these policy guidelines into action. In the process, he made a number of conciliatory gestures to Peking, including a decision to nullify the peace treaty with Taiwan after the establishment of diplomatic relations with China, the abolition of the "Yoshida Letter,"<sup>27</sup> the conclusion of a Yen-Yuan agreement to settle payments, and the removal of travel restrictions on Chinese residents. In addition, Tanaka managed to secure an invitation from Premier Chou for a summit conference. Chou finally extended his welcome to Tanaka and the date was set for September 25, 1972.

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<sup>26</sup>Barnett, China Policy: Old Problems and New Challenges, p. 23.

<sup>27</sup>Hsiao, p. 167. In 1964, Japanese Government ordered that no state funds could be used to finance Japanese companies to trade with Communist China.

Tanaka spent six days in China (September 25 to 30, 1972). The talks between him and Chou were centered on four points: the peace treaty between Japan and China, the status of Taiwan, the question of "hegemony," and Japan's "reversed" relation with the People's Republic and Taiwan. In the Chou-Tanaka joint statement issued on September 30, Japan unilaterally terminated its peace treaty with Taiwan and formally recognized the government of the People's Republic of China as "the sole legal government of China."<sup>28</sup> As to the status of Taiwan, the Japanese expressed "understanding and respect" for China's stand that "Taiwan is an inalienable part of territory of the PRC." However, it adhered to its stand of complying with the Article 8 of the Potsdam Proclamation, which stated that after the Japanese were defeated in World War II, Taiwan should be returned to China.<sup>29</sup>

Though Japan gave its formal recognition to China after Tanaka's visit, it tried to maintain the existing close economic ties with Taiwan. Therefore, Japan followed a formula of "separation of politics from economics" in its efforts to reverse relations with Communist China and Taiwan. Before the exchange of ambassadors between Peking and Tokyo in January, 1973, nonofficial organizations were established in both Taipei and Tokyo. The Nationalist Embassy in Tokyo was replaced by an Association of East Asia Relations which was founded on December 2, 1972; and the Japanese Embassy in Taipei was replaced by a Japan Interchange Association which was founded on December 1, 1972. Each association enjoys the status of a quasi-legation and performs regular consular functions and some semi-official activities.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Barnett, China Policy: Old Problems and New Challenges, p. 23.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Hsiao, p. 175.



### The Soviet Union

Since the end of World War II, the Soviet Union had become the strongest rival of the United States. The Soviet Union and the United States are the only two countries with substantial nuclear capacities, conventional military power, and economic resources that can influence world peace. Though President Nixon began to think in the late 1960's that it was important for China to play an active role in world affairs, he actually believed that the future peace and stability of the world depended primarily on the relationship between the two super powers.<sup>31</sup> Facing the expansion of Soviet military power, both China and the United States saw a necessity to reach better Sino-American relations in order to check the increasing threat from the Soviets to world peace. President Nixon repeatedly denied that the attempt to improve American relations with Peking was specifically directed at any other nation (particularly the Soviet Union). Nonetheless, many Sinologists believed "Peking is the door to Moscow"--that the Nixon administration was using a Sino-American rapprochement to prod the Soviet Union into agreements with the U.S. on world problems.<sup>32</sup>

Unquestionably, the Soviet observers agreed that the Americans, in pursuing their flirtation with China, wished to complicate Sino-Soviet affairs aimed toward "getting the PRC further from the socialist system and involving it in the political intrigues of American imperialism

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<sup>31</sup>Morton H. Halprin, "America and Asia: The Impact of Nixon's China Policy," in Roderick MacFarquhar, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

against the forces of socialism, peace, and progress."<sup>33</sup> The Soviet leaders did expect some improvement of the Sino-American relationship, but they never thought that there would be such rapid progress until they heard the news of Kissinger's expedition to Peking and the announcement of Nixon's trip to China. Their immediate reaction to the Nixon visit was stony silence.<sup>34</sup> A week later, the Soviets reprinted in the Weekly Leterturnave Fazeta, an article originally distributed by the official Bulgarian Telegraph Agency. According to that article, the Sino-American rapprochement was designed as an anti-Soviet policy by both the United States and China. It charged the United States with being aggressive in its relations with the Soviet Union, and attacked China's engaging in "secret collusion with imperialism."<sup>35</sup> The first authoritative Soviet comment came on July 24. Pravda declared:

Our party and state will take into account all possible consequences of the Chinese-American contacts . . . any designs to use the contacts between Peking and Washington for some "pressure" on the Soviet Union, on the states of the socialist community, are nothing but the result of a loss of touch with reality.<sup>36</sup>

While the Soviets emphasized that they would not be influenced by any change of Sino-American relations, they began to move energetically on two fronts to deal with the new international reality. First, they started a "counter-offensive" to neutralize the potential consequences of the Sino-American thaw and to pursue better relations with

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<sup>33</sup>George Ginsburgs, "Moscow's Reaction to Nixon's Jaunt to Peking," in Gene T. Hsiao, p. 139.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>36</sup>Szulc, p. 571.

countries in Asia and democratic Europe. Second, they sought to improve rapidly their relations with Washington. They were suddenly anxious to create the impression that more serious business could be accomplished in Moscow than in Peking.<sup>37</sup>

The first instance in the Soviet "counter-offensive" came in the summer of 1971, in connection with the Indian-Pakistani conflict over Bangladesh. Fearful that a Sino-American détente might increase Pakistan's military capacity and whittle down India's armed superiority, India sought support from the Soviet Union. The Kremlin, of course, welcomed this drift and saw a unique chance to make India dependent on the Soviet Union and coincidentally undermine the influence of both China and America in the Indian subcontinent.<sup>38</sup> A Soviet-Indian treaty of friendship was signed on August 9, 1971, which provided India Soviet support in the coming Indian-Pakistani War.

The next step in Moscow's global campaign to counter the Sino-American détente was to seek understanding and cooperation with Japan. In January, 1972, Andrei Gromyko visited Tokyo where, according to Western analysts, he hoped to "reconnoiter current Japanese views on the United States and China, plumb the depth of Japanese resentment over the Nixon administration's secretive tactics in approaching the PRC, investigate the possibility of exploiting Japanese pique over the incident to the advantage of the Soviet Union, and to block the PRC's moves to woo Japan."<sup>39</sup> The Soviets tried hard to win the Japanese over

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ginsburgs, p. 150.

<sup>39</sup>Szulc, p. 528.



to their side and promised to make concessions, including a peace treaty, commercial and economic cooperation, and better treatment of Japanese fishermen in Soviet waters.<sup>40</sup> The Japanese also expressed welcome to the rapprochement from the Soviet Union because they had gradually come to distrust America's attitude toward Japan after the two "Nixon shocks" and wanted to show the United States that Japan would adopt an independent policy toward the Soviet Union.<sup>41</sup>

North Korea was another country with which the Soviet Union tried to improve its relations. Until now, Pyongyang had been always leaning to Peking's side. Under an arrangement with the Soviets, a North Korean delegation visited Moscow at the same time Nixon stayed in Peking. The trip to Moscow served dual purposes. It showed Peking that the North Korean regime did not depend wholly on China's support and that it had other friends in the world on whom it could count. It also met North Korea's desire to obtain Soviet assistance in exchange for taking a more middle position in the Sino-Soviet controversy.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile, Moscow also sought improvement of relations with other "capitalist" countries. There were important discussions with the political leaders of West Germany, France, Canada, and Scandinavian countries. Considerable progress was achieved especially in dealing with West Germany. The Soviet Union wanted to show that if Washington and Peking could bury the hatchet, so could Bonn and Moscow. Consequently, the Soviet Union made important concessions in its negotiations with the three western powers on the Berlin issue. The accomplishment

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<sup>40</sup>Ginsburg, p. 143.

<sup>41</sup>Szulc, p. 528.

<sup>42</sup>Ginsburgs, p. 151.

of the Berlin Agreement in September, 1971, doubtlessly owed much of its success to the dramatic development in the Far East.<sup>43</sup>

After this initial "counter-offensive" to the Sino-American détente, the Soviet Union calmed down and sought to improve Soviet-American relations lest Washington further intensify its rapprochement with Peking to Moscow's disadvantage or aid and arm China against it. Although Moscow once again warned the United States against anti-Sovietism and denounced its attempt to "use China's desertion from the international communist movement for its own purposes," Russian criticism of U.S. policy was moderate.<sup>44</sup> It tried to play down the importance of Nixon's trip to China, and ignored the statement in the Shanghai Communique that the U.S. and China disavowed any intention to seek hegemony in East Asia and opposed any effort in that direction by any third country as well. Instead, the Tass commentary focused on the statement that there remained "essential differences between China and the United States" on foreign policy issues and in their social system.<sup>45</sup> The moderate reaction toward the Shanghai Communique

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 147; Szulc, p. 427. The ambassadorial level negotiations between the United States, France, and Britain on one side and the Soviet Union on the other concerning the question of Berlin began in March, 1970, and lasted for seventeen months. On September 3, 1971, the four powers signed the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin. According to the agreement, Berlin remained under the four-power rule. However, the Soviet Union for the first time formally committed itself to guarantee that all forms of traffic to and from West Berlin henceforth be "unimpeded." West Berliners would be authorized to visit East Berlin and East Germany for thirty days annually. East Berliners also were free to enter West Berlin, but East Germany retained control over departures of its citizens.

<sup>44</sup>Ginsburgs, p. 150.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 152.

reflected the Kremlin's determination to retain an open channel of communication with Washington and to avoid jeopardizing Nixon's planned trip to Moscow in May, 1972.

Nixon set off for Moscow on May 22, 1972, and spent eight days in the Soviet Union for a summit with Soviet leaders. The Soviets seemed to be tougher negotiators as compared with the Chinese, according to Kissinger's experience, but there were more concrete accomplishments achieved from the Russian journey. Returning from China after his February visit, the President brought home only the prospect of formal relations with Peking and some plans for cultural exchanges between China and the United States. However, returning from Moscow, Nixon brought seven agreements with the Soviet Government, including two nuclear arms control accords and agreements in trade and scientific development.<sup>46</sup> In addition, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to make further efforts to ensure a peaceful future for Europe and reduce tension and conflict in the world, according to the joint communique of May 29.<sup>47</sup> Apparently the Soviets were trying to convince Washington that it had more to gain by being friendly to Moscow. Thus, the improvement of Soviet-American relations in 1972 could be viewed as a direct impact from the Sino-American détente.

#### Vietnam War

Vietnam had long been influenced by, and played a significant role in, Sino-Soviet-American relations. Since the escalation of the

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<sup>46</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, Nixon: The Fourth Year of His Presidency (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1973), p. 10.

<sup>47</sup>Szulc, p. 581.



American war effort in 1965, many observers believed that it was actually an American action to confront China and the Soviet Union in an effort to contain communism.<sup>48</sup> For years the North Vietnamese fought for total victory against the Americans, following the so-called Ho Chi Minh formula, which Ho maintained until his death and which was memorialized in his will when he died on September 4, 1969

The resistance war against U.S. aggression may drag out. Our compatriots may have to undergo new sacrifices in terms of property and human lives. In any case, we must be resolved to fight the U.S. aggressors till total victory.<sup>49</sup>

Until 1971, Moscow and Peking competed for the favor of Hanoi and gave support against Washington. In the meantime, Hanoi was successful in manipulating them against each other in order to enhance its own independence and power.<sup>50</sup>

The announcement of Nixon's plan to visit China in July, 1971, was a great blow to the North Vietnamese. Nixon's new China policy was unquestionably motivated partly by the assumption that a détente with China might be helpful in ending the Vietnam War. Therefore, the Sino-American rapprochement threatened to deprive North Vietnam of one of the strongest supporters of its policy to defeat the Americans.<sup>51</sup> Hanoi began to realize that time was running out for them to gain control over the rest of Indochina. It now turned to its remaining chief supporter, the Soviet Union, for more aid. The Soviets, disturbed

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<sup>48</sup>Griffith, p. 42.

<sup>49</sup>Kenneth P. Landon, "The Impact of the Sino-American Détente on the Indochina Conflict," in Gene T. Hsiao, pp. 208-209.

<sup>50</sup>Griffith, p. 43.

<sup>51</sup>Wu, p. 156.

by the implications of a China-U.S. détente, saw an opportunity to enlarge their own influence on Hanoi to the detriment of China. Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny arrived in Hanoi on a state visit on October 3, 1971. The Soviet delegation signed an agreement with the North Vietnamese and promised to give Soviet military and economic aid for the coming year.<sup>52</sup> Substantial Soviet military hardware came to Hanoi shortly thereafter. On March 30, 1972, the North Vietnamese started an all-out war, committing 12 of 13 divisions. But, to Hanoi's shock, American air and naval forces rapidly escalated their responsive strikes; and by April 16 they attacked Haiphong, damaging four Soviet ships. Moscow issued a stiff protest, but Nixon made no apology.<sup>53</sup> Although Peking also issued bitter verbal protests against the United States, it did not cancel the visit of the American Senators Hugh Scott and Mike Mansfield. In Washington, Nixon seemed to be confident that Peking would not interfere with his Vietnam adventure.<sup>54</sup>

On May 8, 1972, he announced the mining of the harbors of North Vietnam. At the same time, he warned the Soviets that they must remove their shipping before May 11, when the mines would become active, or such shipping would be unable to move without great hazard.<sup>55</sup> Moscow came to the support of Hanoi with words and publicly objected to the recent American actions. But the Soviets did not cancel Nixon's visit to Moscow on May 22 because they wanted and needed better relations with

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<sup>52</sup>Landon, p. 210.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Wu, p. 157.

<sup>55</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1972, p. 586.

the United States, particularly in view of Nixon's Chinese initiatives.<sup>56</sup> The Chinese also publicly condemned the mining of the North Vietnamese harbors by the Americans. However, they did not do much for Hanoi's aid. They allowed only a handful of Soviet bloc ships carrying supplies for Hanoi to put into south China ports. And, in addition to delaying Soviet ships, Peking flatly refused to grant the Russians permission to fly transports over China on the way to Hanoi.<sup>57</sup>

The ultimate disappointment to Hanoi with respect to Moscow's support was administered on May 29, 1972, in Moscow, when Nixon and the Soviet leaders signed a joint communique which stated principles committing both nations to seek peaceful solutions to disputes. For Hanoi, the time had expired for possible achievement of its goals by direct military means; the time had come to turn to other means. And to begin with, it would become necessary to make concessions to the Americans so that the U.S. involvement in the military aspects of the war could be brought to an end.<sup>58</sup>

Hanoi agreed to renew the Paris negotiations on July 13, 1972. During the summer and autumn, the United States and North Vietnam negotiators devised a compromise formula which could be accepted by both sides. But the renewed negotiations led to a stalemate in December. Kissinger, returning from Paris, held a press conference on December 16 at the White House and summed up the situation:

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<sup>56</sup>Nixon, The Real War, p. 112.

<sup>57</sup>"Where Are Hanoi's Friends Now?" Newsweek, LXI (June 19, 1972), p. 33.

<sup>58</sup>Landon, p. 214.



"The negotiations have had the character where a settlement was always just within our reach, and was always pulled just beyond our reach when we attempted to grasp it." He continued: "The only thing that is lacking is one decision in Hanoi to settle the remaining issue in terms that two weeks previously they had already agreed to."<sup>59</sup>

Nixon determined to push the North Vietnamese to make their decision. The United States resumed a major bombing against all of North Vietnam on December 18 and warned that unrestricted bombing would continue until there was a peace agreement.<sup>60</sup> The "Christmas Bombing" was as heavy as any in the war. Both Moscow and Peking condemned the bombing but took no other action to express their objection. Without support from the Soviet Union and China, Hanoi was forced to adopt a serious attitude toward the peace negotiations. The Paris talks resumed again on January 8, 1973. A week later, Nixon halted all bombing in North Vietnam as a peace gesture.<sup>61</sup> By January 13, Kissinger and Le Duc Tho had worked out the final text of the agreement and the complex protocols.

The Vietnam War was officially ended on January 27, 1973, with a cease-fire at 7 p.m. Secretary of State William Rogers, Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh of North Vietnam, Foreign Minister Tran Van Lam of South Vietnam, and Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh of the PRG (Provisional Revolutionary Government or Viet Cong) signed the peace agreement and

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<sup>59</sup>"Dr. Kissinger Reviews Obstacles in Negotiations on Vietnam Peace," U.S. Department of State Bulletin, LXVIII (January 8, 1973), p. 36.

<sup>60</sup>Landon, p. 214.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

protocols dealing with the Armistice Commission, cease-fire, prisoner exchanges, and demining operations of the North Vietnam harbors.<sup>62</sup>

The United States pledged not to continue "its military involvement or intervene in the internal affairs of South Vietnam," and to withdraw within sixty days all remaining troops and advisory and technical personnel, and to dismantle all its bases in the country.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>63</sup>Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1973, p. 19.

## CHAPTER 6

### EPILOGUE

As Nixon went into office in 1969, he was convinced that it was in America's interest to improve relations with China, especially when he considered the behavior of America's only rival for world-wide power and influence, the Soviet Union. Changes in the balance of power in East Asia had compelled the United States and Communist China to see that, despite years of hostility and distrust, their vital interests in East Asia were best served by a new relationship. For Peking, détente with the United States could provide a guarantee against Soviet domination in East Asia; it would bring an end to American efforts to contain Chinese influence in that area; and it would strengthen Peking's longstanding efforts to regain control of Taiwan. For the United States, détente with China would help to maintain a balance of power in East Asia that was favorable to the United States; it would persuade China to help to end the war in Indochina; and it would provide Washington with important international leverage in its ongoing competition with Moscow. These reasons made a Sino-American rapprochement possible in the early 1970's.

Nixon started his efforts by lifting restrictions on trade with and travel in China to show his willingness to improve relations. He resumed the ambassadorial level talks in Warsaw in January, 1970, although they lasted for only four months. Later, in November of 1970, a secret Pakistani channel was established as a means of communication



between Washington and Peking. In July, 1971, Kissinger made his first trip to Peking and talked with the Chinese Premier Chou En-lai and arranged a visit by Nixon to Peking. In October, 1971, when Kissinger made his second trip to China, it was precisely the time for the annual debate on the China seat in the General Assembly of the United Nations. Kissinger's staying in Peking was a signal to the majority of UN delegates that the United States was seeking a new relationship with China. Consequently, by a substantial margin, China was voted in and Taiwan was voted out.

The negotiations with China reached their highest point when Nixon flew to Peking to meet and talk with the Chinese Communist leaders in February, 1972. In the week of his visit, the United States and China achieved some understanding: there was only one China, Taiwan and the mainland would be settled by the people of both sides of the Taiwan Straits and only through peaceful means. These points had become the guiding principles of Nixon's policy during his administration.

According to Nixon's design, the normalization of relations between China and the United States would have been completed during his second term, but Watergate affairs halted the process. Nixon apparently feared that any improvement in relations with Peking at Taipei's expense would irritate those conservative Senators who were his hope of defeating a possible impeachment conviction in the Senate, and he failed to press the relationship forward during his final months in office.

After Nixon's resignation, President Ford seemed prepared to continue the process of normalization. However, two events prevented him from doing so. First, faced with the collapse of the U.S.-supported South Vietnamese regime in the spring of 1975, American

conservatives were unwilling to accept a break in U.S. ties with Taiwan. Second, there was a strong conservative challenge led by Ronald Reagan within the Republican Party to deprive Ford of the nomination for the presidency. Both events pressed the Ford Administration to demonstrate its conservative credentials and, as a result, progress toward improved relations with Peking, particularly if it involved breaking formal relations with Taipei, was again postponed.<sup>1</sup> On China's side, the slow pace of normalization prompted serious criticism of American policies. The Chinese implied that the U.S. administration was increasingly trying to appease Moscow at the expense of the interests of other countries.<sup>2</sup> Though President Ford also visited China in December, 1975, little had been accomplished to move Sino-American relations forward.

The death of Chou En-lai in January, 1976, and of Mao Tse-tung in September of that year removed the two Chinese leaders most responsible for the current Sino-American rapprochement. Thereafter, the problems of power struggles and the economy preoccupied the new leaders' time and reduced chances of significant changes in Sino-American relations.<sup>3</sup>

In mid-1976, the Democratic nominee for President, Jimmy Carter, urged further steps toward normalization, and the Democratic Party platform advocated "movement toward normalizing diplomatic relations in the context of peaceful resolution of the future of Taiwan."<sup>4</sup> However,

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<sup>1</sup>Michel Oksenberg and Robert B. Coxnam, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup>Robert G. Sutter, China Watch: Toward Sino-American Relations (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University, 1978), p. 114.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>4</sup>Barnett, China Policy: Old Problems and New Challenges, p. 13.

during the first two years of the Carter Administration, movement virtually ceased. Most foreign policy experts endorsed the principle of full Sino-American diplomatic relations, but they disagreed over how the ties should be achieved. The Chinese had stated three conditions for the United States to fulfill: the severance of diplomatic relations with Taipei, the termination of the mutual defense treaty with the Republic of China, and the withdrawal of U.S. military personnel from Taiwan.<sup>5</sup> Carter hesitated to accept these conditions for fear of creating a conservative backlash against the Panama Canal Treaty and SALT negotiations.

Nevertheless, during 1978, a rapid chain of events involving China pushed the Carter Administration toward positive action. Under the joint direction of Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, China began a bold approach to modernization and increased foreign contacts with capitalist countries. China's rush to acquire foreign technology provided an important market for American products. The absence of normal relations threatened American corporations with a loss of business to Japan and West Germany. Moreover, China's continued hostility to the Soviet Union and desire to limit Soviet power prompted some strategists--such as National Security Advisor Abigniew Brzezinski--to talk of "playing the China card."<sup>6</sup>

Late in 1978, Carter decided to act. The mid-term congressional election had passed, eliminating any danger that opposition to a new initiative might hurt the Democratic Party at the polls in November.

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<sup>5</sup>Barnds, p. 181.

<sup>6</sup>Michael Schaller, The United States and China in the Twentieth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1979), p. 189.



In addition, a long series of discussions between Peking and Washington had come close to resolving the problem posed by Taiwan. The Chinese no longer called for "liberation" of the island by any means. Instead, they spoke of "reunification sometime in the future."<sup>7</sup> Intensive discussion early in December produced a final breakthrough. The United States now accepted the three conditions for normalization. On the evening of December 15, 1978, in an address to the American people, President Carter announced:

The United States and the People's Republic of China have agreed to recognize each other and to establish diplomatic relations as of January 1, 1979.

The United States of America recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China. Within this context, the people of the United States will maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan . . . .

The United States of America and the People's Republic of China will exchange ambassadors and establish embassies on March 1.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, Carter also announced that Chinese Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping had accepted an invitation to visit Washington at the end of January, 1979. In the conclusion of his address, the President referred to this decision as "the final result of long and serious negotiations begun by President Nixon in 1972, and continued under the leadership of President Ford." He saw it as an opportunity to resume the "long history of friendship" between the Chinese and American peoples. Accepting political reality, he thought, would strengthen world peace.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Public Papers--Jimmy Carter, 1978, pp. 2264-2265.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 2265.

The establishment of formal relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China was undoubtedly the hardest blow the Nationalist Government had ever met. Both the government and people in Taiwan had realized that America's recognition of Communist China was an inevitable result of President Nixon's visit to Peking in February, 1972. But they were angry because they had not been notified until four hours before President Carter made his announcement. They felt that they had been betrayed by their most friendly ally. They protested against this decision and expressed their determination to face the coming challenge and to fight for their freedom should their lives be threatened. However, Taiwan still considered aid from the United States essential to the defense of its security and, therefore, continued to pursue a friendly policy toward America. And, commercial and economic exchanges between Taiwan and the United States have been steadily increasing since the severance of diplomatic relations in 1979.

The Soviet Union was one of the most nervous countries watching the development of Sino-American détente. Moscow had repeatedly warned that it was not wise for the United States to play "the China card." Although Nixon and Kissinger had declared that "nothing that has been done in our relations with China is in any way directed against any other countries, and especially not against the Soviet Union,"<sup>10</sup> the Russians were not convinced. With the increasing hostilities between the Soviet Union and Communist China, the Kremlin did not want to worsen its relations with the Americans. The Soviets expressed their willingness to move toward a reconciliation with the United States in 1972.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.; Public Papers--Richard Nixon, 1971, p. 326

As a result, several agreements were accomplished by Nixon's visit to Moscow in May. Nixon believed his policy of détente with China did help the progress of Soviet-American détente.

However, if Nixon's China policy was chiefly designed to force the Soviet Union to behave more mildly, it was just a temporary success. As Sino-American relations were improving, the Russians had begun to hasten their effort of encircling China in Asia, especially through improvement of relations with North Korea, Vietnam, and India. At the same time, they tried to enlarge the anti-American mood in the third world and increased assistance to Marxist revolutions in Africa and Latin America to challenge the leadership of the United States in the world. Now, because of a continuing perception of a threat of Soviet expansionism, Nixon's policy of cooperation with China will likely be continued by American administrations at least in the near future.



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