

The London School of Economics and Political Science

Congress, China and the Cold War: Domestic Politics and Sino-American Rapprochement and Normalisation, 1969-1980

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine the impact of the US Congress on the process of Sino-American rapprochement and diplomatic normalisation during the period 1969-1980. Thus far, research on Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation has focused on the role played by the Executive Branch, ignoring the role played by Congress. This study aims to place Executive Branch actions with regard to China policy in the context of domestic political trends and Congressional actions and attitudes, and locates the process of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation in the broader context of shifting domestic attitudes toward the Cold War. This thesis demonstrates that rapprochement would not have been possible in the absence of dramatic domestic political changes in the United States, particularly important shifts of perspective within Congress toward the Cold War in general and China in particular. It traces the development of Congressional attitudes towards China, and examines the interaction between Congress and the Executive Branch with regard to China policy. This study argues that the interplay between the Executive and the Legislative Branches during a decade in which Congress was asserting its views on foreign policy is central to understanding the development of China policy during the 1970's. One of the most effective means by which Congress shaped China policy during the period of this study was by means of its ability to define the political space within which the Executive Branch was able to operate with respect to China policy. Attempts on the part of the Executive Branch to deny Congress influence were only partially successful, and although there were limits on Congress's ability to directly influence policy in the 1970's, this thesis demonstrates that Congress had a much greater impact on the development of China policy during the decade than has previously been acknowledged.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Administrative Assistant (the old term used to denote a Senator or House Member's chief of staff)
ACA	Asian Communist Affairs (State Department office)
AIT	American Institute on Taiwan
ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
CCK	Chiang Kai-shek
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
Chirep	Chinese representation (at the UN)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COCOM	Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls
CQ	<i>Congressional Quarterly</i>
CRS	Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress
D	Democrat
DAS	Deputy Assistant Secretary
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DOD	Department of Defense
DSG	Democratic Study Group
ELINT	Electronic Intelligence
ExIm Bank	Export-Import Bank
FRUS	<i>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
GOP	'Grand Old Party' (Republican Party)
GRC	Government of the Republic of China
ISA	International Security Affairs (Pentagon)
LANDSAT	Land satellite programme

LOC	Library of Congress
MCPL	Members of Congress for Peace Through Law
Memcon	Memorandum of Conversation
MFN	Most Favored Nation (trade status)
NARA I	National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, D.C.
NARA II	National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NIO	National Intelligence Officer
NPMP	Nixon Presidential Materials Project, at the National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland
NSA	National Security Advisor
NSC	National Security Council
PCF/EAP	Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PPS	Policy Planning Staff (State Department)
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRCLO	People's Republic of China Liaison Office
PRM	Presidential Review Memorandum
RG 233	Record Group 233, Records of the United States House of Representatives, The Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, D.C.
RG 46	Record Group 46, Record Group 46, Records of the United States Senate, The Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, D.C.
RG 59	Record Group 59, Records of the U.S. Department of State, National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland

R	Republican
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
RPC	(Senate) Republican Policy Committee
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
SCC	Special Coordinating Committee
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation
SFRC	Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Telcon	Telephone Conversation
TRA	Taiwan Relations Act
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
USLO	United States Liaison Office
WHCF	White House Central Files
WHOCL	White House Office of Congressional Liaison

INTRODUCTION

The late Daniel Patrick Moynihan noted that 'the neglect of congressional history is something of a scandal in American scholarship'.¹ The field of diplomatic history has particularly felt the lack of attention to a Congressional role in foreign policy, especially as regards US-China relations. The Congressional contribution to Sino-American relations during the Cold War is the focus of this present study.

Historiography

While there have been biographies of major Congressional actors who influenced foreign policy during the Cold War, including Senators Mike Mansfield, William Fulbright, Frank Church and Henry Jackson, and there is a growing body of political science literature examining the role played by the Congress in foreign policy, only one study of the role played by Congress as an institution and from an historical perspective during the Cold War has been undertaken to date - Robert Johnson's *Congress and the Cold War*.² Johnson's study is exhaustively researched and has the strength of recognising that the Congressional impact on foreign and national security policy should be measured by more than simply the amount of legislation addressing foreign and national security issues, but also by other more subtle ways that Congress can influence the direction of such policy, including 'the ability of individual legislators to affect foreign affairs by changing the way that policymakers and the public thought about international questions'.³ Johnson's study is the first to not only examine the role of Congress in shaping foreign and national security policy during the Cold War, but also to assert that the Congress played a pivotal role in the shaping of such policy. Valuable a work as it is, however, his

¹ Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *On the Law of Nations* (Cambridge, 1990), p.50.

² Robert Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War* (London, 2005).

³ Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War*, p.xxiii.

purpose is to give a broad overview of the Congressional role during the Cold War and he therefore gives almost no attention to Congressional attitudes toward China.

Congress has, however, historically played a significant role in China policy. Michael Oksenberg, President Carter's China specialist on the National Security Council staff, noted not long after he left the White House that:

While the executive branch is constitutionally charged with management of foreign policy, on several occasions the Congress has decisively intruded into the management of China policy. When the Congress has chosen to immerse itself, its impact has been proven profound and lasting.⁴

It is surprising, therefore, that although voluminous literature on Sino-American relations exists, so little has been written on the topic of the Congressional role in the development of Sino-American relations and American policy toward China during the Cold War, either by political scientists or by historians. Partially, this can be attributable to the fact that the Executive Branch has historically been responsible for creating and formulating foreign policy. The Executive Branch's primacy in this area has particularly grown since the Supreme Court ruled that the Executive Branch had primary authority over foreign policy decision-making in the 1936 case *United States vs. Curtis-Wright Export Corporation* (which ruled that the President had broad powers to conduct foreign policy, regardless of whether Congress had delegated such power to the Executive), which decision was followed by the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War confrontation with the Soviet Union, crises that demanded strong executive leadership and resulted in an almost unquestioned Executive Branch authority over foreign policy. Accordingly, it has been more tempting for scholars to focus their attention on that branch

⁴ Michael Oksenberg, 'Congress, Executive-Legislative Relations, and American China Policy', in Edmund Muskie, Kenneth Rush and Kenneth Thompson, eds., *The President, the Congress, and Foreign Policy* (Lanham, Maryland, 1986), p.218.

of the government at the expense of Congress. The diffusion of authority within the Congress, which makes researching that body a daunting task given the large number of power centres and the vast material that require consultation, provides another reason for the lack of scholarly attention to the Congressional role in foreign policy.

There have been numerous historical studies of the process of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation, but each of these gives little or no attention to the role played by the Congress. This is also the case with the memoirs of each of the Executive Branch officials involved in the process of rapprochement and normalisation.⁵ Historical studies of the process of rapprochement include: Hao Yufan, *Dilemma and Decision: An Organizational Perspective on American China Policy Making* (Berkeley, 1997); Harry Harding, *Fragile Relationship: The United States and China Since 1972* (Washington, D.C, 1992); Robert Ross, ed., *China, the United States, and the Soviet Union: Tripolarity and Policy Making in the Cold War* (Armonk, New York, 1993); Robert Ross and Jiang Changbin, eds., *Re-examining the Cold War: US-China Diplomacy, 1954-1973* (Cambridge, 2001); and Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972* (Stanford, 1990).

Several historical studies touch on the role of Congress in the first few years after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, including Nancy Bernkopf Tucker's *Patterns in the Dust*, which focuses on the period 1949-1950⁶; Thomas Stolper's *China, Taiwan and the Offshore Islands*, which examines on the Taiwan Straits crises of the

⁵ See Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York, 1978); Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, 1979), *Year's of Upheaval* (London, 1982), and *Years of Renewal* (New York, 2000); Gerald R. Ford, *A Time to Heal: The Autobiography of Gerald R. Ford* (New York, 1979); Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981* (New York, 1983); Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York, 1982); Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York, 1983).

⁶ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy, 1949-1950* (New York, 1983).

1950's⁷; David Finklestein's *Washington's Taiwan Dilemma: 1949-1950*, which focuses on the formation of policy toward the Nationalists and the Chinese Communists, respectively, during and immediately after the establishment of the PRC;⁸ Chang Tsan-kuo's *The Press and China Policy*, which is the only history to give attention to the period of rapprochement⁹; and Thomas Christensen's *Useful Adversaries*, which covers Sino-American relations in the first decade of the Cold War.¹⁰ These studies disagree on the extent and nature of Congressional influence, with some, such as Tucker and Christensen, arguing that Congress was able to significantly shape China policy during the Truman Administration,¹¹ and others, such as Chang Tsan-kuo, whose work focuses on the press, arguing that Congress did not play a significant role.¹²

A few scholars have addressed the Congressional role during the opening and normalisation process very briefly, including Jaw-Ling Joanne Chang in *United States-China Normalization: An Evaluation of Foreign Policy Decision-Making* (Denver, 1986), pp.342-4; Robert Ross in *Negotiating Cooperation: the United States and China, 1969-1989* (Stanford, 1995), pp.55-7; Robert Sutter in *The China Quandary: Domestic Determinants of US China Policy* (Boulder, 1983), pp.3-5; and Rosemary Foot in *The Practice of Power: US Relations with China Since 1949* (Oxford, 1995) pp.100-1. Nancy Bernkopf Tucker's recent work, *Strait Talk*, includes some discussion of the role of Congress in the history of the Sino-American-Taiwan triangular relationship, but that discussion is primarily limited to Congressional action surrounding the Taiwan Relations

⁷ Thomas Stolper, *China, Taiwan and the Offshore Islands* (Armonk, New York, 1985).

⁸ David Finklestein, *Washington's Taiwan Dilemma, 1949-1950: From Abandonment to Salvation* (Fairfax, Virginia, 1993).

⁹ Chang Tsan-kuo, *The Press and China Policy: Illusion of Sino-American Relations, 1950-1984* (Norwood, New Jersey, 1993).

¹⁰ Thomas Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton, 1996).

¹¹ Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust*, pp.162-8; Christensen, *Useful Adversaries*, pp.58-66.

¹² Chang, *The Press and China Policy*, p.244.

Act of 1979.¹³ Only one historical study has been published to date that concentrates wholly on the Congressional role through the 1970's, Guangqiu Xu's *Congress and the US-China Relationship: 1949-1979*.¹⁴ While admirable for its attempt to address a yawning gap in the literature, and including some evidence from Chinese sources, this lone study for the most part ignores the interplay between the Legislative and Executive Branches and the broader political backdrop to the development of China policy. In addition, it makes use of a very limited range of archival resources, virtually ignoring the archival materials available in the papers of various Senate and House leaders as well as those of relevant private individuals such as Edgar Snow and Executive Branch officials such as Averell Harriman, thus leaving vast swaths of material unexplored. It also includes no oral interviews or correspondence with former Members of Congress, Congressional staff members or Executive Branch officials. Finally, only the last chapter and a half of Xu's study examines the period 1969-1979, making that examination brief.

Three recent historical studies have noted the limited movements within the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations toward a modification of the policy of containment and isolation of China. Evelyn Goh's *Constructing the US Rapprochement With China* examines the various contending conceptions of China from the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon Administrations to show that official conceptions of China evolved slowly throughout the 1960's and early 1970's, from the perception of China as an aggressive, expansionist state to a weak, cautious state, helping to set the stage for Richard Nixon's dramatic and fundamental policy shift.¹⁵ As innovative and valuable as Goh's approach is, however, it focuses on the what she terms the policy 'discourse'

¹³ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China* (Cambridge, 2009).

¹⁴ Guangqiu Xu, *Congress and the US-China Relationship: 1949-1979* (Akron, Ohio, 2007).

¹⁵ Evelyn Goh, *Constructing the US Rapprochement with China, 1961-1974: From 'Red Menace' to 'Tacit Ally'* (New York, 2004).

regarding China within the Executive Branch and ignores the debate occurring regarding China within Congress and the manner in which that debate may have shaped the White House pursuit of rapprochement. James Peck's *Washington's China* examines an evolution of policy toward China from the 1950's to the mid 1960's, taking a different approach than does Goh by focusing on the role played by nationalism and ideology in constructing and maintaining the structure of containment around China and pursuing its isolation.¹⁶ Peck's study, however, gives no attention to the role played by the Congress both in helping to construct and maintain the policy of containment and isolation and in then turning against that policy, challenging it and helping to prepare the political environment in Washington for the fundamental policy shift that occurred under Richard Nixon. The most recent study touching on Sino-American rapprochement was Michael Lumbers' *Piercing the Bamboo Curtain*, which examines moves within the Johnson Administration toward a re-evaluation of China policy, which Lumbers convincingly argues was a precursor to the fundamental policy change that took place under Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon. Although Lumbers does acknowledge the significance of the 1966 China hearings held by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the study has as its focus the debate over China policy within the Executive Branch.¹⁷

Two political scientists have written on Congress and China policy. The first of these was Yang Jian's *Congress and US China Policy: 1989-1999*, published in 2000.¹⁸ Yang examines the influence of three structural factors in domestic politics that influence China policy: partisanship, constituency interests and committees, and his analysis revolves around the debate over 'Most Favored Nation' (MFN) trade status for China and

¹⁶ James Peck, *Washington's China: The National Security World, the Cold War, and the Origins of Globalism*, (Boston, 2006). Peck's discussion of the evolution of thought toward China within the Johnson Administration is found on pages 226-59.

¹⁷ Michael Lumbers, *Piercing the Bamboo Curtain: Tentative Bridge-Building to China During the Johnson Years*, (Manchester, 2008). Discussion of the Fulbright hearings is found on pages 154-6.

¹⁸ Yang Jian, *Congress and US China Policy: 1989-1999* (Hauppauge, New York, 2000).

the issue of Taiwan. As the title describes, however, the book is limited to examination of the Congressional role during the Administrations of George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton. More recently, Tao Xie's *US China Relations: China Policy on Capitol Hill*, touches briefly on the period prior to 1989, but his focus, too, is the period from 1989 onward (he argues, based on the lack of significant legislative action in comparison to the post 1989 period, that Congress had little influence on China policy prior to 1989).¹⁹ Tao examines roll call votes, bills, resolutions and amendments, but notes the limitations that the committee system, differences between the two chambers, and the general diffusion of power within the Congress place on Congress's ability to legislate policy. Despite arguing that Congress had little influence on China policy prior to 1989 due partially to the dearth of China-related legislation from that period, Tao does give attention to the importance of some of the non-legislative means of influencing policy. While Tao's study very briefly addresses Congressional action in relation to China during the 1970's, that attention is brief and, as a work of political science, it lacks historical perspective, neglecting an analysis of the broad historical context for the types of Congressional interventions considered.

A limited literature, beginning with writings by Arthur Waldron and Rosemary Foot, has begun to develop which gives some attention to changes to the domestic and strategic context within which China policy was considered in the Executive Branch in the mid and late 1960's, which changes helped to pave the way for Nixon's opening.²⁰

¹⁹ Tao Xie, *US-China Relations: China Policy on Capitol Hill* (New York, 2008).

²⁰ Arthur Waldron, 'From non-existent to almost normal: US-China relations in the 1960's', in Diane Kunz, ed., *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade: American Foreign Relations During the 1960's* (New York, 1994); Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: US Relations with China Since 1949* (Oxford, 1995); Robert Garson, 'Lyndon Johnson and the China Enigma', *Journal of Contemporary History* 32:1 (1997), pp.63-80; Victor S. Kaufman, *Confronting Communism: US-British Policies Toward China* (Columbia, Missouri, 2001), chapters 7-8; Robert Schulzinger, 'The Johnson Administration, China, and the Vietnam War', and Rosemary Foot, 'Redefinitions: The domestic context and America's China policy in the 1960's', both in Robert Ross and Jiang Changbin, eds., *Re-examining the Cold War: US-China Diplomacy, 1954-1973* (Cambridge, 2001); and Goh, *Constructing the US Rapprochement with*

Within this underdeveloped body of literature, however, no one has yet focused their attention on the Congress, nor carried such a study through the whole process of rapprochement and normalisation. As we shall see, the study of the evolving Congressional attitudes toward China during this period can help to illuminate the domestic political environment that provided Nixon with the political freedom to consider change of policy and, to a limited degree, also provided partial motivation for such change. A focus on domestic politics and evolving Congressional attitudes during the 1970's also sheds light on the ongoing process of normalisation and the development of the Sino-American relationship that unfolded after Nixon's trip to China under Presidents Ford and Carter. This thesis attempts to fill the gap in rapprochement literature by examining the role played by Congress and that of domestic politics in the process of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation, arguing that without paying attention to this factor only a truncated picture of the process of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation emerges. As historian Jason Parker has written, 'Given that both American leaders and foreign actors alike were paying close attention to [American domestic politics], we [historians] should ourselves do no less.'²¹

Although little has been written on the nexus between domestic politics and China policy, a relatively new and growing body of literature does exist in the area of domestic politics and foreign policy in general. Formerly given little attention, recent scholarship has begun to show increased attention to this area, arguing forcefully that knowledge of domestic politics can play a significant role in increasing our understanding of foreign policy and hence of international history. Fredrik Logevall and Craig Campbell have termed the area within which the international and domestic political dynamics intersect

China, pp.17-98.

²¹ Jason Parker, "'On Such a Sea Are We Now Afloat': Politics and US Foreign Relations History Across the Water's Edge", *Perspectives on History* 45:9 (May 2011).

the 'intermestic'.²² Logevall and Campbell have even asserted that 'for much of the Cold War the domestic variables predominated over the foreign ones.'²³ While domestic variables could not be said to dominate foreign variables during the period of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation, they certainly were far more powerful shapers of the relationship during this period than has previously been acknowledged. Melvin Small has authored a significant body of literature examining the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy.²⁴ Other scholars to examine aspects of this 'intermestic' include Steven Casey²⁵, American political historian Julian Zelizer, who has written in *Arsenal of Democracy* about the manner in which domestic politics has impacted national security policy²⁶, Dominic Sandbrook, who has written on the many ways that domestic politics informed Nixon's approach to foreign policy²⁷, and Andrew Johns, whose recent work on the domestic politics of the Vietnam War significantly added

²² Fredrik Logevall and Campbell Craig, *America's Cold War: The Politics of Insecurity* (Cambridge, 2009), pp.10-2.

²³ Fredrik Logevall and Campbell Craig, *America's Cold War*, p.6.

²⁴ See Melvin Small, 'Historians Look At Public Opinion', in Melvin Small, ed., *Public Opinion and Historians* (Detroit, 1970), pp.13-32; 'Public Opinion on Foreign Policy: The View From the Johnson and Nixon White Houses', *Politica* 16:2 (1984), pp.184-200; *Johnson, Nixon and the Doves* (New Brunswick, 1988); 'Public Opinion', in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (New York 1991), pp.165-76; 'Richard Nixon and the Containment of Domestic Enemies', in David L. Anderson, ed., *Shadow on the White House: Presidents and the Vietnam War, 1945-1975* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1993); *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement* (New Brunswick, 1994); 'The Politics of Foreign Policy', in Stanley Kutler, *The History of the United States in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1995); *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics in US Foreign Policy, 1789-1994* (Baltimore, 1996); *The Presidency of Richard Nixon* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1999); *Antiwarriors: The Vietnam War and the Battles for America's Hearts and Minds* (Wilmington, 2002); and *At Water's Edge: American Politics and the Vietnam War* (Chicago, 2005)

²⁵ Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion and the War Against Nazi Germany* (New York, 2001); and *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950-1953* (New York, 2008)

²⁶ Julian Zelizer, *Arsenal of Democracy: The Politics of National Security From World War II to the War on Terrorism* (New York, 2009)

²⁷ Dominic Sandbrook, 'Salesmanship and Substance: The Influence of Domestic Policy and Watergate', in Frederik Logevall and Andrew Preston, eds., *Nixon in the World: American Foreign Relations, 1969-1977* (New York, 2008), pp.85-106.

to scholarship of this topic which Melvin Small had previously undertaken.²⁸ Lastly, Jeremy Surri, in *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente*, has examined the manner in which the domestic political and cultural turmoil that spanned the globe during the late 1960's was a significant domestic shaper of the foreign policy choices of many states from the late 1960's well into the 1970's.²⁹ Although Surri's work does not focus on Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation, the story of Sino-American relations from the late 1960's through the 1970's fits well within his conceptual framework. Indeed, the cultural ferment of the late 1960's and early 1970's played a significant role in shaping the political environment within which the new Nixon Administration approached the issue of China.

The Executive Branch, Congress, and Foreign Policy: A Brief Overview of Approaches

Although historically the Executive Branch has been seen as the branch of government most responsible for formulating and implementing foreign policy, the Congress has exerted considerable influence over foreign policy throughout the history of the United States, particularly, as Michael Oksenberg noted, in the area of China policy. Regarding its ability to influence foreign policy in general, former Representative Lee Hamilton, a past chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, has noted that:

Notwithstanding the key role of the President, most of the foreign policy powers enumerated in the Constitution are with Congress. In general, Congress is instructed to provide for the common defence and to declare war. It also has great power because of its control of the purse.³⁰

Given the high profile enjoyed by the Executive Branch in the creation and

²⁸ Andrew Johns, *Vietnam's Second Front: Domestic Politics, the Republican Party and the War* (Lexington, Kentucky, 2010).

²⁹ Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge, 2003)

³⁰ Address by Lee Hamilton at the Thirteenth Annual Student Symposium, sponsored by the Center for the Study of the Presidency, Washington, D.C., 13 March 1982, published as 'Congress and Foreign Policy', in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 12:2 (Spring 1982), p.133.

implementation of foreign policy, it has been easy to miss the major foreign policy-making powers enjoyed by the Congress, of which Hamilton lists the most prominent. There are, in fact, many other ways in which the Congress can play a critical role in the foreign policy process and many levers at its disposal with which it can influence policy outcomes. Some of these are worth reviewing briefly, since they form the mechanisms by which Congress shaped US policy towards China during the Cold War. In the remainder of this study such levers will be discussed in greater detail.

One important area in which the Congress plays a vital role is in the importance of public and congressional support to the success or failure of an Administration's foreign policy initiatives. This is both due to Congress's power in its own right, and to the fact that attitudes in Congress many times reflect the predominant attitudes on the part of the public at large, without whose support any administration's foreign policy is doomed to failure. Because of this, Congressional and public opinion are generally conceded to be important considerations of any administration's formulation of security and foreign policy.³¹ Christian Herter, who succeeded Dulles as Eisenhower's Secretary of State, argued that 'a successful foreign policy must . . . to be effective, command the support of a vast majority of the American people'.³² Charles 'Chip' Bohlen, after a distinguished diplomatic career, wrote regarding foreign policy that 'the most carefully thought out plans of experts, even though 100 percent correct in theory, will fail without public support'.³³ There are a number of theories among political scientists regarding the role played by public opinion in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. Hans Morgenthau, the founder of post-World War II realist thinking in international relations,

³¹ Richard Sobel, *The Impact of Public Opinion on U.S. Foreign Policy Since Vietnam*, (New York, 2001), p.17.

³² Schuyler Foster, 'American Public Opinion and US Foreign Policy', *Department of State Bulletin*, XLI (1959), p.797.

³³ Charles Bohlen, *Witness to History* (New York, 1973), p.177.

held a sceptical view of the influence of public opinion, viewing it as ill-informed and volatile.³⁴ Scholars from the liberal-democratic school of thought have tended to hold a more positive view of the impact of public opinion on foreign policy, seeing public opinion as less volatile and uninformed than did Morgenthau. There is consensus, however, that public opinion matters, even if there is disagreement on the precise nature of the influence that it exerts.³⁵ There is also wide recognition of a close relationship between public and Congressional opinion. Lee Hamilton has asserted that:

The accessibility and representativeness of Congress . . . guarantee that the people will have input into foreign policy-making. . . . The Executive Branch cannot effectively pursue any policy for an extended period without support from the American people. Congressional support is the primary expression of the people's approval. A President is not likely to gain the support of the American people if he cannot gain the support of Congress.³⁶

Complementing Hamilton's view of the centrality of Congress to the healthy functioning of a republican form of government and emphasising the role played by Congress in giving the public influence over the direction of policy, Julian Zelizer has described Congress as 'the heart and soul of democracy, the arena where politicians and citizens most directly interact over pressing concerns'.³⁷

The assumption by many within the Executive Branch that Congress has little or no legitimate role to play in foreign policy, and the consequent neglect (and in many cases conscious shunning) of Congress in the process of policy development, undermines

³⁴ Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York, 1973), pp.146-7.

³⁵ For a summary of theories on the interrelation of public opinion and foreign policy, see Ole Holsti, 'Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: Challenges to the Almond-Lippmann Consensus', *International Studies Quarterly* 36 (1992), pp.439-66.

³⁶ Address by Lee Hamilton, 'Congress and Foreign Policy', p.135.

³⁷ Julian Zelizer, ed., *The American Congress: The Building of Democracy* (Boston, 2004), p.xiv.

an Administration's own foreign policy by denying it the legitimacy that Congressional approval provides, and sets the stage for foreign policy failure. An example of this was the decision by the Carter Administration not to fulfil its promise to consult with Congressional leaders prior to making a decision to break official US diplomatic and security ties with Taiwan and to recognise Mainland China in Taipei's stead, which resulted in a Congressional backlash and the loss of an opportunity to create domestic political consensus behind the new China policy. A particular policy of the Executive Branch, therefore, must enjoy the support of the public, as well as of the Congressional leadership and the majority of the Congressional rank and file. If a proposed policy of the Executive Branch does not enjoy such support, there are several options. It can attempt to convince a substantial proportion of the public and the Legislative Branch that the proposed policy is wise (such as took place in President Nixon's attempts to convince those conservatives opposed to an opening to China to support such an opening), or it can change its course so that it will conform to Congressional and/or public wishes (as when President Ford's and Henry Kissinger's hopes to normalise relations with China had to be postponed due to the lack of a supportive domestic political climate in 1975 and 1976), or, at times, the Congress forcibly reshapes the policy that had been pursued by the Executive Branch (the passage of the Taiwan Relations Act in response to President Carter's pursuit of normalisation of Sino-American relations is an example of this).

In addition to the role of either providing or denying consensus to a policy proposed by the Executive, one of the primary and most powerful means of Congressional influence over foreign policy is through its constitutional power over the purse. Most activities of the federal government must be authorised and funded through Congressional legislation. This results in annual requests from the Executive Branch for

funds, an explanation of the reason those funds are needed, and the manner in which they are to be used. Such budget requests are an important opportunity for the Congress to help determine policy outcomes. As everyone familiar with the workings of Washington knows, the President may submit his budget request to Congress each year, but Congress many times uses that request as a general framework or starting point and then changes, sometimes dramatically, the shape of the budgets of the various Executive Branch departments and agencies with its own policy preferences guiding the shaping process. Thus, the annual budget process is an important and effective way in which Congress makes its policy preferences known and can exert an influence on the direction of policy. Amendments to the authorisation and appropriations bills for the Departments of State and Defense, for example, can have long-lasting impact on foreign and national security policy – a fact that was just as real during the Cold War as it is today.³⁸

One of the key areas of funding that gave Congress a lever over both foreign policy in general and China policy in particular during the Cold War was the annual foreign aid bill, which was regularly used as a vehicle, by both conservatives and liberals, for expressing their policy preferences. During the 1950's and 1960's, foreign aid legislation directed aid in Asia primarily to American allies such as Taiwan, Japan and South Korea largely for the purpose of assisting Washington in the goal of containing Chinese communist influence in the region.³⁹ During the 1950's and early 1960's the

³⁸ James Lindsay, 'The Shifting Pendulum of Power: Executive-Legislative Relations on American Foreign Policy', in James McCormick, ed., *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence* (New York, 2012), p.225.

³⁹ See Senator William Fulbright's 1962 speech in support of the foreign aid bill for FY1963, in which Fulbright affirms that most of the then \$7 billion US aid to East Asia has gone to American allies 'upon which we depend to check the Chinese Reds'; Undated 1962 speech, RG 46, Records of the US Senate; 1958-1965, Congress, Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman Fulbright's statements on foreign affairs, Box 1, National Archives and Record Administration, Washington, D.C. (hereafter, NARA I); See also 5 April 1963 statement of Dean Rusk before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Box 499, Averell Harriman Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (hereafter, LOC), Washington, D.C.

foreign aid bill was used as a vehicle by conservatives to constrain any potential moves the Executive Branch might make in the direction of a more flexible China policy. By the early 1970's, however, while the foreign aid bill continued to be a vehicle for the expression of Congressional attitudes toward China, the attitudes expressed were very different. The failure of the Nixon Administration's foreign aid bill in the autumn of 1971, largely due to anger over the manner of China's seating and Taiwan's expulsion from the UN, is one example. Another example is that of amendments attempting to cut off funding for American military operations in Vietnam and elsewhere in Indochina, which were introduced by liberal Senators and House members with increasingly regularity in the early 1970's, each of which failed until an amendment to cut off funding for the bombing operations targeting the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia succeeded in the summer of 1973 as the Nixon Administration was weakening due to the Watergate scandal. This example illustrates the fact that Congress has the ability, although it has rarely been utilised, to refuse to pass requested funding legislation in order to provide a particularly strong challenge to the foreign policy preferences of the Executive Branch. One of the primary ways in which the Senate Foreign Relations Committee took advantage of the legislative process in order to challenge Nixon Administration foreign policy under the chairmanship of William Fulbright was through amendments attached to the annual foreign aid appropriations bill. By the early 1970's Senate liberals regularly attempted to attach to it various amendments challenging key aspects of the Nixon Administration's foreign and national security policy, including at various points amendments demanding a withdrawal of all American troops from Indochina⁴⁰, the withdrawal of a significant number of American troops from Western Europe, etc.

⁴⁰ This unsuccessful amendment to the FY1972 foreign aid appropriations bill was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield.

The strategy used by individual Members of attaching amendments to legislation that reflect the Member's particular policy preferences became common during the Cold War, with amendments many times being added to otherwise unrelated legislation. Such amendments can be legally binding requirements for the Executive Branch to operate in a certain way, or they can merely be expressions of Congressional intent, such as 'sense of the Senate' amendments that express a desire that policy move in a certain direction. An example of this was the Dole-Stone amendment to the International Security Act of 1978, which had been intended by its authors to be legally binding, but was watered down until it became an unbinding declaration expressing the expectation that the Senate expected consultation from the Carter Administration prior to any proposed changes to the US-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty (proposed changes to the treaty also being a signal that a change of recognition from Taipei to Peking was imminent).

Reporting requirements added by the Congress to authorisation and funding legislation, which requires the Executive Branch to report on the status of affairs or progress made in various areas, are also a means that Congress uses to shape the direction of foreign policy. Over the years thousands of reports on a wide variety of topics have been required, many on an annual basis. One such prominent area of Congressional interest during the 1970's was that of human rights, with legislation creating a new office responsible for human rights in the State Department and an annual report on global human rights practices required of that office. These reporting requirements lead to increased Congressional oversight over Executive Branch activities, an important area of authority granted by the US constitution to the Congress.

Another constitutional area of authority is granted solely to the Senate, and is a primary reason the Senate tends to view itself as the body constitutionally charged with

having the greater influence over foreign policy (to the irritation of the House). This is the Senate's role in providing 'advice and consent' on treaties with foreign governments, and ambassadorial and other presidential appointments. The Senate has also historically enjoyed greater prestige than has the House, with the consequence that Senators have been granted access to global leaders much more readily than have House Members. During the 1970's, for example, when Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev visited Washington, he met with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but not with members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. As another example, during the trips of Congressmen (called 'Congressional Delegations' or 'CoDels') to China following Sino-American rapprochement, Senators were given much more access to senior Chinese leadership than were members of the House. These differences between the chambers have consistently caused friction over the issue of authority in foreign policy.

Conflict between the Executive Branch and Congress over treaties with foreign governments was one of the key areas of the battle over control of foreign and national security policy during the late 1960's and early 1970's. Facing increasingly strong scrutiny from an antagonistic Senate to Executive Branch relationships with Cold War allies, the White House sought to pursue secret 'executive agreements' that were not, legally speaking, treaties, and thus technically not subject to Senate consent. In response, William Fulbright created an investigative subcommittee under the Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Fulbright's political ally, Stuart Symington, the staff of which travelled the world attempting to uncover such agreements. The Symington Subcommittee would investigate such agreements from 1969-1971 in an attempt to bring them under Senate scrutiny, and its investigation would criticise Washington's continuing covert security cooperation with Taipei.

In addition to the above-mentioned mechanisms for influencing policy, there are numerous other ways in which the Congress can exert influence over the direction of foreign policy and in so doing either challenge or support the foreign policy espoused by a given Administration. Such means include the publicising of a policy issue by such means as committee or subcommittee hearings, speeches given on the House or Senate floor, particularly by high profile Members of Congress, speeches given by Members in outside forums to private groups, and other actions including resolutions submitted in the Congress, participation in symposiums on a given topic, and even leaking information to the news media in such a way that is calculated to portray the policy preferences of a Member or coalition of Members in as positive and appealing a light as possible.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings of 1966 on the subject of Vietnam and China are an example of Congressional hearings being used to publicise a particular policy issue, to educate, and to attempt to shape political debate. Likewise, speeches made repeatedly by liberal Democratic Senators such as Edward Kennedy, Mike Mansfield, William Fulbright, George McGovern and others sought to push the debate over China policy in the direction sought by them – toward the ending of the American policy of isolation of China and of opposition to its entry into the United Nations, and in favour of US recognition of Peking. Liberal advocacy of these positions brought sympathetic media coverage, creating an atmosphere in which such questions could be seriously addressed as possibilities, and signalling to the new Nixon Administration that domestic political attitudes toward China policy were changing significantly. These examples also highlight the manner in which individual legislators can affect the thought and debate of policymakers and the public regarding foreign affairs through individual or collaborative action, as well as through leveraging the capabilities of a committee or

subcommittee.

A means of Congressional influence on policy that is not often recognised, but nevertheless can be very effective, is the inhibiting nature of known policy views of Congressional leaders, which can help determine the legitimate policy options open to the Executive Branch. This type of influence was evident in 1974 when the Department of Defense (DOD) was interested in pursuing an aggressive American military posture in Asia as a means of containing growing Soviet power in the region by taking advantage of Sino-Soviet hostility and pursuing an informal cooperative military relationship with China. Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger was favourably disposed towards an idea that involved an increased American force posture in Asia as part of a framework of military cooperation with the People's Republic of China in late 1974. However, the major American military effort in Indochina had just ended, partially through the efforts of the Congress. In this context, Congress's known distaste for any military spending and Pentagon initiatives of any kind, as well as its overall support for US-Soviet détente in 1974, and the lack of Congressional support for such a cooperative relationship with China, had a major impact on Schlesinger's thinking. Because of this political environment, he decided not to pursue this option in internal policy discussions within DOD and elsewhere within the Executive Branch, despite the fact that fairly senior Pentagon officials supported this policy option as being the one that would best protect Washington's security interests in Asia. Likewise, the views of leading Senators regarding potential political appointees to foreign and national security policy roles can heavily influence the choice of which nominees are named by the President. It was widely believed during the 1970's, for example, that a major reason that James Schlesinger was appointed to a series of increasingly high-profile posts by President Nixon was due to the

influence of Democratic Senator Henry 'Scoop' Jackson, who shared a very similar foreign policy outlook with Nixon.⁴¹

Thus, as has been briefly shown, there are many ways in which the Congress can exert a powerful influence over foreign policy. This system of checks and balances that characterise the government of the United States has been called an 'abiding mystery',⁴² and has been a source of frustration not only to American government officials but also to foreign leaders. Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping, told Vice President Walter Mondale in 1979 that he was beginning to understand that the Executive Branch did not hold all power in the American political system, but that 'you really have four branches of government: the executive branch, Congress, the courts and the media!'⁴³

Political Science Scholarship Relating to the Congressional Role in Foreign and Defence Policy

While the historical literature examining the Congressional role in US foreign policy is lacking, there is a growing body of political science and legal literature studying the Congressional role in foreign and defence policy. In relation to this body of literature, this thesis is in harmony with the views of Louis Fischer, the leading scholar on constitutional prerogatives in foreign and defence policy, whose work has emphasised the largely ignored role of Congress.⁴⁴

This body of literature has taken a wide variety of views on the patterns of Executive-Legislative interaction over foreign policy and of the possible reasons for

⁴¹ Internal office memorandum from the office of Senator Walter Mondale, reporting on a conversation with Richard Perle, a Jackson staff member, 26 February 1974, Location 153.L.13.6F, Walter Mondale Senatorial Papers, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota; Interview with former Jackson staff member Charles Horner, 27 August 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁴² Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Alfred De Grazia, *Congress and the Presidency: Their Role in Modern Times* (Washington, D.C., 1967).

⁴³ Interview with former Vice President Walter Mondale, 17 November 2010, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

⁴⁴ See Louis Fisher, *On Appreciating Congress: The People's Branch* (Boulder, 2010); and *Defending Congress and the Constitution* (Lawrence, Kansas, 2011)

Congressional behaviour in these areas. Common issues addressed include that of the balance of power between the Legislative and Executive branches vis-a-vis foreign and defence policy, the various motivations of Congressional leaders regarding such policy, and how policy decisions are reached within the Congress.

One group of scholars argue that relative power between the Executive and Legislative branches in these policy areas is cyclical. The 'pendulum theory', which argues that relative power in the area of foreign policy swings back and forth between the two branches in historical cycles like the pendulum of a clock, is perhaps the best-known of these views.⁴⁵ Proponents of this view typically argue that such swings in relative power are a natural result of the American system of governmental checks and balances as the American government faces various domestic and international challenges. A second school of thought argues that the presidency is perpetually superior to the legislative branch in terms of authority over foreign policy, regardless of historic trends. A third group of scholars argues that each branch has areas in which it is the strongest with regard to foreign policy. According to this 'complimenting view', which has been most prominently advocated the work edited by Lindsay and Ripley in 1993, *Congress Resurgent*, the presidency is most powerful at times of crisis, the two branches share power more evenly in the area of strategic policy, and Congress is at its most powerful in the making of long-term, structural policy.⁴⁶ Lindsay and Ripley define structural policy as determining the manner in which resources are used.

Others, focusing more heavily on Congress itself rather than the relative authority of Congress and the Presidency over foreign policy, have studied

⁴⁵ The pendulum theory is described in, among other places, Cecil Crabb and Pat Holt, *Invitation to Struggle: Congress, the President, and Foreign Policy*, (Washington, D.C, 1980); See also Thomas Frank and Edward Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress*, (New York, 1979).

⁴⁶ James Lindsay and Randall Ripley, eds., *Congress Resurgent: Foreign and Defense Policy on Capitol Hill* (Ann Arbor, 1993).

determinants of the legislative behaviour of individual Members – examining why they vote the way that they do. The first major study of this issue was Warren Miller and Donald Stokes' 1963 article, 'Constituency Influence in Congress',⁴⁷ which was followed by a number of other studies. Studies that have focused on determining the causal factors behind a given Member's votes in the area of defence spending have disagreed over whether Member attitudes are primarily determined by ideology or by constituent interests (such as the amount of economic activity in a given state or Congressional district that is related in some way to defence spending).⁴⁸ Despite the fact that conventional wisdom has held that the amount of money which flows to a given state or Congressional district as a result of defence-related contracts is the major determinant, the majority of such studies have tended to conclude that the 'parochial hypothesis' (that constituent interests are the primary causal factor) has little factual basis and that ideology plays the dominant role. The attitude of many House Members to defence spending in the early 1970's, which was extremely critical despite defence-related spending in their districts, supports this view. The role of ideology was evident in intra-governmental consideration of a potential military relationship with China, as well as in the critical attitude of liberal House

⁴⁷ Warren Miller and Donald Stokes, 'Constituency Influence in Congress', *American Political Science Review* 57 (1963), pp.45-56.

⁴⁸ For arguments against the 'parochial hypothesis' and in favour of the view that ideology is the major determinant, see Stephen Cobb, 'Defense Spending and Foreign Policy in the House of Representatives', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13 (1969), pp.358-69; Wayne Moyer, 'House Voting on Defense: An Ideological Explanation', in Bruce Russett and Alfred Stepan, eds., *Military Force and American Society* (New York, 1973); Robert Bernstein and William Anthony, 'The ABM Issue in the Senate, 1968-1970: The Importance of Ideology', *American Political Science Review* 68:3 (September 1974), pp.1198-1206; James McCormick and Michael Black, 'Ideology and Senate Voting on the Panama Canal Treaties', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 8:1 (February 1983), pp.45-63. For arguments that constituent interest is the primary causal factor see Charles Gray and Glenn Gregory, 'Military Spending and Senate Voting: A Correlational Study', *Journal of Peace Research* 5 (1968), pp.44-5; and Bruce Russett, *What Price Vigilance? The Burdens of National Defense* (New Haven, 1970), particularly chapters 2 and 3.

and Senate Members to any aggressive American military posture in post-Vietnam war Asia, which affected the Pentagon's consideration of a potential relationship of security cooperation with China in Asia in 1974.

By contrast, research into Congressional behaviour in the area of trade policy has tended to show that constituency interests are the major determinant of legislative behaviour.⁴⁹ The case of the opening to China illustrated the influence of constituency interests on foreign policy attitudes when Members from states which were likely to benefit from the opening of relations, such as Western states oriented toward trade with the Pacific and Midwestern agricultural states hoping for grain sales to the world's most populous nation, advocated for the breaking down of trade and diplomatic barriers.

A few scholars have looked at the role of partisan concerns and Congressional committees in foreign and defence policy decision-making on Capitol Hill. Areas examined have included the relationship between relevant committees (such as the Senate and House Armed Services Committees) and the full chambers,⁵⁰ and the role of party leaders and partisan concerns in the formulation of

⁴⁹ Suzzane Tosini and Edward Tower, 'The Textile Bill of 1985: The Determinants of Congressional Voting Patterns', *Public Choice* 54, pp.19-25;

Richard Smith, 'Interest Group Influence in the US Congress', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 20:1 (February 1995), pp.89-139; and

In-Bong Kang and Kenneth Greene, 'A Political Economic Analysis of Congressional Voting Patterns on NAFTA', *Public Choice* 98:3-4 (March 1999), pp.385-97.

⁵⁰ Bruce Ray, 'The Responsiveness of the US Congressional Armed Services Committees of Their Parent Bodies', *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 5:4 (Nov. 1980), pp.501-15.;

Arthur Denzau and Robert Mackay, 'Gatekeeping and Monopoly Power of Committees: An Analysis of Sincere and Sophisticated Behavior', *American Journal of Political Science* 27:4 (Nov. 1983), pp.740-61;

Keith Krehbiel, Kenneth Shepsle and Barry Weingast, 'Why Are Congressional Committees Powerful?', *American Political Science Review* 81:3 (September 1987), pp.929-45;

Keith Krehbiel, 'Are Congressional Committees Composed of Preference Outliers?', *American Political Science Review* 84:1 (March 1990);

Christopher Deering, 'Decision Making in the Armed Services Committees', in James Lindsay and Randall Ripley, eds., *Congress Resurgent*, pp.155-82;

Barbara Sinclair, 'Congressional Party Leaders in the Foreign and Defense Policy Arena', *ibid.*, pp.207-31;

Joseph White, 'Decision Making in the Appropriations Subcommittees on Defense and Foreign

foreign and defence policy, a trend that has been particularly apparent due to the increasing polarisation of the parties since the 1960's.⁵¹

The clearest characteristic of Executive-Legislative interaction over China policy in period, however, is the constructive role that Congress can play in questioning the basic assumptions and logical underpinnings of Executive Branch foreign policy. Constitutional scholar Edward Corwin famously wrote regarding Congress and the Presidency that the Constitution was 'an invitation to struggle for the privilege of directing American foreign policy',⁵² and the struggle between the two branches has occupied the focus of most legal scholars and political scientists who have sought to investigate this area. Most scholarship on Executive-Legislative relations over foreign policy understands the relationship as a zero-sum game in which a gain by one branch represents a loss by the other. However, the pattern of Congressional influence on Sino-American relations supports the argument that Executive-Legislative interaction on foreign policy tends to be more complimentary than each side appreciates.⁵³ Due to Constitutional vagueness, tension between the two branches over their respective foreign policy roles has existed since the time of George Washington. The Executive Branch tends to see the Congress primarily as a nuisance that interferes with Executive Branch prerogatives, and the Congress tends to see Executive Branch officials as arrogant and

Operations', *ibid.*, pp.183-206; and

Kenneth Shepsle and Barry Weingast, 'Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions', *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 19:2 (May 1994), pp.149-79.

⁵¹ Barbara Sinclair has been one of the most prominent of such scholars. See Barbara Sinclair, *Congressional Realignment: 1925-1978* (Austin, Texas, 1982); 'Congressional Party Leaders in the Foreign and Defense Policy Arena', in James Lindsay and Randall Ripley, eds., *Congress Resurgent*, pp.207-31; and *Do Parties Matter?* (Irvine, California, 1998). See also Walter Dean Burnham, *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* (New York, 1970), p.10.

⁵² Edward Corwin, *The President: Office and Powers, 1787-1957* (New York, 1957), p.200.

⁵³ It must be pointed out, however, that the complementarity evident in Congressional consideration of China policy during the 1970's is not identical to that described by Lindsay and Ripley, who define structural policy, which they identify as an area of Congressional strength, as policy which 'governs how resources are used'; 'How Congress Influences Foreign and Defense Policy', *Congress Resurgent*.

uncommunicative. Despite these mutual, institutionally-based biases, however, each branch can play a complimentary role in the development of foreign policy.

Often, Congress's contribution in the area of foreign and security policy is one of raising the 'big picture issues' that those in the Executive Branch, who have become wedded to a given policy view, and/or are so at the mercy of constant crises that they do not have sufficient time to reflect on many of the larger issues underpinning their preferred policies. Consideration of China policy during the period of rapprochement and normalisation illustrates the constructive role that can be played by the Congress in the development of sound policy. Examples of this type of Congressional contribution include the many Congressional hearings which attempted to examine the various aspects of China policy, at times challenging Executive Branch policy and at times hoping to question the underlying assumptions of such policy in order to strengthen a policy the basic direction of which was supported by the panel. The issues raised in many of these hearings were deserving of public debate and involved fundamental questions such as the nature of the American approach to communism and the interrelation of Sino-American relations with Soviet-American relations.

Aim of This Thesis

This thesis attempts to fill the gap in rapprochement literature by examining the role played by Congress and domestic politics in the process of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation. Filling such a gap is important for several reasons. One is the vast swaths of unexplored primary source material related to Congressional attitudes toward China and to Legislative-Executive interaction over China policy. A wealth of primary source material is available from a wide variety sources, including numerous collections spread around the United States belonging to various former key

Senators and House Members; committee records and papers of various committee chairmen housed in the Legislative Division of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., including the documents of Record Group 46 (the records of the United States Senate, which contain the records of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee); committee prints, reports, and hearings, most of which are now available to researchers, including many of the executive (closed) sessions of the various committees, available in the U.S. Senate Library; the *Congressional Record*; collections contained at the Library of Congress, which include the papers of former Members of the Senate and House as well as those of relevant former executive branch officials such as Averell Harriman; the papers of Record Group 59 (State Department records) in the National Archives in College Park, Maryland; materials in the Nixon, Ford and Carter Presidential libraries, which contain an increasing number of documents related to Presidential dealings with Congress which have recently been processed and opened to researchers; and the collections of private individuals who were involved in China policy, those of Edgar Snow being the most prominent example. Other materials not normally accessible to researchers, such as privately held records of former officials and the uncatalogued and private records of the Senate Republican Policy Committee were made available to this researcher and shed light on the attitude of Senate Republicans to the opening to China in 1971 and 1972. This thesis will draw significantly on this largely unexplored material.

Another reason that this research gap needs to be addressed is the importance of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation both to Cold War history as well as to an understanding of the present day. Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation is correctly regarded as a watershed period of international history. The fact that the United States took advantage of the Sino-Soviet split to eventually build a 'tacit alliance' with

Communist China against the Soviet Union was a key turning point in the Cold War, and without the entry into the world community of the world's most populous nation and its subsequent adoption of a form of capitalism, the world that we now know would not have been possible. Gaining a fuller understanding of this paradigm shift in Cold War history, therefore, is crucial.

A third reason that this research gap should be addressed is that, as mentioned above, without understanding the Congressional role that was played in this drama only a truncated picture of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation emerges. This thesis will, therefore, examine the attitudes and actions of Congress with respect to China policy, paying special attention to: the political and strategic environment within which China policy was created, the role of ideology and partisan considerations, institutional differences, the nature of interaction with the Executive Branch, and the impact that the advocacy of certain points of view on the part of individual Members and staff had on the consideration of policy options, the expression of policy preferences, and on policy outcomes. What emerges as a result of this approach is a more holistic picture of the development of US-China relations. This new approach contrasts with historical and political science studies that have over-emphasised the role of the Executive Branch and/or under-emphasized the domestic political process that impacted on Congress's role in shaping that relationship.

HISTORICAL PROLOGUE: CONGRESS AND CHINA, 1949-1968

Prior to 1969, Congress played a major role in the development of Washington's China policy, a role that went through two distinct phases. In the early period of the Cold War, when the 'China Lobby' was so influential, Congress was at the heart of the effort to isolate Peking, and in many ways constrained what few impulses occurred within the Executive Branch to re-examine any portion of the policy of the 'containment and isolation' of the new Chinese Communist regime. From the mid 1960's onward, due to dramatic changes in the strategic environment and equally dramatic changes within the Democratic Party, Congress became a driving force behind a movement to break down barriers and to seek more normal relations with Peking.

Congress Helps Build Structure of Containment and Defines Political Space for Permissible Executive Action

From 1950 through the early 1960's, Congress enacted an interlocking network of laws that created a total trade embargo with regard to China either through directly restricting trade or by authorising the Executive Branch to do so. At the same time, using its power of the purse, it pushed for increased economic and military aid to the government and military of the Nationalists on Taiwan. The foreign assistance program was also used as a means to strengthen American allies on China's periphery through economic and military aid, the purpose of which was to contain China.⁵⁴ Congress also funded a ring of military bases surrounding China and partnered with the Eisenhower

⁵⁴ William Fulbright affirmed in the early 1960's that the containment of China was the goal of US foreign aid to Asian allies, as did Secretary of State Dean Rusk in Congressional testimony. See undated 1962 Fulbright speech, Record Group 46, Records of the United States Senate (hereafter, RG 46); 1958-1965, Congress, Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman Fulbright's statements on foreign affairs, Box 1, NARA I; Senate floor speech by William Fulbright, 1 August 1964, *ibid.*; and Dean Rusk statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 5 April 1963, Box 499, Averell Harriman Papers.

Administration to create SEATO, which was meant to be the Asian equivalent of NATO, aimed at containing China's military power, to confirm the Sino-American Mutual Security Treaty of 1954, and to pass the Formosa Resolution, which gave the Executive Branch Congressional authority to introduce American armed forces into the Taiwan Straits area to defend Taiwan and an undefined number of islands under its control in the event of an attack by the Mainland. Lastly, from January 1951 onward, both chambers of Congress went on record, sometimes several times annually, opposing recognition of Peking and the admission of Mainland China into the United Nations through the passage of various resolutions. Each annual foreign aid bill from the early 1950's onward contained such language, and Congress also passed numerous 'sense of the Congress' resolutions expressing this attitude. Figures who would later challenge the anti-Communist assumptions that undergirded, and reinforced Executive Branch policy toward China, including Senate Foreign Relations Committee (hereafter SFRC) chairman William Fulbright and Senator Mike Mansfield, strongly supported the policy of the containment and isolation of China through the early 1960's.⁵⁵

Congressional sentiment was so strongly in favour of placing as much pressure on Peking as possible that it served as a major inhibiting factor on any possibility that the Executive Branch might consider slightly more flexible policy options in the areas of trade, travel restrictions, UN membership, etc. President Eisenhower, for example, displayed some interest in allowing the same limited level of trade with Peking as was allowed with Moscow, yet complained that 'our trouble was that our domestic political

⁵⁵ Senators Mike Mansfield (D-MT) and Alexander Smith (R-NJ) took part in the negotiations which created SEATO at the invitation of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and were original signatories, see Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat* (Washington, D.C., 2003), pp.121-4; and Senate floor speech by William Fulbright, 12 May 1959, *Congressional Record*; undated 1962 Fulbright speech, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman Fulbright's speeches, Box 1, NARA I.

situation . . . compelled us to adopt an absolutely rigid policy'.⁵⁶ A few years later, when members of President Kennedy's Administration considered such initiatives as recognition of Outer Mongolia, a move to which Chiang Kai-shek strongly objected, taking a 'two Chinas' approach to the Chinese representation ('Chirep') issue at the UN, providing food aid to China in the midst of the famine caused by Mao's 'Great Leap Forward', and lowering restrictions on travel to China, the negative reaction from Congress was immediate, unified and strong.

Roger Hilsman, Director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research in Kennedy's first two years, records that a bipartisan coalition of Congressional members of the China Lobby informed the Administration in 1961 that 'they intended to destroy Kennedy's foreign aid program with crippling amendments unless the administration abandoned its plan to recognize Mongolia'.⁵⁷ First the Senate and then the House overwhelmingly passed a concurrent resolution which reaffirmed support for the Republic of China and opposition to UN membership for Peking, pointedly supporting the existing policy of non-recognition. From 1961 through the remainder of the 1960's more than fifteen resolutions and amendments restated Congressional opposition to UN membership for China, continuing even after Congressional liberals began to question the wisdom of current China policy in the mid 1960's.

Harbingers of Change

In spite of strong opposition to a critical re-evaluation of China policy, first the

⁵⁶ 22 December 1955 Memorandum of Discussion, 271st Meeting of the National Security Council, *FRUS, 1955-1957, vol. III, China*, Document 124;

See Simei Qing, 'The Eisenhower Administration and Changes in Western Embargo Policy Against China', in Warren Cohen and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Great Powers in East Asia, 1953-1960* (New York, 1990), for detailed information on Eisenhower's attitude on trade with China.

See also Rosemary Foot, 'The Eisenhower Administration's Fear of Empowering the Chinese', *Political Science Quarterly* 111:3 (Autumn 1996).

⁵⁷ Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics and Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, New York, 1967), p.307.

Sino-Soviet split and then the Vietnam War gradually generated pressure for change. Some Members of Congress began to gain an awareness of the rift in the early 1960's and to follow its evolution, with the SFRC using hearings to aim detailed questions at Secretary of State Dean Rusk about the nature of the split.⁵⁸ In March 1962 Senator Hubert Humphrey noted that the Sino-Soviet split was causing 'a fundamental change in the world balance of power' and that:

There is reason to believe . . . that a Sino-Soviet split could be to our advantage. The centralised Soviet empire might never be the same again . . . with the defection or outright hostility of China, the cohesiveness of the Communist bloc would be broken, perhaps forever.⁵⁹

As evidence accumulated of growing Sino-Soviet hostility, an increasing number of Members began to understand the seriousness and permanence of the dispute, and the opportunities it provided for American foreign policy, which dynamic began to place China policy in a different strategic context than had existed earlier. In light of the Sino-Soviet split, Humphrey surmised that reaching out to Peking could provide benefits to Washington, writing to Fulbright in 1963 that a review of China policy 'may very well merit consideration'. He simultaneously acknowledged, however, that the ability to begin a public debate over policy remained constrained, and expressed a reticence to publicly advocate in favour of policy reform.⁶⁰ Domestic political changes were beginning, however, in response to growing American involvement in Vietnam, that would create a much more favourable climate for reconsideration of China policy.

As the Sino-Soviet split became increasingly bitter, undermining the conviction

⁵⁸ SFRC staff memorandum, 11 January 1963, f.2115, Accession C3974, Stuart Symington Papers, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri-Columbia.

⁵⁹ Senate floor speech by Hubert Humphrey, 16 March 1962, *Congressional Record*.

⁶⁰ Hubert Humphrey to William Fulbright, 18 September 1963, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman's Correspondence (1963-1967), Box 2, NARA I.

that communism was monolithic, growing American involvement in the war in Vietnam provided the other factor that would facilitate a shift of opinion, beginning within the Democratic Party, regarding how best to approach communism. William Fulbright's March 1964 Senate floor speech, 'Old Myths and New Realities', was the first major speech given by a Democratic leader indicating the start of the unravelling of the domestic political consensus that had supported US foreign policy since the 1940s. The themes touched upon in Fulbright's speech were expanded upon and published as a book later that year.⁶¹ It marked the beginning of a thought process among liberals that would develop more fully as the Johnson Administration committed the United States more deeply to the defence of South Vietnam. Fulbright came to personify the ideological shift within the Democratic party, and to some degree among some liberal Republicans as well, against the aggressive containment of communism that had characterised American foreign policy to that point in the Cold War.

The changing foreign policy perspectives among liberal Democrats, which was first publicly articulated by Fulbright, had obvious implications for China policy. As early as late 1963 and early 1964, a few Democratic senators began to indicate that they believed China policy to be symbolic of the broader change that was needed.

Simultaneous with Fulbright's speech, three other liberal Senators, Edmund Muskie, Frank Moss, and Warren Magnuson, secretly contacted Edgar Snow, the American socialist journalist known to have the trust of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, asking whether Snow might intercede on their behalf to obtain visas to China. Although Snow wrote to his contact at the Chinese Foreign Ministry, the response was negative.⁶² China,

⁶¹ William Fulbright, *Old Myths and New Realities* (New York, 1964).

⁶² Edgar Snow to Kung Peng, 26 March 1964, f.53, Edgar Parks Snow Papers, University Archives, University of Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri; 30 April 1964 letter from Kung Peng to Edgar Snow, *ibid.*

on the cusp of the Cultural Revolution, was not yet ready to host a group of Senators from China's 'imperialist' enemy, since this would have undermined Mao's claims to be the leader of the global revolutionary movement.

1965 and 1966 House and Senate Hearings Reshape the Terms of Debate

The beginnings of ideological change among liberals of both parties, the changing strategic environment caused by the Sino-Soviet split, and America's growing involvement in the war in Vietnam, led to a series of committee hearings in both the House and Senate that challenged, for the first time, existing policy toward Asian communism. The three sets of hearings have been largely overlooked by historians, despite the fact that together they symbolise a paradigm shift in Washington's thinking toward China policy and successfully reset the terms of debate. All three sets of hearings were designed to be educative, both of the Congress as a whole and of the US public, and, hopefully, to create pressure on the Executive to reform policy toward China.⁶³ Together, these hearings reshaped public perceptions of China policy and set the agenda for discussion of China policy within Washington – a trajectory that ultimately resulted in the opening to China in 1971.

The first of these hearings was held by the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific, chaired by Clement Zablocki. Zablocki was a Cold War liberal who remained convinced of the need to contain Chinese communism.⁶⁴ The Zablocki hearings' impact on the evolution of US China policy has been overlooked by historians likely due to the fact that little overt movement to lessen tensions with Peking took place in their immediate aftermath. However, they were the

⁶³ Interviews with John Sullivan, the House Asian and Pacific Affairs subcommittee chief of staff who organised both sets of House hearings, 30 June 2009, Alexandria, Virginia; and Richard Moose, SFRC staff member, 26 June 2009, Alexandria, Virginia.

⁶⁴ Speech by Clement Zablocki, 27 January 1964, Series PR-3, Speeches, 1949-1983, Box 4, Clement Zablocki Papers, Raynor Memorial Library, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

first time that the Congress had publicly questioned China policy and advocated for policy change. The portion of the subcommittee report that made the largest impression, both in the media and within the Johnson Administration, was the suggestion that 'The United States should give, at an appropriate time, consideration of limited but direct contact with Red China'.⁶⁵ It was significant that the suggestion was made by a subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which was not known to challenge Executive Branch policy and whose chairman, Thomas 'Doc' Morgan, was close to President Johnson, rather than by the SFRC, whose chairman, William Fulbright, had begun to challenge the full range of Washington's foreign policy, particularly policy toward Asia.

The hearings also marked the first time that a Congressional panel sought to address the Sino-Soviet split and its potential implications for American foreign policy – the issue that would lay at the foundation of the Nixon White House's China initiative several years later. The subcommittee report and subsequent book based on the hearings contained the first public reference to what became known as the 'triangular relationship' between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China. The concept for which Kissinger is many times given credit with creating, therefore, that of a Sino-Soviet-American diplomatic and strategic triangle, had actually been made part of the policy discourse by a Congressional panel long before Kissinger took office.

If the goal of the hearings was to raise awareness within Congress of the Sino-Soviet split and to spark a public debate of China policy, those goals were met. The subcommittee expended significant energy seeking media attention and, while it received (in keeping with the House's inability to gain as high a media profile as the Senate) only a fraction of the attention that its Senate counterpart did a year later, the subcommittee did

⁶⁵ *Report on Sino-Soviet Conflict and its Implications*, p.15R.

receive some media attention.⁶⁶ The *New York Times*, writing in the midst of the Fulbright hearings a year later, referred to the Zablocki hearings of 1965 as 'important, though little noted', and noted that those hearings, together with the Zablocki and Fulbright hearings of early 1966, was evidence that 'the Congress, which has conventionally relied upon Presidential initiative in complex foreign-policy matters', was beginning to take the lead in driving debate on potential reform of China policy.⁶⁷

The hearings also received the attention of other Members of the House, resulting in Congressional requests for information on the Sino-Soviet split from the State Department's office of Mainland China Affairs.⁶⁸ Most importantly, the hearings began the process of change, accelerated by a second round of subcommittee hearings as well as by SFRC hearings the next year, by which time it had become more acceptable both for Members of Congress and for non-governmental groups to speak publicly in favour of policy reform. A month after the end of the hearings, two unprecedented recommendations were made by non-governmental groups urging a fresh look at existing policy. In late April the US Chamber of Commerce, interested in potential trade opportunities, urged the Johnson Administration 'to explore steps designed to more

⁶⁶ The subcommittee released multiple press releases over the course of the hearings which were meant to raise the media profile of the hearings, found in Series FA-2.1, Box 2, Clement Zablocki Papers; See 'Relations With China', *Washington Post*, 23 May 1965; 'Possible Russian Turn to West Forecast by House Subcommittee', *Journal Wire Service*, 16 May 1965; 'A Time for Reappraisal?', *New York Times*, 20 March 1966; *Washington Post*, 1 March 1965. Regarding the differential in media attention granted to the 1966 Zablocki and Fulbright hearings, respectively, see 'These Days: "Live" News and TV Objectivity', *Washington Post*, 26 February 1966; and Joseph Kraft, 'Insight and Outlook: The Other Hearings', *Washington Post*, 26 February 1966, in which Kraft asserts that the Zablocki hearings were 'less dramatic, but far more illuminating' than the hearings held by Fulbright.

The Providence [Rhode Island] Journal praised the Zablocki hearings, saying that the Subcommittee 'has taken a cautious but courageous step in becoming the 1st congressional group to publish a report urging' contact with China, 9 May 1965, f.60, Edgar Snow Papers.

⁶⁷ 'A Time for Reappraisal?', *New York Times*, 20 March 1966.

⁶⁸ Lindsay Grant, Officer in Charge, Mainland China Affairs, to 'The Files', re: 'Briefing of Congressmen on Policy Toward Communist China', 17 May 1965, Lot File 70D248 and 71D423, Subject Files of the Office of Asian Communist Affairs (hereafter, ACA), 1969-1973, Box 1, Record Group 59, Records of the US Department of State (hereafter, RG 59), National Archives and Record Administration, College Park, Maryland (hereafter, NARA II).

effectively open channels of communication with the people of mainland China'.⁶⁹ The same week, a joint conference hosted by Georgetown and American Universities, including speakers from business associations, academia, and the Senate, all similarly urged the Administration to lower trade barriers with China as a first step toward rapprochement, with Senator George McGovern (D-SD), a Midwesterner hoping for grain sales for farmers from his home state, calling for a first step of removing the restrictions on selling surplus grain to China.⁷⁰

As the *New York Times* recognised, the hearings evidenced Congress taking the initiative from the executive branch in the area of foreign policy in general, and policy toward Asia in particular. The hearings sparked a debate within Washington over China policy that had previously not existed, and were quickly followed by calls on the part of business, agricultural and religious organisations for policy reform. Most importantly, these hearings, and the calls for policy reform that accompanied them, prodded discussion within the Johnson Administration of China policy. Two months after the hearings ended, Marshall Green, Johnson's ambassador-designate to Indonesia, noticed the change in Congressional attitudes, which were communicated by William Fulbright, whose views on China had been evolving for at least the previous year. Fulbright, with whom Green met ahead of Senate confirmation hearings, had read speeches made by Green in which Green had recommended expanding official contacts with China. To Green's surprise, Fulbright expressed agreement. After the meeting, Green advised the State Department that changing sentiment on Capitol Hill regarding China policy was broader than even that indicated by Zablocki's hearings, noting pressure from Fulbright to expand contacts

⁶⁹ 'Leaders of US Chamber Urge Steps to Ease Peking Embargo', *AP*, 24 April 1965; 'Chamber Bids US Ease Peking Curb; Asks "Communication" with the People of Red China,' *New York Times*, 29 April 1965.

⁷⁰ 'Peking and Washington', *Washington Post*, 5 May 1965.

with China.⁷¹

The changing environment caused Green to perceive an opportunity to propose that the travel ban to China be lifted.⁷² The next day, NSC aid James Thomson, who had long argued in favour of a more flexible China policy, took advantage of the indications of changing Congressional sentiment and a more propitious domestic political environment to press for incremental policy changes.⁷³ Two weeks later, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, William Bundy, also reacting to the calls for policy reform emanating first from Congress and then business organisations, wrote to Dean Rusk also recommending that the Administration pursue some minimal changes, arguing that 'We have had recommendations for increased efforts at contact from various quarters, including the US Chamber of Commerce and the Zablocki subcommittee'.⁷⁴ Rusk initialled at the bottom of the memo his disapproval of the Bundy's recommendation,⁷⁵ and Johnson rejected these potential policy changes a couple of weeks later.⁷⁶ Despite Johnson's rejection of minimal policy changes then, a series of small travel regulation liberalisations were gradually introduced from late 1965 through the summer of 1966.

The Sino-Soviet split was the initial inspiration for the beginnings of a Congressional challenge to existing China policy. The sustained Congressional challenge emerged, however, out of the Johnson Administration's growing commitment of American troops to the conflict in Vietnam, which raised the possibility that a Sino-

⁷¹ Marshall Green to Lindsay Grant, 1 June 1965, Lot File 72D175, Subject Files of the Office of ACA, 1969-1973, Box 3, RG 59, NARA II.

⁷² *ibid.*

⁷³ James Thomson to McGeorge Bundy, 2 June 1965, Document 88, *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XXX, China*.

⁷⁴ William Bundy to Dean Rusk, 16 June 1965, Document 89, *ibid.*

⁷⁵ *ibid.*

⁷⁶ McGeorge Bundy to President Johnson, 24 August 1965, cited by Lumbers, Michael, *Piercing the Bamboo Curtain: Tentative Bridge-building to China during the Johnson Years* (New York, 2008), p.94, f.50.

American military conflict might result as it had from the last Asian land war in which Washington had been involved on China's periphery – the conflict in Korea. Given the fact that one of the primary rationales used by the President and senior Administration officials for involvement in Vietnam was the need to contain Chinese influence in Asia and the conviction that Hanoi was merely a proxy for Peking, it is ironic that the war also became the primary reason for the Congressional challenge of existing China policy. The question of whether the Administration's strategy in Vietnam would lead to military conflict with China became a key point of contention between Senate liberals, on the one hand, and the Johnson Administration and the House leadership, on the other. Fulbright used his position as SFRC chairman to advance his thesis, backed by such liberal allies as George McGovern and Edward 'Ted' Kennedy, that escalating American involvement in Vietnam was likely to lead to Chinese intervention and a direct military clash with China.⁷⁷ Administration officials and other leading Democrats, including Zablocki and House Democratic leaders, completely rejected this.^{78 79}

The subject of China policy in the context of the growing commitment to Vietnam was addressed by two sets of hearings in early 1966, one by Zablocki's subcommittee and the other by Fulbright's committee. The Zablocki hearings continued the discourse that had been initiated the previous year regarding China policy, advocating a re-evaluation of Asia policy.⁸⁰ Zablocki continued to garner media attention in his push for a re-evaluation

⁷⁷ 'China and the Vietnam War–Will History Repeat?' Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate by Senator Joseph Clark, 29 March 1968 (Washington, D.C., 1968); 'Six Senators Warn President on War: Say Escalation May Bring in Chinese and Russians', *New York Times*, 15 May 1967.

⁷⁸ Walt Rostow to Averell Harriman, 11 August 1966, Box 462, Averell Harriman Papers; see also Averell Harriman memo for Personal Files, 6 October 1966, *ibid.*

⁷⁹ 'US Policy in Asia: What Do We Do With China?' a speech by Clement Zablocki at the National Eagles Convention, Kansas City, Missouri, Thursday, 27 July 1967, Series PR-3, Speeches, 1949-1983, Box 4, Clement Zablocki Papers.

⁸⁰ 'United States Policy Toward Asia', Report by the Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., May 1965).

of China policy, telling an interviewer from the *Washington Post*, 'We must come to grips with the inevitable rise of China as a power'.⁸¹ The set of hearings that had the greatest impact on the embryonic debate over China policy reform were those held by Fulbright, whose hearings on Vietnam and China were designed to challenge the Administration's Vietnam policy as well as its China policy, and to express the liberal belief that American involvement in Vietnam would lead to war with China.⁸² The hearings were the most well-publicised of the sets of hearings dealing with Asia policy in 1965 and 1966 and had the greatest impact on public and Congressional thinking. The Vietnam hearings began in January and ended in March, with hearings on China immediately following. Fulbright designed his hearings to educate and alter thinking about China within the Congress, the media and the general public, and to advocate for the United States to change its China policy and break down barriers with Peking.⁸³ In this sense, the hearings were wildly successful. Polling taken during the hearings showed that fifty four percent of the American public were aware of the televised hearings. They received extensive, mostly positive, response from the media (much of which joined the Congressional advocacy for change)⁸⁴, with most witnesses suggesting that the Johnson Administration show increased flexibility in its China policy and seek greater avenues of communication with China.

The key phrase to come out of the hearings that represented a general consensus on a revised direction for China policy was 'containment without isolation', which was meant to denote that Washington should no longer attempt to isolate China economically

⁸¹ 'US Policy on China Studied by House Unit', *Washington Post*, 7 February 1966; see also 'House Panel Finds US Limited in Asia', *UPI*, 21 May 1966.

⁸² Interview with former SFRC staff member James Lowenstein, 9 March 2010, Washington, D.C.

⁸³ *ibid.*, and interview with Richard Moose, 26 June 2009, Alexandria, Virginia; Fulbright himself stated this purpose in Senate floor statements announcing the hearings.

⁸⁴ Harrison Salisbury to Edgar Snow, 14 April 1966, f.64, Correspondence, January 1–May 31, 1966, Edgar Snow Papers; among the many media articles supporting policy change see 'A Time for Reappraisal?', *New York Times*, 20 March 1966.

and diplomatically. Witnesses generally supported the Administration's goals in Vietnam, as well as the idea that China needed to be contained and its influence in Asia balanced due to its aggressive behaviour, revolutionary rhetoric, possible expansionist intentions and potential to dominate Asia due to its massive size. They also suggested, however, that isolating China would only serve to exacerbate Peking's aggressive tendencies. Breaking down the barriers of communication, it was argued, would serve to socialise China, moderate its behaviour and gradually ease its hostility to the established global order.⁸⁵ The Fulbright and Zablocki hearings sparked a period of intense public discussion of Asia policy in general, and China policy in particular, that brought about a paradigm shift regarding thinking about China and the acceptability of public debate over possible alternative policies. The two sets of hearings, and the public debate that they sparked, took the initiative away from the Johnson Administration, and brought significant pressure to bear on the Administration to reconsider policy. In March, the President was asked at a press conference to respond to calls for a more flexible China policy. While Johnson said that while he 'had watched with interest and complete understanding the testimony of various committees', it was China that bore primary responsibility for the alienation of the two countries, not the United States.⁸⁶ The hearings had begun a national conversation, however, which would grow in the coming weeks, months and years, the pressure from which would continue to force debate within the Johnson Administration regarding reform of policy toward China.

The most important policy suggestion to come out of the Fulbright hearings, that Washington pursue 'containment without isolation', became the goal toward which policy

⁸⁵ 'US Policy with Respect to Mainland China', Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate (Washington, D.C., 1966)

⁸⁶ President's News Conference, 22 March 1966, *Public Papers of the Presidents, Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1969*.

evolved through the remainder of the Johnson Administration, setting a trajectory of policy reform that would be followed by Johnson's successor.⁸⁷ On 1 March 1966 NSC aide James Thomson, responding to a request by Johnson assistant Jack Valenti for 'some informal thoughts on the China problem', used the Congressional agitation in favour of policy reform to continue his crusade in favour of initiatives toward Peking. He first acknowledged the domestic political constraints that had dominated China policy to that point, particularly the understandable sensitivity of the Democratic Party to advocate on behalf of policy change. He argued, however, that the domestic political environment no longer foreclosed consideration of a more flexible policy, noting the weakening of the China Lobby (which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter), changing public attitudes toward China, 'widespread press support' of the Administration's reduction of travel regulations, and 'no Congressional criticism whatsoever'. He also emphasised the Zablocki subcommittee recommendation for increased contacts with Peking.⁸⁸

As Thomson noted, public opinion in the spring of 1966, in part as a result of the hearings and their accompanying publicity, showed a new receptivity to relations with China, with fifty six percent saying that they would favour China's admission to the UN if it would result in improved relations with China. Further public opinion polls, which Johnson aid Bill Moyers requested, showed similar results, with a Harris poll published in June resulting in fifty seven percent favouring diplomatic recognition with forty three percent opposed.⁸⁹

Vice President Humphrey helped lift the profile of his former Senate colleague's

⁸⁷ Allen Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (Ann Arbor, 1981), pp.186-90; see also 'US and China: Policy Shift Based on "Containment Without Isolation"', *New York Times*, 27 July 1969.

⁸⁸ James Thomson to Jack Valenti, 1 March 1966, Document 129, *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XXX, China*.

⁸⁹ Poll results found in Location 153.L.10.2F, Senatorial Papers, Walter Mondale Papers, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota.

hearings further by immediately repeating the phrase 'containment without isolation' in public, helping to popularise it.⁹⁰ Following Fulbright's hearings, the State Department began a series of meetings to consider China policy, chaired by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (DAS) for Far Eastern Affairs Robert Barnett. Illustrating that the Fulbright hearings had had their desired effect in spurring greater flexibility in Executive Branch consideration of China policy, conversation in the first meeting questioned long-held assumptions undergirding China policy. One of the topics discussed was 'the proposition that none of our unilateral trade controls can be shown to have had an appreciable effect on Communist China's war-making potential; that controls, to be effective, had to be multilateral'.⁹¹ Also questioned was the 'extent our trade controls might be said to express our own disapproval of Communist China rather than reflecting an objective judgement about their effectiveness for dealing with the threat of Chinese Communism'.⁹² Foreshadowing the Congressional debate over policy toward China and the Soviet Union, respectively, in the 1970's, the meeting participants debated whether trade policy toward China should not be brought into line with that governing trade with the Soviet Union.⁹³ Guiding these discussions was a keen awareness that potential policy changes could only go so far as domestic political attitudes allowed. While the obvious change in attitude among Democrats in both the Senate and the House provided some support for policy reform, meeting participants noted the 'need for a new US public opinion poll on China policy', noting 'that at some stage it would be very useful, if not imperative, for the White House to have a reading on US public opinion on China dealing with this matter'.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ *New York Times*, 14 March 1966.

⁹¹ Meeting notes, US Department of State, 'US Trade and Other Controls Directed Against Communist China', 12 April 1966, Box 442, Averell Harriman Papers.

⁹² *ibid.*

⁹³ *ibid.*

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

At the June meeting, major topics of discussion included the Department's response to the Fulbright hearings, advocacy on the part of liberal Senators for liberalisation of trade policy toward China, new pressure from agricultural and business interests for liberalisation, and changed public attitudes. Senators from Midwestern agricultural states, such as McGovern, sought changes in trade regulations to allow grain sales to China, and pressure for trade policy liberalisation was coming from farmers and agricultural firms in the Midwest, who were beginning to lobby Congress 'on the benefits of opening up trade'.⁹⁵ Other participants in the meeting also noted an increase in pressure from US business interests in general to liberalise China trade controls.⁹⁶

In mid July, President Johnson gave a televised address on Asia policy, clearly in response to the changed climate, in which he addressed his willingness to lower communication barriers with China, while placing the blame for China's isolation firmly on Peking.⁹⁷ Two days later, the State Department spokesman followed up with a statement suggesting that controls governing trade with China were under review. At the July State Department meeting, DAS Barnett noted that he believed Washington 'was receptive now to a detached analysis of the various aspects of US China trade policy', and the major topic of discussion was media, public and congressional attitudes toward policy reform. The participants noted that the press 'had generally accepted the . . . thesis (as stated before the Zablocki subcommittee . . .) that US policy should aim at breaking Communist China's isolation and that increased contacts was the proper way to do this'.⁹⁸

It was also noted that the press and the Congress had not reacted negatively to either the

President's expression of interest in lowering barriers to China, nor to the State

⁹⁵ Meeting notes, US Department of State, 'US Trade and Other Controls Directed Against Communist China', 28 June 1966, *ibid.*

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Speech by President Johnson, 12 July 1966, *Public Papers of the Presidents.*

⁹⁸ Meeting notes, US Department of State, 'US Trade and Other Controls Directed Against Communist China', 21 July 1966, Box 442, Averell Harriman Papers.

Department spokesman's similar statement. Despite the obviously changed Congressional and public attitudes, however, and that it was 'the sense of the meeting' that 'the China trade issue was perhaps not as explosive as it once was', participants believed 'that there was no groundswell of public opinion favouring the relaxation of the China controls', a perception which affected their willingness to pursue policy change.⁹⁹ The changes in Congressional opinion were so new that given the history of nearly unanimous and heated opposition to any liberalisation of China policy, participants were unsure of the extent of the shifts in attitude that they were witnessing, with one of the officials expressing the belief that 'there is still considerable political heat in the issue'.¹⁰⁰

As the State Department and White House were considering possible conciliatory moves toward China, Senate liberals continued to press the advantage they believed they had gained due to the success of the hearings. In June 1966 George McGovern was in steady communication with the Far Eastern bureau of the State Department and received clearance to travel to China, should Peking issue a visa. McGovern was referred to Edgar Snow for his intervention with Peking to obtain a Chinese visa. As before, Snow's advocacy proved fruitless.¹⁰¹ In a 16 June speech Majority Leader Mike Mansfield asserted that the growing conflict in Vietnam necessitated more open Sino-American communication in order to avoid war with China, and suggested that to that end Dean Rusk meet with Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi.¹⁰² Johnson, at a press conference a month later, responded to a question on Mansfield's suggestion that he had 'read Senator Mansfield's speech with a great deal of interest. . . . [and had] asked Secretary Rusk to give the majority leader's observations very careful consideration'. Johnson went out of

⁹⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ George McGovern to Edgar Snow, 12 June 1966, f.65, Correspondence, June 2–December 30, 1966, Edgar Snow Papers.

¹⁰² *China and US Far East Policy, 1945-1966* (Washington, D.C., 1967), p.191.

his way to show that the administration was 'delighted to review the Senator's views, any information he has, and give careful consideration to them'.¹⁰³ In the context of his escalation of American involvement in Vietnam, the President's seeming solicitousness toward the growing pressure from liberal Senators of his own party can probably best be explained by his need to maintain support for his escalation in Vietnam by showing that he was also willing to pursue initiatives that would reduce tensions with America's opponents.¹⁰⁴

Johnson responded similarly to a call by Ted Kennedy for Washington to adopt a 'two Chinas' policy which would provide for UN membership for both Taiwan and Mainland China.¹⁰⁵ In keeping with his response to Mansfield's suggestion, Johnson responded later that day at a news conference that while the administration would seek to 'do everything we can to increase our exchanges' with China, it would not adopt a two China policy.¹⁰⁶ Johnson needed to show himself willing to take some steps in China's direction in order to neutralise liberal criticism that his position in Vietnam was recalcitrant, yet Dean Rusk effectively blocked any moves to lower barriers to China, and certainly did not wish to countenance fundamental policy change. Following the series of meetings, Barnett informed Averell Harriman that the Far Eastern Affairs bureau had been preparing a 'memorandum...to the Secretary recommending some minor but useful changes in our China trade policy. . . We all agree . . . that success in getting other parts of the . . . Government aboard depends upon the Secretary's personal approval of our recommendations'.¹⁰⁷ While a significant number of Administration officials favoured taking at least limited initiatives that would begin the process of lowering barriers with

¹⁰³ President's News Conference, 18 July 1966, *Public Papers of the Presidents*.

¹⁰⁴ Michael Lumbers also makes this point.

¹⁰⁵ Senate floor speech by Edward Kennedy, 20 July 1966, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁰⁶ President's News Conference, 20 July 1966, *Public Papers of the Presidents*.

¹⁰⁷ Robert Barnett to Averell Harriman, 4 October 1966, Box 443, Averell Harriman Papers.

Peking, the success of these suggestions depended upon support from Rusk, which was not forthcoming. Among other things, Rusk argued that any initiatives Washington made in the direction of rapprochement faced almost no possibility of being favourably received by Peking, making American initiatives a moot point.

Therein was one of the primary roadblocks to the implementation of even relatively minor relaxation of trade controls with China. Over the remainder of Johnson's term these suggested policy changes made no headway. Rusk, and other senior policy-makers, continued to view China policy through the prism of Vietnam, but in a very different way than did the new type of Democratic liberal. In one of the last attempts by an Administration official to suggest change of policy toward China, William Bundy, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs¹⁰⁸, re-recommended in March 1968 that the travel ban be revisited.¹⁰⁹ While several other officers at the State Department concurred with Bundy's recommendation, Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs William Macomber did not. Seeing any potential initiatives toward China in the light of the Administration's need to buttress Congressional support for its Vietnam policy, Macomber argued to Rusk that 'the proposed policy change would meet conservative opposition without gaining liberal support for the administration's Vietnam policy'.¹¹⁰ Rusk disapproved Bundy's recommendation.

The continued opposition to change of trade or travel regulations toward China, much less fundamental policy change, on the part of Rusk and other senior Administration members, despite the obvious changing of domestic political attitudes, became a target of criticism in Washington.¹¹¹ The Council on Foreign Relations, for

¹⁰⁸ 'Far Eastern Affairs' was renamed 'East Asian and Pacific Affairs' in late 1966.

¹⁰⁹ William Bundy to Dean Rusk, 6 March 1968, Document 306, *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XXX, China*.

¹¹⁰ *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XXX, China*, footnotes at bottom of Document 306.

¹¹¹ James Thomson, after leaving the NSC, wrote an article in 1967 in which he accused Rusk of being a 'zealot' who had 'single-handedly obstructed recurrent attempts within the Administration to bring about modification of our rigidity on China'. Thomson, James, 'Time for a New China Policy', *Atlantic*

example, undertook a study of Sino-American relations between 1964 and 1968, a portion of which was published in 1966. It concluded that there was much potential for a changed relationship, but that the public was more receptive to talks with China than were leading Administration officials.¹¹² Yet the views of Fulbright and his liberal colleagues were becoming more widely shared: a growing range of political voices were questioning the broader framework of Washington's approach to the Cold War to date and as part of that process were questioning China policy.

The hearings of 1965 and 1966 had made it more acceptable for those in Congress who believed that existing China policy should be questioned to speak out with greater freedom in favour of policy reform, and had begun a campaign by liberals to break down barriers with Peking. Through 1966, 1967 and 1968 Senate liberals, joined by a few in the House, continued to criticise the Johnson Administration's inflexibility on China, urge a reconsideration of China policy, and coordinate among themselves, and with like-minded academics, members of the media, and others, in order to attempt to broaden the public debate.¹¹³ These like-minded individuals perceived that the trend was in their favour.¹¹⁴ This challenge grew in parallel with the growth of the challenge to Administration policy in Indochina.¹¹⁵ House Democratic leaders, like their Senate colleagues, saw China as 'the key to this struggle' [in Vietnam].¹¹⁶ By the time Richard Nixon took office, the trend

Monthly, October 1967.

¹¹² 'The United States and China in World Affairs', Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, D.C., 1966.

¹¹³ George McGovern to Edgar Snow, 30 January 1967, f.68, Edgar Snow Papers; John Fairbank to Edgar Snow, 25 May 1967, f.68, *ibid.*; Edgar Snow to William Fulbright, 27 February 1967, f.70, *ibid.*; Exchange of letters between Andrew Nathan and Don Fraser, 3 May and 10 May 1966, Box 54, Location 145.C.3.1B, Donald Fraser Papers, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota; Memcon between a staff member for Don Fraser and Stuart Innerst, 9 February 1967, Box 55, Location 145.C.3.2F, *ibid.*

¹¹⁴ See John Fairbank to Edgar Snow, 25 May 1967, f.68, Edgar Snow Papers.

¹¹⁵ See memcon between Paul Kreisberg, Officer in Charge, Mainland China Affairs, and Representative Paul Findlay, 6 February 1967, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1967-1969, Political and Defense, Box 1972, NARA II; and Representative Thomas Morris to Dean Rusk, 15 December 1967, *ibid.*

¹¹⁶ 'US Policy in Asia: What Do We Do With China?' Speech by Clement Zablocki, 27 July 1967, PR-3, Speeches, 1949-1983, Box 4, Clement Zablocki Papers.

toward breaking down barriers with Peking was obvious. Fatigue among large portions of the Congress, media and public with the conflict in Vietnam and with a confrontational approach to the Cold War, as well as the implosion of Johnson's presidency and the Democratic party over Vietnam, and a contentious domestic political scene in which it appeared that the very integrity of the nation may be in question, commended a more conciliatory approach to opponents by Johnson's successor. The power of known Congressional attitudes to shape the policy agenda was the primary shaping factor in this case. Repeated public speeches and sets of hearings from liberal Congressional leaders urging reform of China policy had succeeded in setting the policy agenda through educating the public and fellow Members and re-defining the terms of the debate. What Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger subsequently did was not revolutionary, therefore, but followed the trajectory which had been set by Congress.

CHAPTER 1: 1969-1971– A NEW DYNAMIC SIGNALS CHANGE

This chapter traces the evolution of Congressional debate over China policy from President Nixon's inauguration through the announcement of the opening to China in 1971. It argues that the shift in Congressional attitudes toward the Cold War in general, and toward China in particular, was a crucial factor that allowed Nixon to pursue an opening to China. As has been acknowledged by many scholars, the driving force behind Sino-American rapprochement was the strategic rationale. However, although the strategic rationale explains the 'why' of Sino-American rapprochement, it does not explain how Sino-American rapprochement was able to take place after so many years of steadfast opposition in Congress to even the most minimal suggestion of change. The shift in Congressional attitudes from opposition to China policy reform to relatively broad support for such reform, and the dramatic weakening in the power of the China Lobby from the mid 1960's through the early 1970's, explains how rapprochement was able to take place. The seizing by Congress of the initiative in the area of China policy from the executive branch during the mid and late 1960's began a growing movement to reform China policy and largely reset the terms of debate so that the new Nixon Administration faced a very different political environment than that which had been faced by his predecessors.

In tracing the domestic political process that occurred as Kissinger and Nixon pursued rapprochement with Beijing, this chapter also shows the divisions within Congress, as well as tensions between Congress and the White House, that limited Congress' ability to directly shape the reform. Despite these limitations, Congress did exercise influence on the manner in which the White House pursued rapprochement from 1969-1971, partly because Nixon still feared possible conservative opposition to the

opening, and partly because he was concerned that Senate liberals, particularly those with competing presidential ambitions, would travel to China prior to himself and gain credit for 'opening China'.

A New Dynamic: Powerful Constituencies for Change and A Weakened China Lobby

By the time Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger took office, domestic opinion with regard to China had been in transition for several years. Much of the media, the American public and the Congress was fatigued by the long-running war in Vietnam, and the experience of Vietnam had in many ways roused discontent with the underpinnings of the whole of American Cold War foreign and national security policy. Many within the Democratic party, which held massive majorities in both chambers of Congress, were increasingly abandoning the tenets of Cold War liberalism that had defined the party in the post-World War II era (the coupling of a hawkish foreign policy predicated on the aggressive containment of communism with liberal domestic policy preferences), and now openly challenged the way in which American power had been exercised to that point, taking what they saw as a less alarmist view (and what critics countered was a more naïve view) of communist intentions. Those holding these ideas gradually took control of the party between its defeat in the presidential election of 1968 and 1972, when Senator George McGovern won the party's presidential nomination. The criticisms of Cold War foreign policy made by William Fulbright and his liberal colleagues found greater appeal as the nation's experience in Vietnam intensified and as an increasing proportion of Congress became radicalised due to deepening, and seemingly endless, American involvement in Indochina. The challenge to Executive Branch management of foreign and national security policy grew out of this new liberal perspective.

The turbulent domestic political and cultural dynamic of the late 1960's and early

1970's, and a sense that the very survival of the nation was in question, helped to shape a ready constituency for policies of conciliation with America's opponents, particularly with China, containment of which had been one of the primary rationales behind the decision to fight in Vietnam. The Zablocki and Fulbright hearings of 1965 and 1966 had spawned a growing challenge to existing China policy not just within Congress, but from a broad range of sources, all of which served to redefine the space within which the Nixon Administration was able to operate in terms of developing China policy. The Congressional hearings, the purpose of which was to begin a critical evaluation of China policy in light of both the Sino-Soviet split and the American experience in Vietnam, gave rise to several private organisations, such as the National Committee on US-China Relations, a bipartisan group of respected scholars of East Asia and former government officials, which by 1969 had already been working for two years to advance a national dialogue on China policy.¹¹⁷ Opinion shapers in the media, including Harrison Salisbury of *The New York Times*, encouraged by the hearings, began to advocate policy change.¹¹⁸ Public opinion seemed also to have followed the trend begun by the hearings, and in spite of the negative publicity China had earned for itself due to the violence and xenophobia of the Cultural Revolution, had exhibited a steady trend showing greater favour toward the seating of China in the UN since the mid 1960's.¹¹⁹ The broader cultural changes taking place within the United States at this time, in which an almost revolutionary fervor portended dramatic changes in many areas, harmonised with and buttressed the Congressional role in calling for change of policy toward China.

¹¹⁷ Robert Scalapino to Hugh Scott, announcing the formation of a 'National Committee on US-China Relations', 25 May 1967, Accession MSS 10200, etc., Box 117, Hugh Scott Papers, Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

¹¹⁸ Harrison Salisbury to Edgar Snow, 14 April 1966, f.64, Edgar Snow Papers.

¹¹⁹ Gallup Poll No.774-K, released 20 February 1969, cited in Leonard Kusnitz, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: America's China Policy, 1949-1979* (Westport, Connecticut, 1984), pp.117-8, and p.129, fn.143.

All of this contributed to the rise of a powerful lobby (derisively labeled 'The Peking Lobby' by conservatives)¹²⁰ composed of much of the media, Sinologists and other academics (who many times coordinated efforts with sympathetic Members of Congress¹²¹), and a coalition of Democrat and Republican Congressional liberals who, with the support (and many times pressure) of the American agricultural and business communities that sought to benefit from trade with mainland China, and numerous other political, religious and other organisations, placed pressure on the Executive to revise China policy. Policy, political and religious groups joining the effort included the Council on Foreign Relations, the National Committee on US-China Relations (whose membership roles included both liberal and conservative academics), Citizens to Change US China Policy, the Committee for a New China Policy, the US-China Friendship Association, the League of Women Voters, and the leadership of several major church denominations¹²² (including the Quakers, to which Richard Nixon belonged).¹²³ Added to this was active lobbying by powerful business interests including the US Chamber of Commerce, the American Farm Bureau Federation, Monsanto, the Emergency Committee for American Trade (which was made up of large multinational corporations), General Motors, Xerox, Chase Manhattan Bank, several major airlines including Pan American Airlines and TWA, Boeing (which, being Seattle-based, heavily lobbied its Senators from the state of Washington, Warren Magnuson and 'Scoop' Jackson), Raytheon (which was

¹²⁰ 'Obituaries for "China Lobby" Are Very Premature', *Human Events*, 28 March 1970; 'Thinking of Chairman Mao', *National Review*, 11 February 1969.

¹²¹ See Dale MacIver to Donald Fraser, providing a list of Sinologists and other academics who 'would be willing to be of help in your efforts to stir up interest in changing our China policy', 12 June 1969, Box 34, Location 151.I.11.6F, Donald Fraser Papers; Jerome Cohen, 'Ted Kennedy's Role in Restoring Diplomatic Relations with China', *Legislation and Public Policy* 14, p.350.

¹²² The leadership of the major American Protestant denominations had been trending toward advocacy of more liberal political causes since the mid 1960's. See Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton, 1988)

¹²³ *Congress and the Nation: Vol. III, 1969-1972: A Review of Government and Politics* (Washington, D.C., 1973), p.473;

'Recognise Red China, Voters League Proposes', *Washington Star*, 27 April 1969.

based in Massachusetts and lobbied Senators Ted Kennedy and Edward Brooke), and numerous others.¹²⁴ Opposing this powerful campaign was a much smaller grouping composed of the now anemic China Lobby, two veterans organisations (the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars), the American Conservative Union, the American Security Council and the staunchly anti-communist AFL-CIO.¹²⁵

Even conservative, anti-communist Democrats, such as Senator Richard Russell (D-GA), the long-time chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee who took over the even more powerful Senate Appropriations Committee in January 1969, had come to support opening lines of communication to China by the time that Richard Nixon took office.¹²⁶ Russell's animosity toward 'Red China' had been so great, and his belief (and that of most others in Congress) that China was behind North Vietnam's war effort against South Vietnam so strong, that just four years previously, he had advocated the use of nuclear weapons against China.¹²⁷ The evolution of the views of such a powerful and staunch opponent of Beijing was a stark illustration of the broader changes taking place within Washington that recommended policy change to the new Administration.

Perhaps the most significant symbol of the drastically changed political dynamic was the dissipation of the political strength of the China Lobby since the mid 1960's, which removed one of the major political obstacles to reform of China policy. While individual Members and loose confederations of conservatives opposed the challenge to

¹²⁴ *Congress and the Nation*, p.473;

Edward Brooke to Raytheon, 8 January 1970, in response to a letter from Raytheon to Brooke urging that he support improved relations with China, Box 204, Edward Brooke Papers, Manuscript Division, LOC, Washington, D.C.;

Matthew Fehrs, 'Not only Turkeys and Chickens: Why do hawks make out of character moves?' Mershon Center for International Security Studies, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

¹²⁵ *Congress and the Nation*, p.473; George Meany to William Fulbright, 30 August 1971, and Fulbright to Meany, 5 September 1971, RG21-001, Series 1, Box 57, George Meany Memorial Archives, National Labor College, Silver Spring, Maryland.

¹²⁶ Gilbert Fite, *Ricahrd B. Russell, Jr.: Senator From Georgia* (Chapel Hill, 1991), p.486; see also *Savannah Morning News*, 1 January 1969.

¹²⁷ 'Senator Russell to Seek Seventh Term: Suggested Atom Bomb Use Against Red China in Vietnam,' *New York Times*, 21 May 1965.

existing China policy, the muscular, organised response that would have been expected in earlier years was lacking. By 1969 the movement urging reconsideration of China policy had become the far more visible presence both nationally and on Capitol Hill, and the Committee of One Million had lost considerable political potency.¹²⁸ Leading liberal Republicans recognised, and called the White House's attention to the fact, that this opened the door to a re-evaluation of China policy. Republican Senator Jacob Javits, for example, who had himself recently undertaken a high profile resignation from the Committee of One Million, noted that the minimal relaxation of travel regulations related to China late in the Johnson Administration 'did not evoke the wrath in Congressional and editorial circles that some of our higher officials feared. On the contrary, the Congress and the nation at large welcomed the changes'.¹²⁹

There had been many signs of the weakening of the China Lobby. From late 1966 onwards, as the liberal challenge to existing China policy was gaining strength on Capitol Hill, a number of high profile Congressional resignations from the Committee had taken place.¹³⁰ Those members of Congress publicly supporting the Committee continued to drop significantly through the late 1960's, important departures from the Steering Committee of the Committee of One Million including, in addition to Javits, Democratic Senators Paul Douglas (D-IL) and Abraham Ribicoff (D-CT). The departure of such high profile liberal members made it increasingly difficult for the Committee to recruit new membership and more difficult for it to claim that it had a broad-based, bipartisan membership and not a 'right wing' organisation.¹³¹ Support for the Committee's positions dropped so significantly on Capitol Hill after the challenge posed by the Zablocki and

¹²⁸ 'Thinking of Chairman Mao', *National Review*, 11 February 1969.

¹²⁹ Speech by Senator Jacob Javits before the National Committee for US-China Relations, New York City, 20 March 1969, printed in the *Congressional Record*, 26 March 1969; see also 'Javits Urges US to Reassess Its Policy on Communist China', *New York Times*, 15 March 1970.

¹³⁰ Stanley Bachrack, *The Committee of One Million* (New York, 1976), p.281.

¹³¹ *ibid.*

Fulbright hearings that no attempt was made by the Committee of One Million to poll Congressional attitudes on China after 1966 out of fear that the Committee's position would no longer enjoy support from a majority of Members.¹³² Whereas in the late 1950's the Committee boasted as many as 349 Congressional supporters, by 1969 its letterhead contained only seven names.¹³³ Even Senate Minority Whip Hugh Scott (R-PA), one of the few who remained on the Steering Committee of the Committee of One Million, declared his support for 'new options' on China policy and encouraged the new Republican Administration to move 'in the direction of broadening negotiations with Mainland China'.¹³⁴ The organisation's increasing weakness was also evident in the amount of effort it found necessary to dedicate to fundraising. During the 1950's and early 1960's, the Committee had spent no more than thirty three percent of its annual contributions on fundraising. By 1967 this figure had risen to sixty percent, and by 1971 had increased further to seventy nine percent.¹³⁵ Faced with this precipitous decline, Marvin Liebman, who had run the Committee since its founding, resigned in 1968 to go into business as a theatrical producer.¹³⁶

In early 1969, former Congressman Walter Judd, the public face of the Committee, attempted to revive the Committee's presence on Capitol Hill in an attempt to stem the tide in favour of an opening to China. He quickly found, however, that there was little interest. Early in the new Congress the Committee sent out meeting notices to all House and Senate Members, and Judd personally lobbied the vast majority of Members to attend a 26 February meeting in the Capitol meant to mobilise support.¹³⁷ Hugh Scott sent a staff member to the meeting whose report revealed just how far the political strength of the

¹³² Staff memorandum to Hugh Scott, 18 February 1969, MSS 10200, etc., Box 117, Hugh Scott Papers.

¹³³ 'Policy on China and How it Grows', *Washington Post*, 11 April 1969.

¹³⁴ 'Senator Scott, in Tokyo, Cites New Options for US on China', *New York Times*, 16 February 1969.

¹³⁵ Stanley Bachrack, *The Committee of One Million*, p.160.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*; also, 'Policy on China and How it Grows', *Washington Post*, 11 April 1969.

¹³⁷ Staff memorandum to Hugh Scott, 18 February 1969, MSS 10200, etc., Box 117, Hugh Scott Papers.

Committee had fallen. The aide reported that 'attendance was sparse and limited mostly to staff, and that when the issue was raised at taking a poll to determine Congressional sentiment with regard to China policy reform, support for such a poll was weak due to the fact that there was 'some doubt that a new Congressional survey at this point would produce the desired majority percentage'.¹³⁸

The Lobby continued to weaken over Nixon's first three years in office, opening the door even more broadly to policy reform. *The New York Times*, noticing this weakening, wrote a story in April 1970 that quoted an unnamed State Department official as saying, 'I haven't seen any evidence of the China Lobby in the five years I have been working on China. We can now think about China policy without looking over our shoulders'.¹³⁹ That same month Taipei's embassy had a difficult time getting enough Members of Congress and government officials interested in attending a breakfast in honour of Chiang Kai-shek's son and heir, Chiang Ching-kuo, who was visiting Washington.¹⁴⁰ In the spring of 1971, just after 'ping-pong diplomacy', the *New York Times* ran a follow-up story on the China Lobby that expressed the widely-held perception that Walter Judd, 'once a spokesman for the Nationalist Government's cause, has faded from the scene'.¹⁴¹ Support for an opening was broad and growing, while opposition to it was much weakened from previous years and continuing to shrink.

Although Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger later took credit for pushing for major policy change in face of bureaucratic resistance and strong resistance from Congress¹⁴², in truth, although there was conservative opposition to such policy change,

¹³⁸ Sid Bailey to Hugh Scott, 'Re: Committee of One Million Meeting Last Week', 7 March 1969, *ibid*.

¹³⁹ "China Lobby", Once Powerful Factor in US Politics, Appears Victim of Lack of Interest', *New York Times*, 26 April 1970.

¹⁴⁰ Walter McConaughy (Taipei) to the State Department, telegram 9917, undated (April 1970), 'Visit of Vice Premier CCK of China, April 21-23, 1970', NSC Files, VIP Visits, Box 913, NPMP, NARA II.

¹⁴¹ *New York Times*, 2 May 1971.

¹⁴² Henry Kissinger, *The White House Years* (New York, 1979), p.167.

the tide of opinion had so shifted in relation to China policy by 1969 and 1970 that the direction in which the two men developed policy harmonised with the broader trends rather than conflicted with them. No politician, particularly one as shrewd and cautious as Nixon, would have risked his political career with a foreign policy initiative as revolutionary as a fundamental change of China policy without having reason to believe that domestic political opinion would favour his move - that his risks could be minimised and the potential reward worth the effort. The evolution of the domestic political environment, particularly the altered opinions in Congress and the broad movement that the earlier Congressional hearings had spawned, recommended to Nixon the political wisdom of attempting to lower barriers between the United States and China.¹⁴³ An editorial by *TIME* Magazine, which had always been a staunch critic of Mao and supporter of Chiang Kai-shek, summarised well the political environment within which Nixon found himself upon taking office when it asserted that 'on balance the risks involved seem relatively slight and the case for a change in US policy is powerful'.¹⁴⁴

Composition of Congress as an Indicator of Change

The challenge to existing China policy, as well as to Executive Branch leadership of foreign policy in general, was strongest in the Senate, in which the new type of liberal held many of the leadership positions. William Fulbright, who had been using his chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee to the utmost in attempting to reclaim Congressional authority over foreign policy formulation, also used it to advocate for a radical altering of existing policy toward China. Ted Kennedy, a Fulbright ally who had in 1966 joined Fulbright in challenging the policy of pursuing China's isolation, was elected

¹⁴³ See 'Relations with Peking: Several Factors Favor Conciliation With Chinese Communist Regime', *Washington Post*, 26 January 1969; and 'US and China: Stirrings—and Frustrations—Over Policy Change', *New York Times*, 30 March 1969.

¹⁴⁴ *TIME*, 6 June 1969, pp. 48-9.

Senate Majority Whip in early 1969. Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, along with many of his liberal colleagues, was an adherent to the 'lost chance thesis' – the idea that Washington was most responsible for the twenty years of Sino-American hostility by having allegedly alienated Mao's new government in 1949 and early 1950, and that rapprochement with China would therefore right a wrong that Washington had committed.¹⁴⁵

The substantial Democratic majority was quickly becoming increasingly liberal in its foreign policy views, with fewer traditional, Cold War Democrats remaining with each passing year. By the spring of 1971 the makeup of the Democratic members of the Senate had evolved to the point that a staff member for the Senate Democratic Policy Committee stated to an interviewer that 'If something had come out of that caucus with John Stennis [the conservative chairman of the Armed Services Committee] and 'Scoop' Jackson [the hawkish Senator from the state of Washington] in favour of it, it wouldn't mean anything'.¹⁴⁶ The questioning of Cold War orthodoxy on foreign and national security policy had spread by 1969 to the liberal wing of the Republican Party, which was then quite a substantial minority within the Party. By 1969, these Republicans had come to share many of the views of their liberal Democratic colleagues and together formed a coalition that created a majority within the Senate and a significant minority in the House. This majority favoured a reordering of American foreign policy across the board as well as an increased Congressional role in the development of policy. Conservative Republicans themselves admitted that of the forty three Republican members of the

¹⁴⁵ Speech by Senator Mike Mansfield at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., 16 March 1973, WHCF (hereafter, WHCF), Subject Files, CO (Countries), [EX] CO 34-2 4/1/73-5/31/73 through [GEN] CO 34-2 6/1/71-7/31/71, Box 20, NARA II.

¹⁴⁶ 'Mansfield's Reforms Spark "Quiet Revolution" in Senate', *National Journal*, 6 March 1971; also, interview with former Senator Harry Byrd, Jr., a conservative Virginia Democrat who left the party in 1970 due to discontent with the leftward trajectory taken by the party since the mid 1960's, 10 January 2010, Winchester, Virginia.

Senate at least fifteen of those were liberals.¹⁴⁷

In contrast with the Senate, in which debate over foreign policy was divided according to committee, debate over foreign policy in the House was divided largely along generational lines.¹⁴⁸ The seniority system in the House had resulted in the leadership positions and the committee chairmanships being held by conservative Democrats who had risen slowly through the ranks over a period of years and continued to hold the traditional hawkish views of communism that had until recently been characteristic of the Democratic party as a whole. The House, therefore, was a more conservative body than was the Senate and, while concerned about the growth of Executive authority in foreign and national security policy, generally agreed with the Nixon Administration's policy views and thus challenged the Administration's foreign policy less stridently than did the Senate.¹⁴⁹

Despite being the more conservative body, however, changes had been occurring within the House, as well. A significant minority of House Members agreed with the views of their dovish colleagues in the Senate, and a large number of more hawkish Members had begun to believe that China must be more actively engaged in order to help minimise its potential threat. Symbolising the growing clout of liberals within the House during Nixon's tenure, the liberal Democratic Study Group (DSG) contained approximately 120 members as of July 1970,¹⁵⁰ nearly half of the Democratic members of the that body, growing to 170 members over the next three years.¹⁵¹ One of the leaders of the DSG, Donald Fraser, symbolised the changes that had been taking place in

¹⁴⁷ See 22 September 1969 letter from C.Y. Thomas to Senator Robert Dole, Accession 329-73-56, Box 17, Robert Dole Archive and Special Collections (hereafter, Robert Dole Papers), Robert Dole Institute of Politics, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.

¹⁴⁸ Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War*, p.179.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with David Abshire, 2 June 2009, Washington, D.C.

¹⁵⁰ 'Bipartisan Congress Group Seeks to Influence Policy', *CQ (Congressional Quarterly) Fact Sheet*, 28 July 1970, p.1.

¹⁵¹ See the DSG file folders found in Box 683, Papers of Patsy Mink, Manuscript Division, LOC.

Congressional attitudes toward China since the mid 1960's. Fraser had unseated Walter Judd in 1962, gained an immediate seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and had proven as ardent a critic of Taiwan's lack of political freedoms and proponent of opening relations with Mainland China as Judd had proven a supporter of Taipei and a proponent of Washington's attempt to isolate Beijing.¹⁵²

Another liberal group, the Members of Congress for Peace Through Law (MCPL), was founded in 1966 in order to give liberal rank and file Members the opportunity to air their policy ideas that were unable to gain exposure in committee or the full House due to the complete control of committees by conservative chairmen. As liberal Republican Paul McCloskey explained, the group existed in order to get around 'the close tie between the Administration and committee chairmen who have a monopoly on information'.¹⁵³ The group was a precursor to the 1975 'democratic revolution' in the House which saw power diffused downward from the committee chairmen to subcommittee chairmen and rank and file members. MCPL had seventy-seven members as of April 1969 and created a Committee on US-China Relations that spring which actively advocated a liberalisation of China policy.¹⁵⁴ The growing prominence of liberal groups like the DSG and MCPL in the House illustrated the fact that the new liberal attitude toward China, although not dominant as in the Senate, had become influential in that chamber, as well.

In both chambers, regional influences also affected attitudes. Members from western states, being naturally oriented toward trade with the Asia-Pacific region, tended to support China policy reform and pushed particularly hard for the removal of trade barriers. The powerful, long-time chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee from the

¹⁵² See Fraser's letter to the Congressional Research Service (CRS) announcing his desire to 'compile a list of legislative changes that would be helpful in normalising relations between mainland China and the US' and to 'try to re-establish normal trade relations between mainland China and the United States', 14 July 1969, Box 34, Location 151.I.11.6F, Donald Fraser Papers.

¹⁵³ 'Bipartisan Congress Group Seeks to Influence Policy', *CQ Fact Sheet*, 28 July 1970, p.1.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, quoting Representative Morris Udall (D-AZ).

state of Washington, Warren Magnuson, had advocated the removal of trade barriers since the late 1950s.¹⁵⁵ Magnuson's hawkish Democratic colleague from the state of Washington, Senator Henry 'Scoop' Jackson, despite distrusting Beijing's motives, also supported trade policy liberalisation and greater communication with Beijing after coming in early 1969 (after the Sino-Soviet border clashes of March 1969) to view the relationship with China in terms of its effect on relations with the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁶ Mark Hatfield, a liberal Republican Senator from Oregon, was also a strong advocate of policy reform. MCPL's Committee on US-China Relations was chaired by Representative Patsy Mink of Hawaii.¹⁵⁷ ¹⁵⁸ Midwestern Members were initially split on the issue of China, usually according to ideology. Liberal Members from the midwest, such as Representatives Don Fraser (D-MN) and Paul Findley (R-IL) (Findley was a member of the Steering Committee of MCPL) and Senator George McGovern, advocated the lowering of trade barriers and diplomatic normalisation, viewing with envy the wheat sales made to China by Canadian farmers and hoping that farmers in their home states could benefit from a more open trade relationship with China.¹⁵⁹ ¹⁶⁰ Conservative Members from the midwest, such as Senator Robert Dole of Kansas (R-KS), would begin to advocate for a reduction of trade barriers as they saw the incremental steps that the Administration was already taking. Midwestern wheat farmers, a constituency that the *Washington Post* characterized as 'generally thought of as unyielding toward Peking'¹⁶¹,

¹⁵⁵ Shelby Scates, *Warren G. Magnuson and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century America* (Seattle, 1998), pp.192, 284.

¹⁵⁶ Robert Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics* (Seattle, 2000), pp. 242-3.

¹⁵⁷ For information on Patsy Mink's involvement in the movement to reform China policy see Boxes 244 and 245, Papers of Patsy Mink, Manuscript Division, LOC.

¹⁵⁸ MPCL to Edward Brooke, announcing the formation of the Committee on US-China Relations, 30 April 1969, Box 461, Edward Brooke Papers.

¹⁵⁹ House floor speech by Paul Findley, 17 February 1969, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁶⁰ See Donald Fraser to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), in which Fraser announced his plans 'to compile a list of legislative changes that would be helpful in normalising relations between mainland China and the United States' and his desire to 'try to re-establish normal trade relations', 14 July 1969, Box 34, Location 151.I.11.6F, Donald Fraser Papers.

¹⁶¹ 'Policy on China and How it Grows', *Washington Post*, 11 April 1969.

had provided growing pressure on their Congressional representatives to lower trade barriers since the mid 1960's. In early 1969 the University of Nebraska undertook a survey of wheat farmers, finding 'a softening of attitudes, . . . attributed to the hope of following Canada's example and selling China wheat'.¹⁶² By the spring and summer of 1971 conservatives in Congress would join their liberal colleagues in openly advocating with the Administration for further trade reductions.^{163 164}

The Challenge to Nixon From the Left

As has been noted, the greatest pressure for change came from the liberal Senate. Institutionally, the Senate has always been more prestigious than the House in public esteem and press coverage, which has given the pronouncements of Senate members greater public weight. Liberal Democratic senators, joined by their liberal Republican colleagues, sensing an opportunity to influence policy with the advent of a new Administration, began a barrage of speeches both on the Senate floor and outside the Senate in early 1969 advocating rapprochement with China and challenging the new Republican Administration.

The pressure from the left began during the very first week of the new Administration with Ted Kennedy calling for the Administration to draft a UN resolution allowing both Chinas membership in the General Assembly, William Fulbright suggesting the withdrawal of certain US military facilities on Taiwan (attempting to meet Beijing's demand that all US military forces be withdrawn from Taiwan) and belittling the Nationalist claim to represent the Chinese on the Mainland, Mark Hatfield suggesting that the Administration abolish all curbs on travel to China by American citizens, and Senators

¹⁶² *ibid.*

¹⁶³ Robert Dole to Pete Peterson, Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs, 4 May 1971, Accession 329-82-261, Box 83, Robert Dole Papers.

¹⁶⁴ 'Policy on China and How it Grows', *Washington Post*, 11 April 1969.

Fulbright, Kennedy, Hatfield, John Sherman Cooper (R-KY) and Alan Cranston (D-CA) urging Nixon to use the Warsaw talk scheduled for 20 February to signal the start of a new China policy.¹⁶⁵ Speaking at a California conference on China in late January, Senators Fulbright, Mansfield, and Kennedy, along with Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas and others, all suggested some form of a two-China policy that would allow both the Republic of China, on Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China, on the mainland, to be members of the UN simultaneously.¹⁶⁶

The Chinese representation ('Chirep') issue would be an important element in the domestic debate through 1971, with conservatives arguing that the Mainland did not deserve membership due to its alleged aggressive behaviour (proof of which included its xenophobic rhetoric and support for insurgencies throughout the Third World) and lack of support for the international system, and liberals and moderates arguing that keeping a nation of 800 million persons out of the UN merely because Washington disagreed with its form of government was both unfair and harmful to the national interest.

Pressure from the left and evidence that the environment had shifted continued throughout that spring. In late March the National Committee on US-China Relations held a 'national convocation' in New York, which was attended by 2,500 people including Members of Congress, academics, business leaders, journalists, and government officials from the United States and other countries. The conference, which had been organized by leading Sinologists hoping to use Senate luminaries such as Kennedy, Javits and others to pressure the Nixon Administration for change, was successful in this regard.¹⁶⁷ On 20 March, Ted Kennedy gave a speech at the conference in which he stated that the new

¹⁶⁵ *New York Times*, 25 January 1969.

¹⁶⁶ *New York Times*, 27 January 1969.

¹⁶⁷ 'US and China: Stirrings—and Frustrations—Over Policy Change', *New York Times*, 30 March 1969; 'Specialists Urge New China Policy: Moscow-Peking Conflict Is Called Opportunity for US', *New York Times*, 22 March 1969.

Administration had 'a new opportunity to rectify the errors of the past'. He continued by laying out the challenge: 'If the Administration allows this time to pass without new initiatives, if it allows inherited policies to rush unimpeded along their course, it will have wasted this opportunity', and called for the withdrawal of the US military presence from Taiwan and the establishment of US consulates on the Mainland.¹⁶⁸ Nixon perceived the speech by Kennedy, a likely contender for the presidency in 1972, as the beginning of Kennedy's bid to take the White House.¹⁶⁹ Every few weeks, particularly in response to Administration announcements of incremental policy change with regard to China, various Democratic senators such as Ted Kennedy, William Fulbright, or George McGovern, would make their own policy suggestions, in an apparent attempt to lay claim to China policy reform as a Democratic issue. Nixon's chief challenge appeared not to be opposition from the China Lobby, but rather finding a way to move towards a rapprochement in such a way that his Democratic competitors would not be able to make a stronger claim to ownership of China policy reform than could he.

The sole Democratic Senator generally trusted by Nixon was Mike Mansfield, who with the retirement of Lyndon Johnson had become the most senior Democratic office-holder nationwide, thus becoming the *de facto* leader of the Democratic party. Mansfield, who had previously been a professor of Asian history, was strongly supportive of a fundamental reshaping of American China policy and his constant speeches in public and on the floor of the Senate provided a steady barrage of pressure for change. In February 1969 Mansfield began, at Nixon's invitation, to meet monthly with the President for breakfast, and in their very first meeting Nixon confided in Mansfield that he was

¹⁶⁸ 'Kennedy Bids US End Taiwan Bases', *New York Times*, 21 March 1969; 'Washington Hopes Peking Meeting Leads to Talks with US', *New York Times*, 2 April 1969.

¹⁶⁹ Patrick Tyler, *A Great Wall - Six Presidents and China: An Investigative History*, (New York, 2000), p.59; 'Edward Kennedy's Challenge to President Nixon', *New York Times*, 21 May 1969.

hoping to open lines of communication with Beijing.¹⁷⁰ Being a private person who valued confidentiality and a traditionalist who respected the presidency, Mansfield rarely discussed these meetings with fellow Senators and did not even inform his closest aide, Frank Valeo, as to the substance of the meetings.¹⁷¹ However, due to Mansfield's belief in the importance of China and the need to change Washington's China policy, he did repeatedly discuss the topic with the President in their regular, private breakfasts over the next two years.¹⁷²

Nixon encouraged Mansfield's attempts to gain entry to China, but did not inform him of his efforts to establish direct communications with Beijing. Mansfield, in keeping with his reputation of deference to the presidency, told Nixon in a meeting in early 1970 that he believed that, between the two of them, it was the President's right to travel to China first, should an opening appear.¹⁷³ This openness of communication and deference to the presidency on the part of the Democratic Senate Majority Leader was remarkable, particularly in the context of the trend of the period toward curtailment of executive power and a greater Congressional role in foreign policy-development, as well as the partisan conflict between the controversial Republican President and strident liberal Senate critics. Mansfield's attitude stood in stark contrast to those of some of his liberal colleagues, and his regular breakfasts with Nixon were important in that they assured Nixon that the most powerful figure on Capitol Hill and in the Democratic party would be fully supportive of any moves he made toward China and would not compete with him but allow him to take the lead.

¹⁷⁰ Senate floor speech by Mike Mansfield, 23 July 1971, MSS 65, Series VIII, Box 70, Mike Mansfield Papers, University of Montana-Missoula, Missoula, Montana.

¹⁷¹ Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat*, (Washington, D.C., 2003), p.351.

¹⁷² Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, p.392.

¹⁷³ *ibid.*

Vietnam, China and Arguments in Favour of Policy Reform

The criticisms expressed by liberals of existing China policy illustrated the dramatic differences between their current views and those which had previously predominated on Capitol Hill. They questioned whether China was indeed as aggressive in its intent as it had once been perceived to be, whether it had the capability of harming American interests as greatly as had been claimed, and also whether the relationship between Hanoi and Beijing was as close as had been assumed.¹⁷⁴ Liberal recognition that Beijing was not the motivator of Hanoi's war effort and new conviction that China did not have aggressive designs on the rest of Asia illustrated the ways in which thinking among liberals was diverging from its past patterns with important implications for perceptions of China. While the extreme rhetoric of the Cultural Revolution was noted, liberals stressed the disconnect between this rhetoric and Beijing's cautious behaviour.¹⁷⁵ Liberals no longer perceived China to be an expansionist threat, but rather a weak, isolated state imploding due to the internal chaos caused by the Cultural Revolution, and having a weak military.¹⁷⁶

Continuing the attack on the policy of containment and isolation that had been begun in 1965 and 1966, liberals kept up a regular barrage targeting the effectiveness of that policy. The obvious trend in the annual vote on the Chinese representation (Chirep) issue in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which revealed that the United States was fighting a rearguard action in its opposition to Beijing's entry to the UN and in defence of Taiwan's seat, was emphasised. Liberals also accurately pointed to the strength and staying power of the Communist regime on the Mainland, despite the near civil war

¹⁷⁴ Thomas Hennings Memorial Lecture, 'The War and Why We Must End It', by Senator William Fulbright, 10 December 1969, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman William Fulbright's Speeches/Statements, Box 2, NARA I.

¹⁷⁵ For examples see the floor statements by Representative George Brown, 4 February 1969, *Congressional Record*; and by Senator Mark Hatfield, 18 February 1969, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁷⁶ Senate floor speech by Stephen Young, 27 March 1969, *Congressional Record*.

caused by the Cultural Revolution. Freshman Senator Thomas Eagleton's (D-MO) views were typical of those of Senate liberals when he criticised as ineffective the US policy of 'trying to isolate China from the world community hoping that the Communist regime might crumble or evaporate in such a political vacuum'.¹⁷⁷ Also typical of liberal arguments was Senator Joseph Tydings (D-MD), who, noting that the rationale for both the Vietnam War and the proposed ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) system had been to guard against Chinese aggression, contended that refusal to countenance diplomatic and economic relations with China was 'counterproductive', and denied Washington 'the diplomatic and economic means available . . . to affect Peking's behaviour'. Tydings concluded that 'By so reducing our options in the Far East, we limit the potential effectiveness of our policy in this area'.¹⁷⁸

Liberal Republicans shared this criticism of the policy of containment and isolation, as well as the changed perceptions of China. Liberal Republican Senator Mark Hatfield asserted in a January 1969 speech to a US-Japanese policy group that:

It has been obvious for some time that our attempts to isolate China have served no constructive purpose. . . . The ultimate goal of American policy towards Communist China should be to encourage Peking to join the international community and accept the attendant responsibilities and limits of acceptable action. Attempts to isolate China directly contradict this objective and should, therefore, be abandoned.¹⁷⁹

Hatfield's sentiments were echoed by other liberal Republican Senators, such as John

¹⁷⁷ Thomas Eagleton to a constituent, 17 September 1971, Accession C674, f.5651, Thomas Eagleton Papers, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Columbia, Missouri, University of Missouri – Columbia.

¹⁷⁸ Senate floor statement by Joseph Tydings, 12 May 1969, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁷⁹ Speech by Senator Mark Hatfield before the Symposium on US-Japanese Policy Toward Communist China, at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara, California, January 1969, read into the *Congressional Record* on 18 February 1969 by Senator John Sherman Cooper (also a liberal Republican).

Sherman Cooper¹⁸⁰ and Jacob Javits, who drew a link between the learning experience of the Vietnam War and China policy. In a speech in New York, Javits argued that the learning experience the nation had undergone with respect to its involvement in Vietnam 'could well be used as an instrument for public education with respect to realities about China and Asia in general'.¹⁸¹ Javits, like his liberal Democratic colleagues, recognised Beijing's violent verbiage and rhetorical hostility, but expressed his belief that China did not have the 'actual military capabilities' to 'present a significant military threat to our security'.¹⁸²

Hugh Scott, who would become Senate Republican leader upon the death of Minority Leader Everett Dirksen in September 1969, likewise questioned whether the US 'boycott of China' had been successful.¹⁸³ Although conservatives considered Scott to be a liberal¹⁸⁴, Scott disagreed with his liberal Senate colleagues, believing that not only China's rhetoric, but also its actions were threatening to the United States, and therefore expressed his continued opposition to 'Red China's admission' to the UN.¹⁸⁵ The fact that Scott, who held such views and who remained a member of the Steering Committee of the Committee of One Million, also doubted the efficacy of the policy of containment and isolation and pledged 'to support our efforts to relieve tensions and to improve communications with Red China', illustrated the breadth of the support that existed in the Senate for building bridges to Beijing.¹⁸⁶ The majority of Senate Democrats no longer

¹⁸⁰ Senate floor statement by John Sherman Cooper, 18 February 1969, *Congressional Record*; see Cooper also cited in 'Relations with Peking: Several Factors Favor Conciliation With Chinese Communist Regime', *Washington Post*, 26 January 1969; and *New York Times*, 2 February 1969.

¹⁸¹ Speech by Senator Jacob Javits before the National Committee for US-China Relations, New York City, 20 March 1969, read by Senator Javits into the *Congressional Record*, 26 March 1969.

¹⁸² *ibid.*

¹⁸³ Senate floor statement by Hugh Scott, 19 February 1969, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁸⁴ Robert Dole to C.Y. Thomas, 22 September 1969, Accession number 329-73-56, Box 17, Robert Dole Papers.

¹⁸⁵ Senate floor statement by Hugh Scott, 23 May 1969, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*

believed that the policy of attempted isolation had been effective and opposed its continuation, including, as has been shown, the hawkish Richard Russell and Scoop Jackson. The fact that leading Senate Republicans agreed made clear that by 1969 the desire to revise China policy extended far beyond the circles of the new type of Democrat represented by William Fulbright, George McGovern, and their liberal allies.

Support for an opening was also based on the desire to find a way to honourably extricate the United States from the conflict in Vietnam. Congressman Michael Feighan (D-OH), a conservative Democrat, expressed the hope that an opening to China could 'provide the US with the opportunity to break the Paris deadlock through Chinese intervention with Hanoi'.¹⁸⁷ Likewise, House Republican Leader Gerald Ford (R-MI) argued in 1971 regarding Nixon's recent announcement of his pending China visit that 'if the President's visit can help settle the Vietnam War it would be a great step forward'.¹⁸⁸

Conservatives and Nixon's Lobbying

Despite the clear signs of a growing consensus in favour of an opening to China and of the weakening of the China Lobby, Nixon acted with an excess of caution as he pursued the opening and expended great effort to ensure that key conservatives would support him. During the summer of 1969 the Administration had several legislative priorities that required that Nixon not alienate conservative votes in Congress. Two of these were the Export Administration Act of 1969, in which Nixon sought authority to open up trade with communist nations, and the fight over funding for the ABM system. The critical issue that would determine passage of each Act was the number of Republicans and conservative Democrats who could be convinced to vote for them.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ House floor speech by Michael Feighan, 5 February 1969, *Congressional Record*.

¹⁸⁸ Gerald Ford to a constituent, 28 July 1971, Gerald Ford Congressional Papers, Series B, Legislative File, Box B189, Gerald Ford Presidential Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan (hereafter, Ford Library).

¹⁸⁹ Ken BeLieu to Richard Nixon on his meeting with Senator Harry Byrd, Jr., in order to lobby him for support of the President's ABM legislation, 25 April 1969, WHCF, Subject Files, Federal Government (FG), ExFG 36-3-1 Senate Committees—Appropriations--Subcommittees [1969-70] to GenFG 36-5-1

Fearing that announcement of small areas of trade liberalisation vis-a-vis China might anger enough conservatives to scuttle passage of the Export Administration Act, which was the first of the two to be voted on, Nixon ordered that three measures that he favoured liberalising trade controls against China be 'held in abeyance . . . until passage of the . . . Act'.¹⁹⁰ Nixon directed his White House Congressional liaison staff to attempt to approach Karl Mundt, Nixon's old Senate colleague and a bellwether of conservative thinking in the Senate, to test the waters with relation to a relatively minor reduction of trade barriers. Staff member Bryce Harlow reported after a telephone conversation with Mundt that Mundt had 'hit the ceiling' at the suggestion that trade controls with the PRC be liberalised, and had threatened that, if Nixon did so, he would 'lose the ABM fight, lose support of Harry Byrd [a conservative, Democratic Senator from Virginia], McCormack [Speaker of the House] will attack openly, etc'.¹⁹¹ In response to this outburst from his old colleague, Nixon ordered Kissinger to attempt to convince Mundt that he could trust Nixon's intentions towards China and to attempt to 'bring him on board'.¹⁹²

After ordering the announcement of the trade liberalisation measures be postponed until passage of the Export Control Act, however, Nixon changed his mind and announced a small, incremental lowering of trade barriers via cable to all diplomatic posts on 21 July¹⁹³ and published the changes in the Federal Register on 23 July.¹⁹⁴ Elliott Richardson, Under Secretary of Commerce, argued successfully that, among other things, a delay in implementation until after Nixon's planned trip to Romania the decision could,

Senate Committees—Banking and Currency 1969-70], Box 17, NPMP, NARA II.

¹⁹⁰ Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, 'Relaxation of Economic Controls Against China', 11 July 1969. NSC Files, Name Files, Young, David R. to Zorza, Box 839, NARA II.

¹⁹¹ Richardson-Kissinger telcon transcript, 14 July 1969, NSC Files, Name Files, Box 839, NPMP, NARA II.

¹⁹² Richard Nixon to Henry Kissinger, 16 July 1969, *ibid.*

¹⁹³ State Department to all diplomatic posts, telegram 120569, 21 July 1969, RG 59, Central Files 1967-1969, FT 1 CHICOM-US, NARA II.

¹⁹⁴ *34 Federal Register* 12165.

considered together with the Bucharest visit, take on 'overly overt anti-Soviet significance'.¹⁹⁵ Kissinger recommended telling only 'a few select Congressional leaders' in order to minimise potential complications arising from possible conservative objections,¹⁹⁶ and that the changes should be announced in 'a low-key fashion'.¹⁹⁷ The announcement, nevertheless, received media attention.¹⁹⁸ While Mundt had been correct that Harry Byrd, Jr. opposed an opening to China¹⁹⁹, the rebellion that Mundt had predicted did not occur, evidence that although hard core conservative opposition to an opening remained, the number of those steadfastly opposed was relatively low and that conservatives as a whole were not strongly opposed to the lowering of barriers with Beijing. While the conservative reaction was silence, the liberal reaction to the announcement was praise, as Nixon had expected.²⁰⁰

Although no record exists of the specific rationale used by the White House in the attempt to bring Mundt and other conservatives 'on board', there is indirect evidence that the White House appealed to the impact on Moscow that the appearance of movement toward China could have, and that this appeal was successful. The next time Nixon wished to make a move in China's direction, it was to goad the visiting Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko. On 22 September Nixon wrote to Kissinger, telling him that:

I think that while Gromyko is in the country would be a very good time to have another subtle move toward China made. I would suggest that when it is convenient you discuss the matter with Mundt and see whether he would be willing to have another move in that direction. On the same subject, I would like

¹⁹⁵ Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, 'Re:Relaxation of Economic Controls Against China', 11 July 1969, NSC Files, Name Files, Box 839, NPMP, NARA II.

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *FRUS, 1969-1976, vol. XVII, China, 1969-1972*, Document 17, ff.6.

¹⁹⁸ 'US Acts to Relax Curbs on China Travel and Trade', *New York Times*, 22 July 1969.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Harry Byrd, Jr., 9 January 2010, Winchester, Virginia.

²⁰⁰ Walter Mondale to a constituent, 29 July 1969, Walter Mondale Senatorial Papers; Interview with Walter Mondale, 17 November 2010, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

for you to see Walter Judd if he calls and asks for an appointment.²⁰¹

The memo illustrates that Nixon was being extremely solicitous of conservatives as he pursued his incremental policy reforms. It also, however, reveals the belief that Nixon believed Mundt to be willing to support further moves toward China out of appreciation for the effect such moves might have on Soviet behaviour, which in turn implies that this apologetic for change had been used by the White House previously in order to bring Mundt around after his outburst in July.

Just before Thanksgiving 1969 Mundt was felled by a severe stroke which permanently incapacitated him. However, the anti-Soviet rationale seemed to have successfully mitigated his initial opposition to moves toward China, and it appears likely that the White House made use of it with other conservatives, as well. As will be seen in the next chapter, a transition among those conservatives who remained opposed to an opening to China also occurred due to their becoming convinced that the opening to Beijing would not impact US relations with Taipei. Those conservatives who continued to speak against an opening to China in 1969, 1970 and early 1971 had, by late 1971 and early 1972 changed the tone of their public pronouncements to be more supportive of the opening. As with Mundt, while records of the precise White House argument used with these conservatives are not available, their subsequent statements, which are uniform in nature, provide strong evidence of the substance of White House communications with them and of the effectiveness of those communications.

Nixon's concern over potential conservative opposition to an opening continued to shape the Administration's pursuit of incremental policy reform. In November Under Secretary of State Elliot Richardson wrote Secretary of State William Rogers with an eye

²⁰¹ Richard Nixon to Henry Kissinger, 22 September 1969, CO 34/6, WHCF, Confidential Files, Box 6, NPMP, NARA II.

firmly on potential political complications in the implementation of these incremental changes. Richardson advised Rogers that the package of reforms that were then under consideration should be implemented prior to the planned visit to Washington of Chiang Kai-shek's son, Chiang Ching-kuo, in early 1970 so as to make it a *fait accompli* prior to his visit, hence reducing Taipei's ability to complicate Washington's moves toward Beijing. Also, Richardson suggested that the reforms be implemented during the Congressional Christmas recess so that 'our consultation problems will be much reduced'.²⁰² Nixon followed Richardson's advice regarding the timing of the announcement. In this case, as in the case of the announcement of trade policy liberalisation the previous July, the complete lack of conservative protest reinforced the fact that a paradigm shift had taken place in Congressional views of China.

As with most myths, the myth of Nixon courageously facing down strong conservative opposition to rapprochement does contain some truth. The White House did not face conservative opposition to the extent that he and Kissinger later intimated, but it is true that Nixon's attention to conservative opponents of rapprochement did succeed in increasing the level of support for an opening among conservatives. Liberal Republican Senator Edward Brooke, who already supported an opening to China, noticed Nixon's attention to conservative opponents of rapprochement and credited Nixon with what Brooke observed as a lessening of hostility to rapprochement on the part of many conservatives.²⁰³

²⁰² Elliot Richardson to William Rogers, 22 November 1969, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files 1967-1969, POL CHICOM-US, Box 1973, NARA II.

²⁰³ Transcript of appearance of Edward Brooke on NBC Today Show, 25 March 1970, Box 563, Edward Brooke Papers.

Conflictual Relationship: The White House and the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee

William Fulbright and his Senate Foreign Relations Committee was at the centre of the Congressional challenge both to Executive Branch management of foreign policy in general, and in particular to existing China policy. While the relationship between the White House and the SFRC initially improved after Johnson's departure from office, it quickly soured during 1969 as Fulbright realised that the White House was concentrating control of foreign policy within the National Security Council (NSC), thereby distancing the committee further from having influence on the policy process, and as Fulbright became impatient with Nixon's approach to extracting the United States from Vietnam. The Nixon Administration, for its part, sought to minimise the influence of the committee, partially because it viewed Fulbright as antagonistic to Administration goals, and partially out of a lack of desire to allow any Congressional committee significant influence over policy formulation. Fulbright attempted to frame his conflict with the Nixon Administration as an institutional conflict, when it was at least as much an ideological conflict. However, the committee correctly drew attention to the constructive role that it could play in formulating sound policy when it argued that, 'many of our current difficulties might have been avoided if we had taken time to stop, look, and listen'.²⁰⁴ The Administration, however, seeing Fulbright and his committee as being primarily driven by ideological opposition to the Administration, was not swayed by such appeals.²⁰⁵

Determined to claim greater control of foreign and national security policy, in early 1969 Fulbright created a subcommittee, the goal of which was to examine secret US military agreements with foreign governments, of which Taiwan was one. The

²⁰⁴ SFRC press release, 31 December 1970, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman Fulbright's Speeches/statements on foreign affairs, Box 2, NARA I.

²⁰⁵ Interviews with David Abshire and Tom Korologos.

Subcommittee on United States Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad (generally called the 'Symington Subcommittee') was placed under the chairmanship of Fulbright's political ally Stuart Symington. Throughout the 1960's a trend had developed in which the Executive Branch had signed with foreign governments a number of executive agreements which were not treaties and therefore technically not subject to Senate confirmation. Through such agreements, which the executive branch was not required to communicate to the Senate, a global web of military relationships had developed of which the Congress had little knowledge and therefore virtually no oversight. Fulbright and Symington's attempt to gain information, and thereby an element of control, on these relationships in order to gain influence over security policy reflected Congressional concern over the policy creep that had led to such heavy involvement in Vietnam and elsewhere throughout Southeast Asia.²⁰⁶ The committee believed that policy creep had taken place because no one within the Executive Branch was questioning the fundamental assumptions on which the incremental policy decisions had been made and that the committee could contribute to sound policy in this area.²⁰⁷ Not surprisingly, the White House saw it differently, and took an extremely wary attitude toward the investigation and accompanying hearings, seeing them as being primarily directed by Senator Fulbright.²⁰⁸

Initially, the White House, according to NSC aide John Lehman, saw its primary

²⁰⁶ Interview with Walter Pincus, 16 February 2010, Washington, D.C.; Interview with Hoyt Purvis, 22 March 2010, Washington, D.C.; Kissinger wrote a memo to Nixon on 1 October 1969 complaining about the amount of information that had been dug up by Mr. Pincus and Mr. Purvis, the subcommittee's staff investigators, and accusing them of leaking much of that information to the media in order to influence the policy debate.

²⁰⁷ Carl Marcy to David Abshire, 26 July 1971, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Carl Marcy Files, Box 12, NARA I.

²⁰⁸ Robert McClintock, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, to Secretary of State William Rogers and Acting Secretary of State Elliott Richardson, 'Meeting of Kissinger Committee on Symington Subcommittee', 30 September 1969, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files 1967-1969, DEF 12, NARA II; also, interviews with Nixon White House and NSC staff members.

role in relation to these investigations as to 'limit the damage' caused by Symington and Fulbright.²⁰⁹ But as information on US-Taiwan security cooperation began to leak to the press from the committee²¹⁰, the White House became determined 'that from now on, it must deal with the subcommittee on the basis of all-out confrontation'.²¹¹ What had begun with protestations of goodwill on both sides devolved into a political slug match that lasted more than two years, until the subcommittee reports came out in early 1971. These supported a reorientation of American Asia policy away from Taipei and towards Beijing, and were concerned that ongoing covert military cooperation between Washington and Taipei would be considered provocative to Beijing and thus foreclose a potential opening.²¹² The subcommittee reproached the Administration for never having stated 'public disapproval of provocative action by the Nationalist Chinese' against the mainland. The report indicated distrust on the part of the subcommittee of the actual goals of the Administration and accused it of a lack of candor with the Congress and of hiding the true nature and extent of its military cooperation with and assistance to Taiwan.²¹³

Conservatives, of course, opposed the report and strenuously disagreed with its conclusions. The Administration did not respond to the report's challenge. Despite all of the effort by Fulbright and Symington and the political noise created by the hearings, they ended up having little effect on either the nature of the security relationship with Taiwan, which the White House was seeking to gradually diminish in any case, or the pace of movement toward rapprochement with the Mainland. They symbolised, however, the growing struggle between the liberal Senate leadership and the Nixon Administration for

²⁰⁹ John Lehman, *The Executive, Congress and Foreign Policy* (New York, 1976), p.133

²¹⁰ 'Fulbright Cites China Spy Flights', *Washington Post*, 13 November 1969.

²¹¹ *ibid.*; see also 'Senator's Queries Rejected by Envoy', *Washington Post*, 26 November 1969.

²¹² Report by the Subcommittee on US Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad: Republic of China (Part 4), November 1969 and May 1970, f.2230, Stuart Symington Papers.

²¹³ *Congress and the Nation*, p.867.

control of foreign policy in general, and the concern of Fulbright and Symington (who were unaware of Nixon's behind-the-scenes communications with Beijing) that while Nixon was signalling an intent to open relations with Beijing, he was actually continuing to pursue the containment of China.

Ping Pong Diplomacy, Growing Support from Conservatives, and the Race for Beijing

By the spring of 1971 the Administration had made a series of moves lowering trade barriers with China, which had met with the approval of business interests, and continued lobbying for further reductions of barriers and moves in the political arena. The pace of change had been slow, but the 'ping pong diplomacy' of spring 1971 brought hopes that a diplomatic breakthrough might be near, which in turn caused increased lobbying from business, as well as expressions of interest from Members whose states stood to gain from the breaking down of trade barriers. The Administration had followed up on the opportunity presented by the success of the visit of the US men's table tennis team to Beijing by announcing a further liberalisation of trade barriers with China. This was noticed by conservative Republicans from the midwest, such as Senator Bob Dole (who was also the head of the Republican National Committee). Dole and other midwestern Members of both parties, hoping to benefit their agricultural constituencies, immediately began pressing for further reductions in trade barriers so that wheat, grains and other agricultural commodities could be sold to China.²¹⁴ The fact that China was the world's most populous nation but also had difficulty feeding its people made it one of the world's largest markets for agricultural goods, a temptation too big to ignore, and a flurry of activity took place among midwestern Members of Congress, liberal and conservative, coordinating efforts and lobbying the Administration. Strategic concerns also continued to

²¹⁴ Letter from a Kansas agricultural dealer to Senator Bob Dole regarding meeting with Pete Peterson, Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs, and Dean Hinton the Special Assistant responsible for trade regulations, 21 May 1971, Accession 329-82-261, Box 83, Bob Dole Papers.

cause the level of support for an opening to continue rising among some conservatives and 'ping pong diplomacy' seemed to spark renewed appreciation for this dynamic. Scoop Jackson, for example, whose attitude toward rapprochement was based on a desire to counter growing Soviet power, called for UN membership for China shortly after the visit of the US table tennis team to China.²¹⁵

Ping pong diplomacy also reinvigorated the hopes of Senate liberals who had long hoped for an invitation to Beijing, and who now saw a new openness on the part of the Chinese. Leading Democratic Senators had been attempting to gain entry to China since the mid 1960's, and their efforts redoubled beginning in 1969 with many of them doubtless believing that an opening to China creditable to themselves would stand them well in the 1972 presidential election cycle, in which China policy reform was expected to be a major issue.²¹⁶ Now they saw a hope to take from Nixon the political credit for opening China. Seeming to be very aware of this dynamic and appearing to take advantage of it in an attempt to play the opposing sides of the American political scene off against one another, during the visit of the US men's table tennis team to Beijing Zhou Enlai mentioned to an American reporter covering the trip that China might issue an invitation to Democratic senators and presidential hopefuls Ted Kennedy, Edmund Muskie and George McGovern.²¹⁷

Several of these Democratic presidential contenders, hoping to beat Nixon to China, turned again to Edgar Snow in an attempt to gain an invitation from the Chinese government. George McGovern kept a steady correspondence with Snow in early 1971, seeking information on China and hoping to obtain Snow's help in gaining an invitation to Beijing. Snow had recently visited Beijing and spent several hours with both Mao and

²¹⁵ Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson*, p.284.

²¹⁶ Cohen, 'Ted Kennedy's Role in Restoring Diplomatic Relations with China', p.350.

²¹⁷ Allen Whiting, 'Sino-American Détente', *China Quarterly* 82 (June 1980), pp.339.

Zhou, and had startling news for McGovern. Despite the fact that Nixon and Kissinger had worked hard to keep secret their communications with Zhou Enlai via various backchannels, to the extent that they kept in the dark their own State Department and even most of the White House and NSC staff, news reached Nixon's opponents on Capitol Hill. On 8 March 1971 Snow wrote to McGovern, forwarding to him the full text of his recent interviews with Mao and Zhou, and breaking news of Nixon's secret communications with Mao and Zhou:

Incidentally, I can tell you, *in strict confidence* [emphasis in the original], and not to be attributed to me, that I learned in Peking, from sources I consider unimpeachable, that President Nixon has sent a message there asking how he or a trusted emissary would be received on a 'secret' visit to hold 'serious' discussions. It is assumed there that, as the China debate waxes hotter in the US, Nixon may attempt to get hold of the China issue through some such stunt. I should like to see you get there first.²¹⁸

The reference to a 'stunt' such as a high profile visit to China, was Snow's acknowledgement that the political drama of such a visit would have enormous political benefit to whomever undertook the trip. The 'unimpeachable source' was Mao himself.²¹⁹ There is no evidence that McGovern communicated what must have been startling news of Nixon's secret communications with Beijing with Fulbright, Kennedy, the Foreign Relations Committee, or any of the several other liberal Senators, both Democrat and Republican, who had been pushing for some time for the United States to fundamentally change its China policy. The temptation to do so must have been great, but the desire to honour Snow's confidence may have kept the news from spreading.

²¹⁸ Edgar Snow to George McGovern, 8 March 1971, f.80, Edgar Snow Papers.

²¹⁹ Edgar Snow to Mao Zedong, 16 May 1971, f.81, *ibid*.

Snow's close communication with liberal Democrat leaders in the Senate, on the one hand, and with Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong in Beijing, on the other, meant that the Chinese leaders were kept informed of the manoeuvrings within Washington regarding China policy. Nine days after informing McGovern that Nixon had been secretly communicating with Mao and Zhou and hoped to visit Beijing, McGovern telephoned Snow to inform him that he planned to announce that if elected President he would immediately recognise Beijing as the legitimate Chinese government, and that he would shortly introduce legislation in the Senate that would recommend a new China policy. McGovern ended with another push for Snow's help in obtaining an open door in Beijing for a potential visit.²²⁰ McGovern's announcement put new life into the partisan battle over the claim of leadership over China policy reform. After hearing from McGovern, Snow immediately wrote to Zhou, relaying to him McGovern's plans. Snow urged that Zhou issue an invitation to McGovern to come to China, arguing that a McGovern visit 'would be to oblige Mr. Nixon to move faster'. Snow pressed, 'It might be a mistake to take the view that because the right and reactionary wing of US politicians is now in power, one can deal only with them'.²²¹ Four weeks later, he followed up by advocating on McGovern's behalf with Huang Hua, then China's ambassador to Canada.²²² Despite Snow's energetic attempts, however, Beijing issued no invitation.

On 19 April William Fulbright wrote to Snow asking him to travel to Washington to 'meet with the [Foreign Relations] Committee in informal session, with a view to enlightening us about recent developments'.²²³ Snow responded, saying that he was not likely to be in Washington anytime soon.²²⁴ Fulbright was also in the midst of planning

²²⁰ Edgar Snow's personal notes of a telephone conversation with George McGovern, 17 March 1971, f.80, *ibid.*

²²¹ Edgar Snow to Zhou Enlai, 17 March 1971, *ibid.*

²²² Edgar Snow to Huang Hua, 14 April 1971, f.81, *ibid.*

²²³ William Fulbright to Edgar Snow, 19 April 1971, *ibid.*

²²⁴ Edgar Snow to William Fulbright, 3 May 1971, *ibid.*

hearings on China policy in the Foreign Relations Committee, and sought to give a platform to several figures who had been purged from government during the era of Joseph McCarthy, asking them to testify before the committee on the need to change China policy. Fulbright's action in inviting these men who had been purged by the right over accusations of being 'soft' on Chinese communism indicate the fact that Fulbright saw the current political environment one within which he could safely attempt to resuscitate the reputations of these men, and to thereby seek to answer the old Republican charge that the Democrats had 'lost China' and to portray the Democrat Party as the party that had historically attempted to advocate a more 'reasonable' China policy.

The Democratic leader who came nearest gaining an invitation to China was Mike Mansfield. Nearly two years after turning down Mansfield's request to visit China, on 11 April 1971, the day after the US men's table tennis team landed in Beijing, Zhou Enlai wrote to Mansfield with an invitation.²²⁵ In keeping with his characteristic deference to the presidency and not seeking to compete with Nixon for the political prize of being the first American to visit China, Mansfield immediately shared the news with Nixon. Nixon and Kissinger at first encouraged Mansfield to pursue the invitation, although they urged him not to make the invitation public.²²⁶

Despite Nixon's determination to gain the political benefit of an opening himself, the Chinese had invited Mansfield, not himself, and Nixon may have been calculating that he had little choice in the matter. At this point, the White House had not received the communication from Zhou inviting the president or one of his advisors to Beijing. Later that same day, however, Nixon began to question the wisdom of sending Mansfield or any other Democrat to China lest the Democratic party gain political benefit from the

²²⁵ Zhou Enlai to Mike Mansfield, 11 April 1971, text of the letter reproduced in Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, p.393.

²²⁶ Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield*, p.393.

opening. Meeting in the afternoon with Kissinger and Nixon's chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman, Nixon complained that the Democrats wanted to 'be part of breaking the ice with China'. Nixon noted that the breakthrough was 'enormous, its an enormous story . . . And they didn't have anything to do with the goddamned event, not one goddamned thing'. Begrudgingly, Nixon conceded that it was probably inevitable that Mansfield would go, although adding, with an eye toward the political benefits of being perceived as the leader of the initiative, 'we should cooperate so that it looks like our move rather than he did it on his own'.²²⁷

Discussion then moved, at Haldeman's initiative, to whether or not it would be a good idea to add Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott to a Mansfield mission to China in order to make it bipartisan and reduce the benefit that the Democrats might gain from a Mansfield visit. Nixon and Kissinger agreed to ask Corneliu Bogdan, the Romanian ambassador to Washington, to communicate to the Chinese that in order to have 'serious, measured progress', Scott should be invited along with Mansfield, and that the Chinese should be told that Scott was 'an expert in Chinese art and who we know would be happy to go'.²²⁸ Concern regarding possible invitations to competitors with Nixon for the presidency then surfaced, with Kissinger saying that 'I'll also tell Bogdan . . . that if they start playing around with [presidential] candidates, this thing will become a political football and they'll never get anywhere'. Nixon immediately agreed, worrying, 'What's next after Mansfield Muskie, Ted Kennedy, Humphrey?'²²⁹

The next day Nixon and Kissinger continued to discuss a possible Mansfield visit, or the potential of a visit by another of the many Democratic senators seeking entrée, with

²²⁷ *ibid.*, p.396.

²²⁸ Hugh Scott had authored a book on T'ang Dynasty Chinese art. See Hugh Scott, *The Golden Age of Chinese Art: The Lively T'ang Dynasty* (Ann Arbor, 1967)

²²⁹ *ibid.*, p.397.

Nixon concluding, 'We don't want any senators over there, by God . . . Its not to our advantage to have Mansfield or anybody else go. We want our own representative to go. This has got to be our initiative'.²³⁰ Three days later, Nixon and Kissinger discussed the issue further. Kissinger promised to 'make it clear to Bogdan that we really don't want any political visits'.²³¹ Nixon then noted the political potential of a successful China opening, relating it to the boost in the polls that he received after the successful July 1969 moon landing, saying that a successful opening to China would be 'an enormous story. Its like going to the moon'.²³²

While Nixon and Kissinger were worrying about Mansfield or any number of potential presidential rivals visiting China first, Zhou sent a message on 21 April via Pakistani President Yahya Khan inviting a 'special envoy' of the president's, suggesting Kissinger, Nixon or Secretary of State Rogers. The White House received the message on 27 April, and immediately began discussing who should go. Worry remained that Mansfield or another Democrat may still beat Nixon, yet Nixon expressed confidence that in the end the Chinese would not allow this to happen as 'they'll know where the power is'.²³³ To ensure that Beijing 'knew where the power was', however, Nixon told Kissinger to respond to Zhou's message through the Pakistanis telling Zhou that 'other visits by political people, by representatives of this government or the Congress and so forth should be held in abeyance'. The message was to be conveyed as the personal opinion of the Pakistani president, however, in an attempt to make Nixon's political paranoia less obvious.^{234 235}

²³⁰ *ibid.*, p.398.

²³¹ *ibid.*

²³² *ibid.*, p.399.

²³³ Transcript of telephone conversation between Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, 27 April 1971, NSC Files, Files for the President–China Material, Exchanges Leading up to HAK's Trip to China, December 1969–July 1971, Box 1031, NPMP, NARA II.

²³⁴ *ibid.*

²³⁵ Memcon between Alexander Haig and Pakistani Ambassador Hilaly, 5 May 1971, *ibid.*

While these discussions were ongoing, the SFRC hoped in the wake of the success of ping pong diplomacy and a *Washington Post* story that President Nixon may name a personal envoy to visit Beijing on his behalf, that Nixon would name the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders to the task, both of whom were committee members.²³⁶ The record of the White House discussions regarding a possible Mansfield or Mansfield/Scott trip show that such hopes on the part of the committee were not completely misplaced. However, no further communications seem to have taken place on this issue between Nixon and Mansfield following their April discussions. The two men met for breakfast again on 23 June, but there is no record of any discussion of China in that meeting. Once the announcement was made that Kissinger had made a secret trip and that Nixon would be following in early 1972, Mansfield fully supported the evolution of events, both publicly and privately.

Other Democratic Senators continued to attempt to beat Nixon to Beijing, however. The presence in Ottawa of a Chinese embassy provided one avenue through which these political figures sought entrance. Stuart Symington wrote directly to Huang Hua, the Chinese ambassador to Canada, without result, seeking a visa.²³⁷ Democratic icon Averell Harriman attempted to use a Canadian diplomat as an communications channel with Beijing in an attempt to gain an invitation.²³⁸ The Chinese, however, while expressing interest in a Harriman visit, were holding him at arm's length, as they were with the many other Democratic leaders seeking visas to China in accord with Nixon's request.

²³⁶ Undated, spring 1971 Senate Foreign Relations Committee internal memorandum, MSS 10200, etc., Box 180, Hugh Scott Papers.

²³⁷ Stuart Symington to Huang Hua, 14 April 1971, f.2133, Stuart Symington Papers.

²³⁸ Transcript of telephone conversation between Averell Harriman and Chester Ronning, 24 June 1971, Box 1053, Averell Harriman Papers.

End of Formal Congressional Opposition to UN Membership for China

During the summer of 1971, signals of rapid policy change proliferated. On 10 June, the State Department announced the end of the trade embargo with the People's Republic of China, and on 2 August the State Department made the announcement that it would now support the seating of the People's Republic of China in the UN, and would pursue a 'two Chinas' strategy, by which it sought seating for the PRC while retaining Taiwan's seat. Just as important symbolically, however, was a change that quietly took place on Capitol Hill. In every year since the founding of the People's Republic of China, Congress had expressed its opposition to China's seating in the UN by means of an amendment to an annual appropriations bill (among other means). The tradition had continued through the 1970 debate on the FY 1971 appropriations bill for the departments of State, Commerce and Justice. During 24 June 1971 House debate on H.R. 9272, the FY 1972 appropriations bill for State, Commerce and Justice, however, Representative Sidney Yates (D-IL) raised a point of order against inclusion of the annual China policy statement 'as being legislation on an appropriations bill'. John Rooney (D-NY), floor manager of the appropriations bill, responded, 'This provision has been in this bill for many, many years. . . . However, I am constrained to have to concede that the point of order has merit'.²³⁹ The point of order was, therefore, sustained, and the language deleted from the bill. This marked the first time since the early 1950s that such a Congressional policy statement had not been included, a change that was doubtless noted both in the White House as well as in both Taipei and Beijing, as an important signal of Congressional sentiment.

Kissinger's Secret Trip and the Beginning of White House Concessions

When Kissinger secretly visited Beijing in July 1971 Taiwan was one of the first

²³⁹ 'China Policy, 1971 Legislative Chronology', in *Congress and the Nation*, p.875.

issues discussed. The concessions made by Kissinger, clearly with Nixon's approval, were deep. Kissinger assured Zhou Enlai that Washington would withdraw the American military forces on Taiwan which were related to the war effort in Vietnam as American involvement in the war wound down, and gradually withdraw the remainder as Sino-American relations improved.²⁴⁰ He also promised that Washington would not pursue a 'two Chinas' policy or support the independence of Taiwan, and that it would cease intelligence operations run out of Taiwan targeting the Mainland. Crucially, and with the greatest political risk to the White House, Kissinger also informed Zhou that the White House expected that Taiwan would eventually be absorbed by the Mainland, and did not ask for any type of assurance on the part of Zhou that Beijing would seek a peaceful reunification with Taiwan.²⁴¹ Kissinger warned Zhou that 'these are personal decisions of President Nixon which have not yet been discussed within our bureaucracy or with Congress, and so should be treated with great confidence'.²⁴² The White House, therefore, had sought secrecy in order to keep the number and level of its concessions regarding Taiwan from sparking public and Congressional outrage, and had enlisted China's leaders in the effort. The next day Kissinger conceded even more regarding Taiwan, telling Zhou that the Administration was prepared to accept the expulsion of Taiwan from the UN, and promised 'to reach normalization . . . in the first two years of the President's next term'.²⁴³ The concessions made by Kissinger would be reiterated during his October 1971 visit to Beijing, as well as by Nixon himself the next February, and reveal how little interest the two men had for Taiwan's future in comparison to the strategic benefits they believed

²⁴⁰ The number of American military personnel and total military force levels in Taiwan had been elevated significantly beginning in the mid 1960's in order to assist with the war effort in Vietnam. By 1971, approximately two-thirds of American armed forces on Taiwan were related to the Vietnam War, and not directly to Taiwan's security.

²⁴¹ Memcon between Zhou Enlai and Henry Kissinger, 9 July 1971, NSC Files, Files for the President – China Material, POLO I, Record, July 1971 HAK Visit to PRC, Box 1032, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁴² *ibid.*

²⁴³ *ibid.*

would accrue to the United States from rapprochement with China.

Although a large number in Congress was supportive of the goal of rapprochement, and understood the potential benefits to the United States in terms of Vietnam and relations with the Soviets, even most liberals would not have supported the level of concessions that Kissinger had made, and that he and Nixon would continue to make in the coming months, causing the White House to attempt to hide those concessions from Congress. Nixon's announcement on 15 July that Kissinger had secretly visited Beijing and that he himself would visit early in 1972 came as a political shock to most in Washington (excepting George McGovern and anyone in whom McGovern may have confided the news from Edgar Snow). Even after Nixon's announcement, the White House was given cause to be concerned about a Democrat politician visiting Beijing prior to Nixon's announced visit. The Chinese appeared to be holding the possibility of a Democratic visit over Nixon's head in an attempt to gain a stronger bargaining position with the White House.²⁴⁴ Nixon's fears were not unfounded. In September, Ted Kennedy traveled to Ottawa in order to seek an invitation to China from Huang Hua. According to Jerome Cohen, an academic who accompanied Kennedy, the Senator was given the opportunity to beat Nixon to China if he would 'make a public statement that Taiwan was legally part of China and should be returned to it'. As Cohen notes, Kennedy 'did not believe that withdrawal of US recognition and diplomatic relations from the Chiang Kai-shek regime on Taiwan should lead to reunification of the island with the Mainland unless the majority of the people on Taiwan made clear this was their wish'. Kennedy, therefore, turned Huang down.²⁴⁵ The fact that one of the most liberal Members of the Senate was unwilling to compromise Taiwan's position to the extent requested by the Chinese reveals

²⁴⁴ H.R. Haldeman, *The Haldeman Diaries: Inside the Nixon White House* (New York, 1995), diary entry for 20 July 1971, p.393.

²⁴⁵ Cohen, 'Ted Kennedy's Role in Restoring Diplomatic Relations with China', p.352.

how unwilling was the Congress to hand Taiwan over to the Mainland as the price of rapprochement.

Misleading of Congress Regarding White House Plans to Use a 'China card'

Nixon's announcement brought out a feeling of almost euphoria among many in the Congress, particularly liberals, who had been advocating change, but seeing little outward signs of progress. The belief that the proper state of affairs for Sino-American relations was one of close friendship helped to contribute to an atmosphere of 'Sino-mania' among many in the Congress, an infatuation which Nixon hoped would help build further support for the opening and for his planned attempts to move toward full normalisation afterwards. Nixon's announcement received substantial Republican support, as well. In the Senate, Mike Mansfield and Hugh Scott co-sponsored a concurrent resolution expressing support of Nixon's upcoming visit to China, underscoring the bipartisan support on Capitol Hill for the opening. Republicans supported Nixon with public statements to the effect that he had not, nor would he, abandon Taiwan, doubtless reflecting White House assurances given them. Senator Robert Taft, Jr., for example, expressed support for the President's trip by asserting that, 'This dramatic action in no way represents a lessening of our commitment to freedom'.²⁴⁶

Four days after Nixon's announcement, he, Kissinger and Secretary of State William Rogers met with the bipartisan Congressional leadership, where they received bipartisan support for the opening. The next day, Nixon and Kissinger met with Republican Congressional leaders, where they outlined the progress of the secret communications for the previous year.²⁴⁷ The issue of Taiwan was not raised, although, as

²⁴⁶ Press release by the office of Senator Robert Taft, 23 July 1971, Box 293, Robert Taft, Jr. Papers, Manuscript Division, LOC.

²⁴⁷ Meeting notes of Republican Congressional leadership with Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, 20 July 1971, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 8, Hugh Scott Papers.

the next chapter will show, the White House had been disingenuously allaying conservative fears in private with Members. By pursuing this pattern of deception, Kissinger was able to make promises to Beijing regarding Taiwan that he could not have had those promises been known within Congress or by the public.²⁴⁸ As both Nixon and Kissinger believed that such concessions were necessary in order to reach their larger purpose of building a new global security framework with the People's Republic of China having a central role, they believed that the only way to do so was to mislead the Congress and the American public so that major opposition to Sino-American rapprochement, and, hence, to their plans, did not arise.

The White House also misled Congress with regard to its hopes to use China to gain leverage over the Soviet Union. In their meeting with the Republican Congressional leadership, Kissinger admitted to the group that he and Nixon hoped that the opening would effect Hanoi's attitude at the negotiating table in Paris, a fact which all recognised. When the topic turned to Moscow, Nixon warned Republican Members not to 'speculate on the impact on other countries'²⁴⁹, an obvious reference to the Soviet Union. Through the summer and autumn of 1971 the White House continued to downplay the impact of the opening on relations with Moscow, telling a bipartisan Congressional leadership group in the White House in early October that the 'journeys to Moscow and Peking are independent', and that 'we seek good relations with both, rather than using one against the other'.²⁵⁰ As Kissinger later noted in a memo to Nixon, however, such linkage did not have to be explained because it was self-evident: 'Pressure on the Russians is something we obviously never explicitly point to. The facts speak for themselves'.²⁵¹

²⁴⁸ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Strait Talk: United States-Taiwan Relations and the Crisis with China*, (Cambridge, 2009), pp.29-31.

²⁴⁹ 20 July 1971 notes on White House meeting with Republican Congressional leadership, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 8, Hugh Scott Papers.

²⁵⁰ Notes on the bipartisan Congressional leadership meeting in the White House, 12 October 1971, *ibid.*

²⁵¹ Kissinger, *White House Years*, p.765.

Continuing Conflict Between the Administration and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

During the spring and summer of 1971, conflict with William Fulbright and the SFRC continued, with Fulbright repeating his regular complaint of a lack of consultations with the committee in general, as well as on China policy.²⁵² Conflict between the Administration and the committee increased after Nixon's announcement, as Fulbright complained about a lack of consultations on China policy and the Administration accused Fulbright of seeking to use his chairmanship of the committee for partisan and ideological purposes.

When Nixon made his announcement, the committee was considering the annual foreign aid bill, which had proven since the early 1960's to be a regular venue for conflict over China policy. Six days after the announcement, the committee approved an amendment to the foreign aid bill that would repeal the 1955 Formosa Resolution, which Fulbright and his allies saw both as a symbolic move meant to lower barriers to Beijing, as well as part of their ongoing attempt to limit Executive Branch authority – this time in relation to the use of US military force to protect Taiwan from an attack by the PRC. The vote took place as part of extensive committee hearings on China in July and August that considered evolving China policy, including legislation on the Chinese representation issue at the UN. The Administration had purposefully taken no position on any of the Chirep-related legislation so that it would not open itself to a possible rebellion from conservatives regarding Taiwan's place in the UN. The committee, on the other hand, which wanted to see Beijing join the UN, attempted to push the Administration to go on record as taking a position on the legislation.²⁵³

²⁵² William Fulbright to Under Secretary of State John Irwin, 1 May 1971, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Carl Marcy Files, Box 12, NARA I.

²⁵³ Carl Marcy to David Abshire, 26 July 1971, *ibid.*

Upon hearing of news of committee's vote to repeal the Formosa Resolution, William Rogers telephoned Carl Marcy, the respected but highly partisan committee chief of staff, telling Marcy that he was 'much disturbed' by the committee's action and explaining that he 'was afraid it would be misunderstood – especially since the President had asked the [Congressional] leadership to be restrained in comment' after the announcement of the opening.²⁵⁴ At least part of the reason for the Administration's worry was the fact that it was attempting to convince Taipei that nothing significant was occurring with Beijing and that US-Taiwan relations were secure.²⁵⁵ It also sought, as Robert Taft's statement regarding the constancy of US commitments to Taiwan demonstrated, to convince conservatives that the opening would not harm relations with Taiwan. Although Taiwan's security was guaranteed by the 1954 US-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty, not the Formosa Resolution, repeal of the resolution would send a negative message of a symbolic nature to both Taipei and Congressional conservatives. Nixon and Kissinger wished to preserve the fiction that Taiwan's interests were being protected, both in order to maintain stability in the relationship with Taipei and to avoid conservative unrest. Although the White House was aware that the political environment was propitious for an opening, it was also aware that conservative support would fall away if it were known that Taiwan's interests were not being protected during the process of building the new relationship with Beijing.²⁵⁶

The conflict with the SFRC over China policy continued over the coming weeks.

Concerned that the manner in which Fulbright was organising his China hearings

²⁵⁴ Carl Marcy to William Fulbright, 21 July 1971, *ibid*.

²⁵⁵ Tucker, *Strait Talk*, pp.37-40.

²⁵⁶ This repeal of the Formosa Resolution had been introduced in early 1970 by Senator Charles McMathias (R-MD), and the State Department had announced that it would not oppose the repeal, although Henry Kissinger, realising the importance of maintaining the appearance of continuing strong support for Taiwan, had argued that 'Such a concession is in no way necessary to the improvement of our relations with Peking.' See Kissinger-Mathias memcon, 22 January 1970, NSC Files, Name Files, Box 825, NPMP, NARA II; and memo by Bryce Harlow, 15 January 1970, *ibid*.

illustrated more a desire to engage in partisan conflict than to assist in the constructive development of China policy, Secretary of State William Rogers wrote Fulbright expressing the hope that this was not the case.²⁵⁷ For its part, the committee wrote to the State Department complaining that the committee had been 'isolated in dealing with significant foreign policy issues and developments' – particularly, China. The letter from Carl Marcy to David Abshire, Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, complained that the Administration had not consulted the committee at all regarding the development of China policy, nor communicated its wishes with the committee regarding China-related legislation or, more broadly, its goals for the relationship with China.²⁵⁸ Marcy alleged that the lack of consultations 'isolated' policy-makers in the Administration with regards to China policy, and was the same mistake made by Johnson Administration policy-makers with regards to Vietnam policy.²⁵⁹

Marcy was pointing out the danger of creating China policy among a very few senior officials with no consultations with Congress and with little public debate, resulting in a myopic policy-development process that could easily result in fundamental errors. He was attempting to highlight the constructive role that the Congress could play in policy formulation, the questioning of the basic assumptions of Administration officials in order to strengthen policy - the same role that he and Fulbright had seen themselves as playing with their 1966 hearings on Vietnam and China policy. As legitimate as was Marcy's appeal to the potential role that could be played by the committee, however, the vast ideological and partisan divisions between the Nixon Administration and Fulbright's SFRC, and the record of highly conflictual interaction since early 1969, foreclosed the

²⁵⁷ William Rogers to William Fulbright, 28 July 1971, RG 46, Committee on Foreign Relations, Carl Marcy Files, Box 12, NARA I.

²⁵⁸ Carl Marcy to David Abshire, 26 July 1971, *ibid.*

²⁵⁹ *ibid.*

possibility of meaningful consultations.²⁶⁰ Despite the best efforts of Marcy and Fulbright, the committee had little direct influence through 1969-1971 on either the direction or the pace of US China policy. The pace of the opening was determined primarily by the development of the (almost) secret communications with Zhou Enlai, and nothing the SFRC or Senate liberals did could quicken that pace.

Mobilising Conservative Support

While the Administration fought with Fulbright's committee, the ever-cautious Nixon continued to guard against a possible conservative backlash. Nixon had thus far been able, through a general appeal to the anti-Soviet aspect of an opening and by pledging that Taiwan's security would continue to be protected, to minimise much potential conservative opposition. There were those who could not be convinced to support an opening, no matter the apologetic used, but these were not numerous enough to cause significant difficulty. Conservative Congressman John Ashbrook (R-OH) grudgingly admitted privately that the reaction to Nixon's announcement had been 'generally good', before adding 'but I think it is ridiculous'.²⁶¹ Within a few days of Nixon's announcement, the White House invited the AA's (chiefs of staff) of well known conservative Senators and House Members who were deemed most likely to cause trouble to the White House for a briefing on the opening. Max Friedersdorf, a White House Congressional Liaison officer, followed up the next month with letters in an effort to create the feeling among these conservatives that they were being consulted and that their

²⁶⁰ Interviews with key actors from both the Administration and the SFRC revealed that these mutual perceptions of the role played by the other side, and the mutual distrust, remained unchanged after forty years. Interview with Tom Korologos, 29 September 2009, Washington, D.C.; Telephone interview with John Lehman, July 2009; Interviews with David Abshire, 2 and 19 June, 2009, Washington, D.C.; Interview with Richard Moose, 26 June 2009, Alexandria, Virginia; Interview with James Lowenstein, 9 March 2010, Washington, D.C.

²⁶¹ John Ashbrook Diary, 16 July 1971, John Ashbrook Papers, John Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs, Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio.

views were important.²⁶² Kissinger met with a group of conservative Congressmen a week after the announcement, reporting to Nixon what he had told them that they could trust Nixon in his ability 'for dealing with these people' [Communists]²⁶³, clearly attempting to address conservative concerns that Nixon would concede too much with regard to Taiwan.

The White House continued its campaign the next week, inviting dozens of influential conservative religious, business, and social leaders to the White House to hear a Kissinger briefing on the nature of the opening to China. Responses from recipients of these briefings, containing comments such as 'we are behind you 100%', seem to indicate that the White House effort to convince conservative leaders of the logic behind the opening were successful. Unfortunately, no written records have been found indicating the precise content of the briefings given by Kissinger, leaving to conjecture the apologetic utilised by the White House. The White House kept a close watch on those in Congress who were most likely to oppose the opening, and found that China policy was behind several other priorities on their list of concerns – a good sign.²⁶⁴ Intelligence such as this was valuable – opposition on the part of conservative House Members had been expected, but these social evenings told the White House that the issue of China ranked behind other issues in level of importance to many of these Members, which communicated to the White House that conservative opposition to the announcement was likely to be manageable.

In the weeks after the announcement Nixon and Kissinger continued to tell

²⁶² Max Friedersdorf letter to the AA's of all of those Members who had attended the August White House briefing, 9 September 1971, WHCF, Subject Files, CO (Countries), Box 17, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁶³ White House Tapes, transcript of conversation between Nixon and Kissinger, July 22, 1971, 3:49–5:05 p.m., Oval Office, Conversation No. 543–1, located in *FRUS, 1969-1976, vol. XVII, China, 1969-1972*, p.459, ff.2.

²⁶⁴ White House memo to Nixon, 23 September 1971, WHCF, Subject Files, CO (Countries), Box 17, NPMP, NARA II.

Congress that the White House would not 'abandon' Taiwan.²⁶⁵ Nixon also used Congress to attempt to convince Taipei of Washington's continued support, which served to keep relations with Taipei stable at a time when it was feeling increasingly insecure. The first Congressional Delegation (CoDel) to visit Taiwan after Nixon's announcement was led by no less a personage than Carl Albert (D-OK), the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Nixon met with Albert just prior to his departure for Taipei, and Albert duly reported to his hosts in Taipei that 'the President told me the day I left to be strong in reassuring all our friends that we were not abandoning them but were keeping our commitments to them'.²⁶⁶ Although the sincerity of such expressions from Nixon was questioned by Chiang and the Nationalists²⁶⁷, they seem to have been accepted by Congress.

China, Taiwan and the United Nations

The State Department had announced in August that the Administration would pursue a 'two China's' policy with respect to Chinese representation in the UN during the upcoming General Assembly, seeking to retain a seat for Taiwan while also supporting entry for Beijing. While the State Department, which had been shut out of the policy-making process with regard to China for some time, was genuinely prepared to fight for Taiwan's seat, the White House was not, having already made the decision to sacrifice Taiwan for the sake of the strategic benefits it assumed would accrue from the opening.²⁶⁸ Virtually nobody in Congress, however, from the right or the left, was prepared to jettison Taiwan in a similar manner. Stuart Symington, one of the Senate's chief liberals, told an

²⁶⁵ John Lehman to Henry Kissinger, 29 July 1971, 'Talker for 8:45AM Meeting with Senator Buckley', NSC Files, Name Files, Brownell, Herbert to Burchett, Wilfred, Box 809, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁶⁶ Statement by Speaker of the US House of Representatives Carl Albert delivered before the Legislative Yuan of the Republic of China, 14 August 1971, Series: Travel, Box 6, Carl Albert Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

²⁶⁷ Tucker, *Strait Talk*, pp.37-40.

²⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p.68.

aide in August that although he supported the opening to Beijing, he did not wish to see Taiwan expelled from the UN.²⁶⁹

On 28 September, twenty one Senators (most of them Republicans) and thirty three House Members (also mostly Republicans) sent a joint letter to the White House declaring that, should the UN vote to expel the Republic of China, 'we would feel compelled to recommend a complete reassessment of US financial and moral support of the UN'. As the time for the UNGA Chirep vote approached, expressions of Congressional support for Taiwan became more forceful. On 13 October, a petition was sent to the White House signed by 336 House Members (including all of the bipartisan leadership) opposing 'strongly and unalterably' the potential expulsion of Taiwan from the UN.²⁷⁰ Continuing to express support for Taiwan's seat, despite undermining it through scheduling a Kissinger trip to Beijing at the same time as the Chirep vote was to take place, Nixon received the petition while expressing gratefulness for Congress's 'support of the Administration on this issue'.²⁷¹

Beijing's seating and Taipei's departure from the UN on 25 October 1971 caused widespread anger within Congress as well as among the American public. Carl Albert went so far as to write a letter to the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Taiwan's Legislative Yuan (Parliament) telling him that he did 'not regard the issue as closed by any means', and would attempt to find a way to regain a seat for Taipei.²⁷² Conservatives, in particular, were angry at the vote and some distrusted the White House's protestations of support for Taiwan. After the vote Ashbrook vented, 'What a fraud the

²⁶⁹ Comments by Stuart Symington, 2 August 1971, Box 265, Stuart Symington Papers.

²⁷⁰ White House Congressional Liaison chief William Timmons responded to each of the signatories on 18 October 1971, WHCF, Subject Files, CO (Countries), [EX] CO 34-2 People's Republic of China (Red China) 1/1/71-5/31/71 through [EX] CO 34-2 People's Republic of China (Red China) 1/1/73-3/31/73, Box 19, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁷¹ *ibid.*

²⁷² Carl Albert to Jen-chao Hsieh, 5 November 1971, Series:Travel, Box 6, Carl Albert Collection.

Nixon Administration has perpetuated on us'.²⁷³ Ashbrook's diary entry for 27 October tellingly recorded, 'Nixon really let us down on this issue, pure and simple. There is just no way to trust him anymore'.²⁷⁴

Ashbrook's reaction to Nixon's China initiatives reflected the beginnings of a disillusionment among some conservatives with Nixon's policies, both foreign and domestic, that would grow in the coming years – particularly opposition to his pursuit of détente with the Soviet Union.²⁷⁵ The vast majority of conservatives, however, continued to support the opening to China, partially reflecting the White House skill in organising support among conservatives. After the UN vote, Nixon put Kissinger to work ensuring the continued support of conservatives such as California Governor Ronald Reagan and Senator Barry Goldwater.²⁷⁶

Congressional anger at the expulsion of Taiwan from the UN held repercussions for the FY 1972 foreign aid authorisation bill, being debated in Congress that autumn. First, conservatives succeeded in stripping from the bill the amendment added by the SFRC in July which would have repealed the Formosa Resolution. Then, when the bill was brought to a vote on the Senate floor, for the first time since the inception of the foreign aid program in the late 1940s the bill was defeated, an action that partially reflected anger with the UN Chirep vote.²⁷⁷ Even more surprising, it was the more liberal of the chambers, the Senate, which showed most clearly its distaste with the UN action and put the nail in the coffin of the FY 1972 foreign assistance bill. Stuart Symington wrote that 'It is unfortunate that the US was forced to accept a defeat on a matter of this

²⁷³ John Ashbrook Diary, 25 October 1971, John Ashbrook Papers.

²⁷⁴ John Ashbrook Diary, 27 October 1971, *ibid.*

²⁷⁵ See Sarah Katherine Mergel, *Conservative Intellectuals and Richard Nixon* (New York, 2010).

²⁷⁶ Haldeman, *The Haldeman Diaries*, 26 October 1971, p.448.

²⁷⁷ Press release from the office of Senator Thomas Eagleton, 8-12 November 1971, Accession WUNP4720, Box 91, Thomas Eagleton Papers; 'US Sets a New Course: Interview with Secretary of State William Rogers', *US News & World Report*, 22 November 1971.

size and importance', and expressed doubt that the Taiwan-US relationship would maintain its historic closeness in light of the vote.²⁷⁸ (The foreign aid bill was finally resubmitted as two separate bills encompassing economic and military aid, respectively, before it finally passed.)

Despite the widespread discontent over the UN vote, support for a new relationship with mainland China was too broad for the Chirep issue to fatally undermine. Also, Nixon's show of fighting for Taiwan's seat and protestations that he was attempting to retain that seat seemed to convince enough conservatives of his continued support for Taiwan that most conservatives did not blame him for the defeat. However, the anger within Congress at Taiwan's treatment spanned partisan and ideological boundaries and underscored the vast gulf that existed between the White House's attitude toward Taiwan and that of the Congress. The Nixon White House, as would the Ford and Carter White Houses, viewed Taiwan as expendable to Washington's larger strategic goals, while Congress gave greater value to the formal commitments and sense of moral obligation that bound Washington and Taipei, as well as concern regarding America's reputation as a reliable ally. These fundamental differences would continue to cause friction between the two branches over China policy throughout the 1970's.

Conclusion

The dramatic change of attitudes within the Congress toward China policy played a crucial role in facilitating what has come to be known as 'Nixon's opening'. While it is true that White House leadership was essential to effect the opening and that Richard Nixon provided that leadership, the opening to China can best be understood in the context of a national movement in favour of a fundamental re-evaluation of US China policy which had begun several years prior to Nixon's election and was recommended

²⁷⁸ Personal notes by Stuart Symington, 26 October 1971, Box 265, Stuart Symington Papers.

both by strategic and domestic political logic, and not as the courageous vision of one man who fought overwhelming odds to bring that vision to fruition. A lessening of the vehement Congressional opposition which had previously arisen to signs that a previous Administrations had been flirting with re-evaluating aspects of China policy, had combined with active support for an initiative aimed at breaking down barriers with China to redefine the space within which the Executive Branch could operate.

Yet in spite of a strong desire on the part of the dominant Congressional liberals to force the pace of change, as this chapter has shown, the White House imposed limits on Congress' ability to directly shape the policy-making process. The micromanagement of foreign policy in general, and the opening to China in particular, from the White House, was a reflection of Nixon and Kissinger's well-known penchant for secrecy. This penchant was reinforced, however, by their distrust of the liberal Senate leadership which was advocating most strongly for a quickened pace of policy reform, and by Nixon's concern that conservatives might still be so strongly opposed to an opening that they could turn on him. The White House also saw a need for secrecy in order to hide the concessions that the Kissinger had made, and would both Nixon and Kissinger continue to make, regarding Taiwan.

The pattern begun by the Nixon White House in the period leading up to Sino-American rapprochement would continue to shape Executive-Legislative interaction over Taiwan for the remainder of the decade. The Executive Branch would consistently value the American relationship with and commitments to Taiwan far less than did Congress, and would consistently mislead Congress regarding its plans for Taiwan. This negative pattern would result in a growing dissonance between the branches on China policy as the decade progressed, which helped to slow progress toward full diplomatic normalisation,

and undermine the opportunity to build a new domestic political consensus behind the new relationship.

CHAPTER 2: 1972–AUGUST 1974 - THE MISLEADING OF CONGRESS, WEAKENING OF THE EXECUTIVE, AND DEBATE OVER THE MEANING OF THE OPENING

The period from January 1972 through Richard Nixon's resignation from the presidency saw a dramatic turn not only in Nixon's political fortunes but also in the power of the Executive Branch relative to the Congress. The new relationship that had been perceived through the cloud of euphoria that had surrounded the rapprochement increasingly came to be defined by a disappointment on the part of the Chinese with the failure of Nixon and Kissinger to follow through on the promises made in late 1971 and early 1972. While a combination of factors contributed to the gradual souring of the relationship during this period, the key factor was the White House's inability to move forward on normalisation on terms acceptable to Beijing. The path to normalisation in Washington was blocked by two key factors: the fundamentally differing attitudes toward Taiwan on the part of the Executive Branch and the Congress, and the crippling of the Nixon presidency due to Watergate.

This chapter focuses on three aspects of the new relationship from 1972 through Nixon's resignation from office in August 1974. The first is the White House's misleading of Congress regarding its concessions to China on Taiwan the path to full normalisation with Beijing. A second focus of this chapter is the impact of the programme of Congressional travel to China, which was begun immediately after Nixon's trip, on the early development of the Sino-American relationship. This programme served, as Nixon intended it, to broaden Congressional support for the new relationship by familiarising Members of Congress with Chinese leaders and vice versa. These trips also, as will be shown, had consequences unintended by Nixon and Kissinger. As one example, they gave the Chinese leadership insight into the domestic political cleavages in the United States,

which the Chinese used to their advantage. The White House and Members of Congress also sought to use these trips to advance their own policy preferences, in effect inviting the Chinese to become involved in the American intra-governmental struggle over such issues as Southeast Asia, US-Soviet détente, and the US defence posture. Most importantly, the trips resulted in a gradual realisation on the part of Members that what they had been told by Nixon and Kissinger regarding the effect of the opening to China on US relations with Taiwan, that the opening had not occurred at the expense of ties with Taipei, did not match with the expectations held in Beijing. This realisation that the United States would be required to sacrifice much more for the sake of normalisation with Beijing than Members had initially been led to believe began a difficult process by which Congress attempted to wrestle with the implications, with no easy answer available.

The third aspect of the new relationship that this chapter discusses is the Congressional debate over the strategic implications of the opening to China. The White House believed the most important aspect of the new relationship with China to be its impact on the global strategic balance and on Soviet-American relations. Significant Congressional interest was shown in this central aspect of the relationship, and through numerous hearings the Congress sought to examine the interrelationship between China, the United States and the Soviet Union, most importantly the effect of Sino-American ties on Soviet-US relations. Debate over this aspect of the relationship was interrelated with the debate over normalisation, and was one in which Congress's ability to contribute to the making of sound policy through examination of the assumptions underlying existing policy could have been brought to bear. The ability of Congress to make a substantive contribution to policy formulation in this area was constrained, however, by Nixon and Kissinger's secretive handling of China policy and their purposeful misleading of

Congress regarding their goals for the new relationship, and by the divisions within Congress itself over how to approach the Cold War.

Nixon in Beijing: The 'Tough Negotiator' Makes Concessions and Plans the Misleading of Congress

The opening to China pursued by Richard Nixon had been enabled by the dramatic shift in Congressional attitudes toward the opening of relations with China. Congressional support for an opening had been predicated on the belief, however, that the White House would make no concessions to Beijing that would result in Taipei's security being compromised and would defend longstanding American commitments to Taiwan – a belief the White House encouraged despite the fact that it was making precisely those concessions that it had promised it would not make. The record of Nixon's talks in Beijing make clear that White House assurances to Congress were insincere, a pattern which would be repeated throughout the Nixon and Ford years.

In Beijing, Nixon affirmed all of the concessions made previously by Kissinger and made clear that his concessions could not be made public and hence undermine his domestic political position. In order to hide his concessions, the Chinese could not reveal them, nor could the joint communiqué indicate that they had been made.²⁷⁹ By linking this secrecy with his ability to push Congressional opinion toward an acceptance of Beijing's demands for normalisation, Nixon hoped to give the Chinese an interest in supporting his domestic political position and collaborating to mislead the Congress regarding the depth of the concessions he had made regarding Taiwan.²⁸⁰

Mao and Zhou were willing to accept, for the time being and for the sake of Nixon's domestic political challenges, a *de facto* 'two Chinas' policy, as well as the fact

²⁷⁹ Memorandum of conversation (hereafter, memcon) between Richard Nixon and Zhou Enlai, 22 February 1972, White House Special Files, President's Office Files, Box 87, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁸⁰ *ibid.*

that Nixon was unwilling to set any deadlines for the withdrawal of US military personnel and forces from Taiwan. These were important concessions. The Chinese leaders were also willing to allow vague wording in the Shanghai communiqué and to provide the protection Nixon sought from domestic political criticism, but wished to ensure that Nixon and Kissinger clearly understood that China expected to recover Taiwan in the relatively near future and that Beijing expected to have to use force to do so. The removal of American troops was merely meant to clear the way for this resolution. It is clear from a reading of the talks that Zhou made this clear, and that Nixon and Kissinger both understood.²⁸¹ Zhou reinforced the urgency of this resolution by telling Nixon that it must take place within the lifetimes of the now aged leaders of the revolutionary generation – i.e.–very soon.²⁸²

So focused were the two men on the strategic value they ascribed to the opening that not only was Nixon not a 'tough negotiator', as he had promised Members of Congress that he would be, but neither he nor his national security advisor objected to Zhou's statement that the Chinese expected to use force to accomplish the reunification of Taiwan with the Mainland and in the relatively near future. While Congressional liberals were less protective of Taiwan than were conservatives, even Senate liberals had shown themselves to be unwilling to sacrifice Taiwan to the degree illustrated by Nixon during his talks with Zhou. Nixon's response to Zhou's presentation was not to express opposition to Zhou's expression that reunification would most likely have to be undertaken by force, but to again talk about the importance of hiding his concessions and giving him time to 'sell' to Congress a complete US withdrawal from Taiwan, which would have signalled American abandonment and the opening of the door to Beijing to

²⁸¹ Memcon between Richard Nixon and Zhou Enlai, 24 February 1972, *ibid.*

²⁸² *ibid.*

take a free hand with Taipei²⁸³ The fact that Nixon and Kissinger did not oppose Zhou's statement on the use of force did not indicate that the two men would have supported such action on the part of China. Kissinger's unwillingness to step aside and give Beijing free reign in the coming years, after the Chinese believed that he and Nixon had given their acquiescence, would prove to be a point of frustration on the part of the Chinese, who felt they had been misled. Nixon and Kissinger's lack of expressed opposition to this potential course of action is more likely explained by their desire to let the Chinese believe whatever they wanted to believe in order to facilitate the opening and gain the geostrategic benefits that the White House expected to accrue from the opening.²⁸⁴

Believing such concessions to be important at this stage, however, Nixon and Kissinger had to hide from Congress and the American public the nature of their discussions in China regarding Taiwan. The shortsightedness of this strategy, both with Congress and with China, however, would have very negative repercussions in the coming years.

Building a Web of Deceit: Nixon's Return and the Debate Over Concessions

The Shanghai communiqué ended up being vague enough to give Nixon the political cover he sought on Taiwan, and Zhou thought that he had gained Nixon and Kissinger's agreement to give Beijing a free hand with Taiwan after the American withdrawal had been completed. Although some suspected that Nixon had sacrificed Taiwan, the attempt to mislead Congress and the public as to the true nature of White House concessions regarding Taiwan was successful, with the result that criticism of the

²⁸³ *ibid.*

²⁸⁴ Other scholars have noted that the uncompromising language used by Zhou and Mao regarding reunification by force on this and subsequent occasions did not mean that forceful reunification was the only policy option being considered by Beijing. As Deng Xiaoping would explain to visiting Members of Congress later in the decade, a renunciation of the ability to use force to accomplish reunification would have been seen by Beijing as giving up its primary leverage over Taipei, which would have meant effectively giving up the hope of eventual reunification. However, Zhou's language during Nixon's visit indicated quite clearly that forceful reunification was the means considered most likely by Mao and Zhou, and that they expected to have to use force in the relatively near term.

communiqué was manageable and Nixon did, indeed, buy time with which to attempt to fulfil his promises to Mao and Zhou regarding the process of normalisation. Whether such deep concessions, so quickly made, were necessary to achieve rapprochement is doubtful. Also, Nixon's concessions and deception would have long-term negative repercussions. The fundamentally different expectations for Taiwan held by the White House, which was willing to sacrifice Taiwan in order to achieve its strategic objectives, and Congress, which was more protective of Taiwan, would make the road to normalisation more difficult than it would have been had Nixon and Kissinger determined to concede to Beijing only as much as they could openly justify to the Congress. Consensus became far harder to reach, and the disconnect between White House and Congressional attitudes regarding Taiwan and its role in American normalisation with the Mainland provided the new relationship an unsure foundation.

Nixon's negotiating tactics in China would also have negative repercussions with Beijing. The Chinese, believing that Nixon would fulfil his promise of quick normalisation and had agreed to step aside and allow the Chinese to reunify Taiwan with the Mainland on their terms, would later feel deceived when Nixon proved unable to quickly normalise and the Nixon and Ford White Houses would not agree to step aside and allow Beijing the free hand it thought it had gained. Regarding his deception of Congress, Nixon could not have foreseen that it was not leaked news of his promises in Beijing that would destroy him politically at home, but that domestic political concerns unconnected to his rapprochement with China would force him from power and ruin any chance that he could follow through on his promises to Beijing.

As Nixon's references to the Shanghai Communiqué in his talks with Zhou reveal, the communiqué was carefully worded in order to give Nixon domestic political cover in

the areas of policy toward Taiwan (as well as Vietnam). Upon Nixon's return, although both the trip and the communiqué were generally greeted with approval, the wording of the communiqué became grounds for criticism, as Nixon had predicted. Although the topic of Nixon's treatment of Taiwan during his trip was the most important issue debated, there was also criticism of the apparent lack of progress on Vietnam. Scoop Jackson, a Democratic presidential hopeful, questioned why Nixon had appeared to have gained no concessions from Beijing on Vietnam.²⁸⁵ Representative Paul McCloskey (R-CA), who, like Representative John Ashbrook, was challenging Nixon from the right in the Republican presidential primaries, was also critical that no progress seemed to have been made on Vietnam.²⁸⁶

The majority of Congressional attention was reserved for the issue of Taiwan, however. The statement in the Shanghai Communiqué regarding Taiwan's status had been carefully worded so that it acknowledged the claim of Beijing to be the legitimate government of the whole of a China that included Taiwan without the American side taking an official position on the matter. The wording of the communiqué could be understood to signify that Nixon had made concessions to Beijing regarding Taiwan, which was, indeed, the case, or that he had not made secret concessions and was simply seeking diplomatic language to 'acknowledge' the Chinese position, the explanation put forward by both Nixon and Kissinger at the time as well as in their memoirs. There were, therefore, Members who saw both betrayal and steadfastness in the communiqué. The White House strongly asserted the latter interpretation to be accurate. Most Republicans rallied in defence of the President, illustrating the power of party loyalty, a factor strengthened by the dynamics of a presidential election year.

²⁸⁵ *Congress and the Nation: Vol. III, 1969-1972: A Review of Government and Politics* (Washington, D.C., 1973), pp.893-4.

²⁸⁶ *ibid.*

From the liberal wing of the GOP, Senator Edward Brooke, in a speech to a Republican Party gathering four days after Nixon's return, asserted that 'the President, in Peking, did not "sell out" Taiwan'.²⁸⁷ Conservatives also defended Nixon against charges that he had betrayed Taiwan. From Nixon's announcement of his upcoming trip to Beijing and the actual date of his trip, the President, Henry Kissinger, and White House congressional liaison officers had continued to lobby those conservatives most strongly opposed to the opening to China in order to broaden support for the President's policy among his political base. The White House's attempts at such lobbying were successful, a testament to Nixon's ability to persuade conservatives that he was not going to 'abandon' Taiwan and that the opening served American interests. As one example, the NSC recorded in August 1971 that Senator Peter Dominick (R-CO) was in 'bitter opposition' to the China opening: 'His reaction indeed has been rather intemperate, and he has said that his non-support of the Administration will spill over to issues like the ABM and Vietnam. . . . He warrants special efforts to bring him back on the reservation'.²⁸⁸

By the time Nixon visited China, however, the White House had so successfully convinced Dominick that he could trust the President not to bargain away American commitments to Taiwan that Dominick delivered a Senate floor speech praising the Shanghai Communiqué and declaring that he saw 'no sign of any change in our commitments to the Republic of China'. He went on to assert that 'Any contrary view simply does not stand up, and the repetition of that concern simply encourages a feeling among our allies that they should review their own positions', to Washington's detriment.²⁸⁹ Dominick's defence of Nixon was based on the belief that Washington's

²⁸⁷ Remarks by Senator Edward Brooke at the Fall River Republican Committee Lincoln Day Dinner, 4 March 1972, Box 559, Edward Brooke Papers.

²⁸⁸ John Lehman to Henry Kissinger, 30 August 1971, NSC Files, Name Files, Mayor Daley to Droge, Dolph, Box 812, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁸⁹ Senate floor statement by Peter Dominick, 3 March 1972, *Congressional Record*.

relationship with Taipei would continue, both diplomatically and militarily:

We have in no way abrogated our commitments under our Mutual Defense Treaty with that government. . . . There should be no concern on the part of our people or on the part of the great people of the Republic of China that we have abandoned our commitments. . . . Those who suggest that our initiatives toward world peace through expanded communication with traditional adversaries will result in abandonment of our friends are doing no favors to the US, to our allies or to the cause of world peace.²⁹⁰

Dominick's statement reflected White House success at broadening the political base of support for Nixon's opening to China among conservatives. But crucially, this success was dependent upon the White House ability to successfully mislead conservatives into believing that no promises had been made to Chinese leaders regarding Taiwan and that Nixon did not plan to de-recognise Taiwan or to end the defence treaty with Taipei.

Nixon, ever concerned to maintain his conservative base, watched carefully for signs among conservatives on Capitol Hill that efforts at lobbying their support had been successful.²⁹¹ The story of the White House's successful attempt to gain the support of Dominick by promising no concessions on Taiwan was replicated with Senator Barry Goldwater, also a staunch Taiwan supporter. In late December 1970, Goldwater had given a speech in which he asserted that 'Nothing can be gained, but a great deal can be lost by admission of Red China to to the United Nations or its diplomatic recognition by the United States'.²⁹² By the time Nixon returned from , however, Goldwater was defending Nixon's trip to fellow conservatives and asserting his confidence that 'we have not given

²⁹⁰ *ibid.*

²⁹¹ Clark MacGregor to President Nixon, 'Peter Dominick's Support for Your China Trip', 9 March 1972, NSC Files, Name Files, Mayor Daley to Droge, Dolph, Box 812, NPMP, NARA II.

²⁹² *China and US Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C., 1973), p.51.

away one single thing to the Red Chinese', and that 'we will uphold our treaty commitments to the Taiwan government'.²⁹³ Other conservative leaders echoed these same convictions. House Minority Leader Gerald Ford, for example, wrote shortly after the President's return that: ' . . . our interest in Taiwan remains and . . . this nation is not going to be left to the communists of Mainland China in a helpless and defenseless position'.²⁹⁴ The White House records that describe attempts to lobby conservatives do not detail the apologetic used to gain their support, but the uniform nature of the statements by conservatives in defence of Nixon supports the conclusion that their public statements reflect the substance of private White House communications to them and that the White House apologetic was effective.

Conservative criticism had been expected, however, and that offered by John Ashbrook was not a surprise. Ashbrook asserted:

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 doing so 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.²⁹⁵

Ashbrook's portrayal of the longtime US government position was, of course, inaccurate. Washington had agreed in the past with the Republic of China that Taipei was the rightful government of the whole of China, including both the Mainland and Taiwan, not that Taiwan was independent of the Mainland. His criticism, nevertheless, reflected fears

²⁹³ *Congress and the Nation*, p.894.

²⁹⁴ Gerald Ford to a constituent, 7 March 1972, Ford Congressional Papers, Series B, Legislative File, Box B219, Ford Library.

²⁹⁵ *Congress and the Nation*, p.893.

among some conservatives that despite Nixon's assurances to the contrary, he had in fact agreed that he would eventually meet Beijing's longtime demands for normalisation – that Washington end its mutual defence treaty with Taipei and withdraw all military forces from the island, actions which were intended to give Beijing the ability to reunite Taiwan with the mainland on its own terms. Other House conservatives, including Representatives Phil Crane (R-IL), John Rarick (D-LA), John Schmitz (R-CA), and Robert Sikes (D-FL), echoed Ashbrook's criticisms. Senator James Buckley indicated that if Nixon had, indeed, secretly agreed to diminish or do away with the American commitment to defend Taiwan, this would 'vastly diminish' his regard for Nixon.²⁹⁶ Much of the public was also concerned that Nixon had reached some sort of secret agreement regarding Taiwan while in China, as illustrated by the large amounts of constituent mail on this topic received by Members of Congress.²⁹⁷

The strong opposition from a minority of conservatives was not enough to give Nixon serious difficulties with the opening. However, their doubts regarding the trustworthiness of Nixon's intentions and promises to them indicated the beginnings of a larger conservative disillusionment with the foreign policy framework inaugurated by Nixon and Kissinger, particularly the policy of *détente* with the Soviet Union.²⁹⁸ Conservative opposition to Nixon and Kissinger's foreign policy framework would grow as the Soviet Union continued to dramatically increase its military development programme and take advantage of opportunities around the globe to increase its influence at Washington's expense in the Third World. This trend would also serve to further constrain the Executive's ability to convince the Congress and the public to make the

²⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p.894. Telephone interview with former Senator James Buckley, 1 December 2009.

²⁹⁷ See James Pearson to a constituent, 13 March 1972, Box 116, James Pearson Senatorial Papers, Spencer Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas. The papers of nearly every Member which were examined contained large numbers of constituent letters expressing this concern.

²⁹⁸ For an outline of the increasing alienation between Nixon and his conservative base see Mergel, *Conservative Intellectuals and Richard Nixon*.

sacrifices required by Beijing vis-a-vis Taiwan in order to complete the process of diplomatic normalisation with Mainland China.

Criticism of the Shanghai Communiqué and suspicions regarding possible secret concessions by Nixon did not only come from conservatives. Although this may partially be explained by partisan election year politics, it also likely reflected genuine concern from all segments of Congress that deep concessions on Taiwan not be made. No less a personage than Hubert Humphrey, the recent Democratic Vice President, who was once again a Senator from Minnesota, questioned Nixon's assertion that the United States had not undermined Taiwan during the talks in Beijing nor made any major concessions:

It is now clear that the rug has been pulled out from under the Taiwanese, though the people of the island of Formosa once aspired to determine their own destiny. . . . It is apparent from the communiqué as I read it that concessions were made by the President and by Dr. Kissinger, but not any, insofar as I have been able to interpret, were made by the Chinese.²⁹⁹

Generally speaking, however, Nixon's trip, and the communiqué, received fulsome praise from the Democrats. Senator George McGovern, who was on his way to winning the Democratic nomination for the presidency and who would oppose Nixon in the general election that fall, praised the trip, as did Senators Ted Kennedy, William Fulbright and, of course, Mike Mansfield, with whom Nixon had had so many breakfast conversations about the desirability of an opening.

Congressional Delegations to China and Their Effect on the New Relationship

The programme of Congressional visits to China was inaugurated by Nixon and Kissinger in the hopes that increasing familiarity with China among Members of Congress would result in deepening levels of support within the Congress for completion

²⁹⁹ *Congress and the Nation*, p.894.

of the process of normalisation. There was certainly no shortage of Members wishing to go. Prior to Nixon's trip the belief that travelling to China would help the career of any politician seeking to raise his political profile in the United States had resulted in an intense competition for invitations to Beijing, and the political success and theatre of Nixon's trip only served to increase the number of Members wishing to visit. A sort of 'China mania' - an uncritical infatuation with all things Chinese, swept the nation and much of the Congress in the wake of Nixon's visit, which was characterised by carefully choreographed television coverage meant to produce the maximum political benefit. As Nancy Bernkopf Tucker has written, Nixon and Kissinger had hoped that a combination of complete secrecy and a 'China fever' would mask the level of compromises and concessions they had made to effect the opening.³⁰⁰ Each year after Nixon's visit saw an increase in the number of senators and congressmen travelling to China, which did serve to deepen the new relationship by familiarising Members of Congress with the Chinese leadership and vice versa (which, as shall be seen, was not always a positive development).

The most important aspect of these trips, however, was that they revealed to Members what Nixon and Kissinger both already understood - that Beijing expected either to reunify Taiwan by force, and that the withdrawal of American military personnel and the ending of the Mutual Security Treaty would make this possible, or that Taiwan would collapse due to increasing international isolation and the withdrawal of American support. Such a realisation gave many Members who had supported the initial opening reason to withhold their support for complete normalisation until a compromise could be reached that would ensure that Taiwan was not left at the mercy of the Mainland.

³⁰⁰ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, 'Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China', *The Journal of American History* 92:1 (2005), p.110.

The trips also highlighted the deep domestic political cleavages in the United States, some of which the Chinese could then attempt to use to their advantage. Beijing used the talks with Members to work to strengthen support within Washington for normalisation on Beijing's terms, to undermine support within the Congress for US-Soviet détente, and to advocate for an increased American defence budget and strong American global position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Both the White House and Members of Congress sought to use these trips to advance their own policy preferences. Kissinger, who did not wish to allow any Members to compromise his control of the new relationship, attempted to micromanage the CoDel programme to this end. He used his authority over appointing Members to each delegation agreed with the Chinese to keep some Members who had challenged Administration policy too strongly from travelling to China, and sought with each delegation as much as possible 'to organize purposefully a group which will most effectively support your [Nixon's] programs'.³⁰¹ Kissinger also attempted to coach the Chinese on how to approach specific Members, attempting to make the Chinese partners in securing maximum Congressional support for Administration foreign policy and attempting to attenuate any temptation on Beijing's part to work certain Members against Administration policy with which Beijing disagreed, such as US pursuit détente with the Soviets.

Some Members of Congress, in turn, attempted to use their visits to China to challenge Kissinger's foreign policy. Congressional liberals played on what they presumed would be Chinese sympathy with their policy preferences in an attempt to gain Chinese support for the confrontation with the White House over foreign policy. (These attempts tended to backfire as the Chinese leaders, appreciative of Nixon overseeing

³⁰¹ Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, 19 November 1973, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Far East, China Exchanges, November 1, 1973–March 31, 1974, Box 96, NPMP, NARA II.

change of policy toward China did not wish to be seen to be allying against him with Senate liberals, whom they viewed as being overly pro-Soviet.) Some foreign policy hawks, such as Scoop Jackson, made common cause with the Chinese in criticism of Kissinger's pursuit of détente with the Soviet Union. Experiences such as these served to reinforce Kissinger's decision to manage China policy himself and to not allow Congress a role in policy formulation.

The first delegation to travel to China after Nixon was made up of the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, a decision which earned the ire of the House leadership, which believed that its support for Administration foreign and national security policy, in contrast with the constant challenge to such policy emanating from the Senate, had earned it the political prize of being the first Congressional delegation to travel to China.³⁰² After Nixon had healed the breach with the House leadership by promising that they would be the next to travel to China, discord arose between Mansfield and Scott over whether their trip would somehow add to the political benefit to Nixon of the opening. Hugh Scott's staff attempted to ensure the trip 'be publicized as an extension of the visit by the President' in order to both benefit Scott and also to further ensure that Nixon and the Republican Party received continuing credit for the development of the relationship, while Democrats, seeking to forestall such an effort, asked that press coverage of the trip be minimised.³⁰³ Press coverage was extensive, and the dispute was evidence of the partisan concerns that still influenced China policy.

As Nixon had predicted to Zhou in February, Mansfield and Scott spent a

³⁰² Richard Cook to William Timmons and Clark MacGregor, 'House Resentment over Mansfield-Scott Trip to PRC', 29 February 1972, NSC Files, Subject Files, Congressional Jul-Dec 1971 to Congressional Jan-Apr 1972, Box 315, NPMP, NARA II; See also Clark MacGregor to Richard Nixon, 7 March 1972, WHCF, Subject Files, CO (Countries), [EX] CO 34-2 People's Republic of China (Red China) 1/1/71-5/31/71 through [EX] CO 34-2 People's Republic of China (Red China) 1/1/73-3/31/73, Box 19, *ibid*.

³⁰³ Staff memo to Hugh Scott, 3 April 1972, MSS 10200, etc., Box 55, Hugh Scott Papers.

substantial amount of time during their 22 April conversation with Zhou Enlai focusing on Vietnam and unsuccessfully attempting to gain some kind of Chinese pledge of support. As he had with Nixon and Kissinger, Zhou Enlai, with whom Mansfield and Scott met, turned away their hints for Chinese assistance. The Administration's primary concern in these first talks between the Chinese and Congressional leaders was that the Chinese side would leak information regarding the secret agreements between Nixon and Zhou, and that this information would find its way into the Congress at large and from there into the press, a revelation that would undermine his balance of power goals for the new relationship and would prove devastating to Nixon politically. When Mansfield pressed Zhou regarding the timetable for the withdrawal of American military personnel from Taiwan and asked 'how do you expect to reclaim Taiwan?' Zhou did not reveal the agreement reached between Nixon and himself or his expectation to recover Taiwan by 1976, and offered only that China expected eventually to reclaim Taiwan (giving no timetable) and its expectation that Washington would at some future point withdraw all of its forces from Taiwan.³⁰⁴ Following their return, Kissinger, ensured that Winston Lord reviewed the memcons and trip reports at the State Department. Relieved, Lord reported that 'There is nothing in these materials that is particularly sensitive or startling'.³⁰⁵

Two months after Mansfield and Scott's trip, House Majority Leader Hale Boggs and Minority Leader Gerald Ford became the second CoDel to travel to China. The divisions between the House and the Senate had already been put on display by the very public dispute between the two chambers over which chamber's leadership would be the first to travel to China. Once in Beijing, Ford further emphasised to the Chinese the depth

³⁰⁴ Memcon between Zhou Enlai, Mike Mansfield and Hugh Scott, 22 April 1972, MSS 10200-u, Box 15, Hugh Scott Papers.

³⁰⁵ Winston Lord to Henry Kissinger, 12 May 1972, Files for the President—China Material, China General, April 1- June 22, 1972, Mansfield/Scott trip to China, Box 1038, NPMP, NARA II.

of this division when he informed Qiao Guanhua, then Vice Foreign Minister, that regarding foreign policy views the House of Representatives 'represent the American people more closely than the United States Senate', painting a picture of the more liberal Senate as being out of touch with mainstream American public attitudes toward foreign policy.³⁰⁶ Ford's intent was to convince Qiao that the US government was not as divided on foreign policy as the challenge from Senate liberals might suggest, although in actuality he confirmed the chasm that existed between the House and Senate leadership – as well as in American politics in general.

The topics of Vietnam, Taiwan, and growing Soviet power were the primary topics of discussion, as they had been during the visit of the Senate leadership. Meeting with Zhou, Ford and Boggs were told that Zhou hoped that the United States would maintain a strong military position around the globe in order to balance Soviet power. When Boggs asked Zhou whether he believed that the lessening of tensions brought about by US-Soviet détente would bring about a reduction of Soviet defence spending, Zhou replied emphatically in English, before the question had even been translated into Chinese, 'Never! Never! Never!'³⁰⁷ He then intimated that it was folly for the United States to consider unilateral defence spending cuts in the face of rapidly growing Soviet military spending. This theme would continue in discussions between the Chinese leadership and visiting Members of Congress for the remainder of the decade, as China, believing that reduced Soviet-American tensions would inevitably lead to increased Soviet military and political pressure on itself, sought to undermine détente.

Regarding Taiwan, Zhou repeated the formulation of the Shanghai Communiqué, but again gave no hint of the harsh expectations that he had made known to Nixon and

³⁰⁶ Memcon between Hale Boggs, Gerald Ford, and Qiao Guanhua, 27 June 1972, Ford Congressional Papers, Series B, Legislative File, Box B219, Ford Library.

³⁰⁷ Memcon between Hale Boggs, Gerald Ford, Zhou Enlai and Qiao Guanhua, 29 June 1972, *ibid.*

Kissinger. During this trip the Chinese received their first taste of the tendency of Members of Congress to be indiscreet in their public statements, a lesson that would make the Chinese cautious in what they agreed to share with Members in the future. Nixon had warned Zhou that Members of Congress could be indiscreet, and a statement by Ford unfortunately validated Nixon's warning. When meeting with Boggs and Ford, Zhou had expressed support for a continued strong American military presence in Southeast Asia. The Chinese had been worried that the 'Nixon Doctrine' implied American retrenchment from Asia, which Beijing feared would leave a vast void into which the Soviet Union could move, strengthening its attempted encirclement of China. Zhou, therefore, had expressed support for a continuing American military presence in Southeast Asia, assuming that their conversation was confidential. As soon as the two House leaders had returned to Washington, however, they held a press conference in which Ford publicly announced Beijing's private attitude.³⁰⁸ While this was a message the Chinese wished to give the Americans in private, it is not one that they wished to give to their North Vietnamese comrades nor to the communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia for whose sympathies Moscow and Beijing were competing, and Zhou publicly disavowed the House leadership's assertion.³⁰⁹

Subsequent groups of Members would visit China in 1973 and 1974 in increasing numbers. Both the White House and the Chinese attempted to use these visits in order to advance their respective policy preferences. In his February 1973 visit to Beijing Kissinger recommended to Zhou that an invitation be issued to Scoop Jackson, telling Zhou that Jackson was supportive of the Administration's goal of strong defence spending

³⁰⁸ The Soviets were thrilled to report this news in order to undermine China's position in Southeast Asia. See 'PRC Leaders Concerned About US Troop Withdrawal', *Moscow Radio Peace and Progress*, 10 July 1972, *ibid*; '2 House Leaders Say Peking Fears a Pullback by US', *UPI*, 9 July 1972.

³⁰⁹ 'Chinese Disown Chou Statement as Related by Boggs and Ford', *AgenceFrance-Presse*, 18 July 1972.

and was, like Beijing, critical of Moscow.³¹⁰ At the same time the White House sought to ensure travel to China by Members with views of the global strategic situation harmonising with its own, there is also evidence that Kissinger sought to delay or obstruct altogether the visits of Members who had strongly challenged Administration foreign policy. William Fulbright and Stuart Symington were two prominent examples.

Given Fulbright's chairmanship of the SFRC, long-time advocacy of improved Sino-American ties, and the fact that his committee was the first to openly advocate fundamental change of American China policy in 1966, he should have been an obvious choice to visit China. Fulbright had long made known his desire to visit China and had apparently made known his wish to be given a place on one of the 1973 delegations slated to visit Beijing. Not hearing anything from the Administration in response, Carl Marcy, the committee's chief of staff, wrote to the White House asking whether Fulbright was going to be placed on an upcoming CoDel. Tom Korologos, a White House Congressional liaison staff member who shared the general White House distaste for Fulbright, responded to Marcy by claiming that, 'We had no inkling in our shop that the Chairman had applied so long ago', putting him off by saying that, 'I also regret that he found scheduling problems with the trip in July'.³¹¹ It seems doubtful that the White House would not have been aware of Fulbright's very obvious desire to travel to China.

Korologos' explanation that he was unaware of Fulbright's desire and that there were 'scheduling problems' with future planned delegations gives the appearance that the White House was purposefully withholding from Fulbright a place on a Congressional trip to Beijing due to the fact that his views on the international situation differed completely

³¹⁰ Memcon between Henry Kissinger and Zhou Enlai, 17 February 1973, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Far East, HAK China Trip, Memcons & Reports (originals), February 1973, Box 98, NPMP, NARA II.

³¹¹ Thomas Korologos to Carl Marcy, 13 June 1973, WHCF, Subject Files, Federal Government (FG), ExFG 36-9 Senate Committees–Foreign Relations [1 of 3] to GenFG 36-11-1 Senate Committees–Interior and Insular Affairs–Subcommittees, Box 20, NPMP, NARA II.

with those of the White House.

SFRC member Stuart Symington, whose subcommittee hearings several years earlier had earned the ire of the White House, was also not placed on a delegation to China, despite his intense interest in going.³¹² When he complained to Carl Marcy, Marcy recounted to Symington his interaction with Korologos on this issue, saying that this pattern:

made it look like there was a clear intent on the part of the Administration to show that those who cooperate get good treatment. I pointed out that the Chairman and other Committee members not on the list [for upcoming delegations] had taken the lead years ago in encouraging an opening to China.³¹³

Symington never did travel to China with a Congressional delegation, and Fulbright would finally travel to China in September 1974 after he had lost the Democratic Senate primary in his home state of Arkansas and was a lame duck.

While Kissinger was apparently attempting to keep Symington and Fulbright out of China altogether, he was also micromanaging the visits of those Members who did travel to China by preparing the Chinese on their positions on various issues, with the obvious intent to elicit Chinese lobbying of these Members in certain areas of mutual concern, such as defence spending and American troop levels in Europe. One example was Mike Mansfield. Kissinger not too subtly complained to Zhou about Mansfield's position on both the issue of US troop levels in Europe, in which Mansfield favoured a dramatic reduction, and on reduction of defence spending in general. Each year since 1970, Mansfield had introduced amendments to various appropriations bills in which he had demanded large reductions in the US troop levels in Europe. The White House

³¹² Stuart Symington to Carl Marcy, 20 June 1973, f.2141, Stuart Symington Papers.

³¹³ Carl Marcy to Stuart Symington, 21 June 1973, *ibid*.

believed such troop reductions would spark fears among its Western European allies about the US commitment to their security and would increase the Soviet ability to apply political pressure on them. The Chinese had a vested interest in the maintenance of a strong US military presence in Western Europe, as well as in the strengthening of the Europeans' own military strength, in order to ensure that the Soviet Union continued to be faced with formidable military forces in the West that would constrain the Soviet ability to concentrate its growing military power in the East.

Kissinger, therefore, sought to enlist the Chinese in an effort to lobby liberal Members of Congress, such as Mansfield, who were supportive of a reduced US troop presence in Europe and who annually attempted to cut the Administration's requested defence budget. Speaking of Mike Mansfield in February 1973, for example, Kissinger noted the fact that 'Senator Mansfield, who incidentally wants to come back here' was advocating force reductions in Europe, adding, 'We will be glad to send him if you promise to keep him'.³¹⁴ The Chinese were perfectly willing to lobby Mansfield and other visiting liberal Members of Congress in these areas. Following his November 1973 trip to Beijing, Kissinger reported to Nixon that the Chinese were concerned about the 'Congressional mood' that favoured reduced defence spending and reduced American military presence globally, asserting that 'Once they become convinced that we cannot or will not act as a major force on a global scale, we will lose our principal value to them'.³¹⁵ Kissinger's belief that the Chinese were vitally concerned about the value of the United States as a counterweight to Moscow was not incorrect, as illustrated by China's repeated admonitions to visiting Members to support stronger defence spending and a strong

³¹⁴ Memcon between Henry Kissinger and Zhou Enlai, 16 February 1973, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Far East, HAK China Trip, Memcons & Reports, February 1973, Box 98, NPMP, NARA II.

³¹⁵ Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, 'My Visit to China', 19 November 1973, Box 96, *ibid.*

global American military position vis-vis the Soviet Union. However, he regularly over-emphasised this aspect of the relationship and ignored the fact that Washington was also of value to Beijing in that its attitude was seen as the key to China's ability to recover Taiwan.

Members of Congress, as well, particularly liberals, attempted to use their talks with Chinese leaders to challenge Kissinger's foreign policy. The Executive Branch's post-Vietnam struggle with the Congress over foreign and national security policy was reaching a fever pitch in 1973, just as the Watergate scandal was beginning to severely cripple Nixon's ability to lead in both of these areas and to defend against Congressional attempts to limit Executive authority.³¹⁶ One such area that impinged directly on Sino-American relations was the Congressional funding cut off, led by liberals, for Nixon's support of Cambodia's struggle against the Khmer Rouge guerillas. Differences of policy toward Cambodia were a source of growing tension between Washington and Beijing in the summer of 1973, with Beijing concerned that a continuation of fighting in Cambodia, which they blamed on American support for Lon Nol's government, would result in a Soviet opportunity to increase its influence in Southeast Asia. Against this background a Congressional delegation visited Beijing, that put on display the fissures between the Executive Branch and Congressional liberals and attempted to play on the sympathy that the Senator leading the delegation presumed Beijing would have for his position on Southeast Asia and elicit from Zhou Enlai an expression of support for the position of Congressional liberals in their challenge to the Nixon Administration.

Warren Magnuson, who had advocated the opening of ties with China since the late 1950's, led this delegation of both House and Senate Members to Beijing in early July

³¹⁶ For a detailed account of the struggle between the Executive Branch and Congress during this period see Thomas Franck and Edward Weisband, *Foreign Policy by Congress* (New York, 1979).

1973, after Congress cut off funds for American air operations over Cambodia.

Magnuson's behaviour angered the Chinese, was seen by Kissinger as complicating the delicate process of developing Sino-American ties, and reinforced Kissinger's belief that Congress was primarily a nuisance and not a partner in the policy-making process. David Bruce, the head of the newly-established US Liaison Office in Beijing, privately labelled Magnuson's behaviour during the trip 'bizarre'³¹⁷ and cabled back to Kissinger a scathing report of Magnuson's visit.³¹⁸

After repeated, loud complaints by Magnuson that he was not given an interview with Zhou, the Chinese finally relented and granted him one.³¹⁹ Magnuson attempted to use his advocacy of the funding cut off in order to gain Zhou's support for the position of Congressional liberals in the struggle with the Nixon Administration over foreign policy, an effort that was not appreciated by Zhou, who attempted to sidestep the issue repeatedly. Magnuson, however, continued to press the issue, seeking praise for the role of liberals in stopping US involvement in support of Lon Nol and telling Zhou: 'Be patient. It will soon all be over'. Other members of the delegation, which included Doc Morgan, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, attempted to disagree with Magnuson's position on Cambodia, but were overridden by his determination that his view be the only one heard. Zhou was so irritated by Magnuson's approach that he took a less compromising tone on Taiwan than he had previously taken with visiting Members of Congress. Richard Solomon, the NSC officer who had accompanied the Magnuson delegation to China recorded that, 'Chou was visibly angered at both the content of the discussion and the fact that he had been put in the position of appearing to play the

³¹⁷ Priscilla Roberts, ed., *Window on the Forbidden City: The Beijing Diaries of David Bruce, 1973-1974* (Hong Kong, 2001), entry from David Bruce Diary, 7 July 1973.

³¹⁸ David Bruce to Henry Kissinger, 6 July 1973, RG 59, Policy Planning Staff Director's Files (hereafter PPS), Box 328, File China Exchanges June 14 – July 9, 1973, NARA II.

³¹⁹ Roberts, ed., *Window on the Forbidden City*, entry from David Bruce Diary, 7 July 1973.

Congress against the White House'.³²⁰

In a banquet on the delegation's last night in Beijing, Magnuson gave the impression that he supported an independent Taiwan, a position bound to earn the ire of the Chinese and potentially complicate Kissinger's delicate attempts to move forward with normalisation while retaining significant American ties to Taipei.³²¹ Solomon, in his report to Kissinger, concluded that:

The Magnuson delegation almost certainly made a negative impact on the Chinese Magnuson's repeated assertions of the independence of Congress and the obvious interest of many Senators and Representatives in using trips to the PRC for their own domestic political purposes, very likely has left PRC leaders with a contemptuous feeling toward our governmental system, and a belief that they could use these men against an Administration position which they did not like.³²²

Kissinger concluded that the experience of Zhou with Magnuson and the success of Congressional liberals in delimiting Executive Branch freedom of action in national security policy had given the Chinese leadership the impression of Executive Branch weakness and, hence, a sense of insecurity in the ability of the American government to support Chinese security interests.³²³ Experiences such as this reinforced Kissinger's penchant for secrecy and desire to deny Congress a role in policy formulation.

During 1974, as US-Soviet détente began to falter, Congressional delegations increasingly came to address the issue of Soviet pressure on China, with the Chinese

³²⁰ Richard Solomon to Henry Kissinger, 'The US Congressional Delegation's Tour of China: It Might Have Been Worse', 18 July 1973, RG 59, PPS, China Exchanges April 1–August 8, 1974, Box 328, NARA II.

³²¹ David Bruce (Beijing) to Henry Kissinger, 8 July 1973, File China Exchanges June 14–July 9, 1973, *ibid.*

³²² Richard Solomon to Henry Kissinger, July 18, 1973, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Far East, China Exchanges, July 10–Oct. 31, 1973, Box 95, NPMP, NARA II.

³²³ Memcon between Kissinger and his staff, 19 July 1973, *ibid.*

leadership using such visits to communicate their message that Moscow's primary aggressive focus was in the West, not in the East. Kissinger's diplomatic strategy with the Chinese had been to play on Beijing's fear of Soviet encirclement and military pressure in order to build up China's appreciation for the United States as a strategic counterweight and, hence, attempt to increase China's desire for close relations with Washington. By mid 1973 two aides to David Bruce reported that the Chinese 'no longer believe a Soviet attack is likely, or at least imminent'.³²⁴ As Chinese fears of a Soviet attack abated, they began to perceive Kissinger as attempting to stoke their fears for his own purposes.³²⁵ In order to counteract Kissinger's attempt to build a sense of obligation, the Chinese in the spring and summer of 1974 began to tell visiting dignitaries and Congressional visitors that the Soviet Union's focus was not on China, but on Western Europe.³²⁶ An aide to Scoop Jackson, who visited China in early July, reported to David Bruce that the Chinese were 'quite relaxed' regarding the Soviet threat, asserting 'that the Soviets were "feinting to the east in order to concentrate against the west"'. Thus, Western Europe and not China was the danger area'.³²⁷

Kissinger's attempts to manage Congressional interaction with the Chinese in a manner that favoured Administration policy preferences were not always successful, as the July 1974 visit of Scoop Jackson illustrates. Knowing that the Chinese shared with Jackson a scepticism of Kissinger's pursuit of détente with the Soviets, he sought to suppress joint criticism of himself. He thus warned Zhou against stoking Jackson's anti-Soviet sentiment so strongly that Jackson made statements that would alienate important

³²⁴ Al Jenkins and John Holdridge (Beijing) to Henry Kissinger, 20 July 1973, RG 59, PPS, File China Exchanges, July 10–October 31, 1973, Box 328, NARA II.

³²⁵ 'Memorandum for the Files' of conversation between Averell Harriman and Ted Heath, 19 June 1974, Box 1072, Averell Harriman Papers.

³²⁶ *ibid.*

³²⁷ David Bruce (Beijing) to Henry Kissinger, 5 July 1974, RG 59, PPS, China Exchanges April 1–August 8, 1974, Box 331, NARA II.

liberals such as William Fulbright, 'whom we need and who is his enemy'.³²⁸ Kissinger was concerned that the commonality of views on détente held by the Chinese and Jackson would serve to undermine Kissinger's position with the Chinese. In reality, his credibility had already been severely undermined by his own over-playing of the 'Soviet card'.

Kissinger had hoped that the fact that he had suggested a Jackson visit to China would somehow cause Jackson to lessen his opposition to détente out of appreciation. When that appreciation was not forthcoming, Kissinger complained to the Chinese 'Your invitation hasn't changed his behaviour toward me at all'.³²⁹ Jackson found his critical views of the Soviet Union appreciated in China, noting on his return from Beijing that 'I found that many of my own positions on vital issues now being debated in America were understood and sympathetically appreciated by the Chinese', and argued that 'We must grasp this moment in history when geopolitical considerations have brought our two countries closer together to build a web of relations which will promote peace'.³³⁰ Jackson's belief in the value of the Sino-American relationship to the containment of Soviet power led him to propose after his trip that: 'On the matter of diplomatic recognition, we should try to reverse the location of our embassy and liaison office as between Taipei and Peking'.³³¹ While Jackson's support of normalisation and willingness to lower the level of diplomatic recognition of Taipei was welcome to Kissinger, his criticism of détente and of Kissinger's monopoly on China policy was not. Attempting to claim a role for Congress, Jackson declared that:

I was able to explain to the highest Chinese officials the nature of the American

³²⁸ Memcon between Henry Kissinger and Zhou Enlai, 14 November 1973, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Far East, Secretary Kissinger's Conversations in Beijing, November 1973, Box 100, NPMP, NARA II.

³²⁹ Memcon between Henry Kissinger and Huang Zhen, 24 June 1974, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Country Files, Far East, China Exchanges, April 1–August 8, 1974, Box 96, NPMP, NARA II.

³³⁰ Press release by the office of Senator Henry Jackson, 8 July 1974, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 6, Hugh Scott Papers.

³³¹ *ibid.*

decision-making process and the increasing importance of Congress in foreign policy matters. I believe that the US-China relationship must be strengthened by moving beyond contacts between a limited number of personalities to a more institutionalized process and a far wider range of exchanges and other relationships.³³²

Jackson's support for lowering the level of diplomatic relations with Taipei and upgrading relations with Beijing - essentially switching the current arrangement, was not widely supported in Congress, where the dominant view was that relations with Taipei should not be downgraded at all. It did, however, evidence at least a small amount of movement within Congress in the direction of Beijing's position on normalisation.

Debate Over Taiwan and the Process of Normalisation

The initial opening to China had enjoyed broad, bipartisan support within Congress, and support from much of the media, from academia, and the business community. As Mike Mansfield explained in December 1973, Nixon had 'proceeded from a base of assured support in the Congress'.³³³ Mansfield's chief of staff, Frank Valeo, echoed his boss's words, describing the national political consensus in favour of rapprochement by writing that, 'The shift in China policy sat well with the American electorate'.³³⁴ The path toward full normalisation, however, due largely to what one prominent House Member termed the 'Gordian Knot of our relations with mainland China', the issue of Taiwan, would prove much more difficult.³³⁵ As Senator Thomas Eagleton (D-MO) stated of the initial rapprochement during Nixon's trip, 'This . . . may be

³³² *ibid.*

³³³ Senate floor statement by Mike Mansfield, 22 December 1973, *Congressional Record*.

³³⁴ Francis Valeo, *Mike Mansfield, Majority Leader: A Different Kind of Senate, 1961-1976* (Armonk, New York, 1999), p.240.

³³⁵ Policy memorandum from office of Representative Donald Fraser, 23 July 1970, Box 34, Location 147.G.11.1B, Donald Fraser Papers.

the easy part'.³³⁶ The souring of Sino-American relations due largely to Washington's failure to follow through on its promises to Beijing and the course the debate within Washington over normalisation over the next several years would prove Senator Eagleton's concern to be well placed. The disconnect between White House and Congressional attitudes toward Taiwan was at the heart of the matter.

In 1972 and 1973 several House panels held hearings in which various aspects of the relationship with Taiwan were addressed, as well as the issue of the strategic implications of the opening to China. The subcommittees were not convinced that the strategic benefits of the opening to China would justify cutting ties with Taiwan, a conviction that set them on a collision course with the White House regarding normalisation with Beijing. Nixon had seemed confident in February 1972 of his ability to convince the Congress to allow a complete severing of military and diplomatic ties with Taiwan. Nixon and Kissinger's treatment of Taiwan and concessions to Beijing indicate that they would, indeed, have been willing to allow Beijing a free hand with Taiwan had they believed that Congress would have allowed them to get away with it.

Both Beijing's demands and Nixon's concessions were unknown to the Congress in early 1972. The increasing access of Members of Congress to Chinese leaders as a result of the programme of Congressional trips to China, however, resulted in a gradual learning process whereby Members became aware of Beijing's demands for normalisation and began to wrestle with the implications. In July 1972 House Members took note of a more explicit delineation of Chinese expectations regarding Taiwan that went 'far beyond the careful ambiguities of the February 28 communiqué'. Zhou Enlai had at first, as pointed out by Selig Harrison in the *Los Angeles Times*, 'pointedly avoided explicit

³³⁶ Press release from the office of Senator Thomas Eagleton for the week of 28 February–3 March 1972, Accession WUNP4720, Box 186, Thomas Eagleton Papers.

demands for the abrogation of the US-Taiwan security treaty or the termination of US diplomatic ties with Taipei'.³³⁷ This was changing. Harrison noted that 'China is now saying bluntly that a complete American break with Taiwan must precede the normalization of Sino-US relations'.³³⁸ Representative Robert Leggett (D-CA) responded:

It should not be inferred that the severance of diplomatic ties with the Taiwan Government is being promulgated. Even with our formal agreements, the friendship between the US and Nationalist China has endured too long to even consider this as a possibility. Our course of action should be to progress instead, in a direction which would ensure both the normalization of our Sino-American relations and the independence of Taiwan. It is possible to move toward both goals at the same time.³³⁹

Both the Nationalists on Taiwan and the Communists on the Mainland believed, as the Shanghai Communiqué had acknowledged, Taiwan to be part of China, and each rejected the concept of an independent Taiwan. Nixon and Kissinger had pledged to Zhou and Mao that they would not support such a move. Yet Members of Congress and Congressional subcommittees would repeatedly return to this theme throughout the next several years, seeing an independent Taiwan as a means of granting finality to the long-running issue of Taiwan's status. Such sentiments worried Beijing, as evidenced by the very negative reaction to Warren Magnuson's hint during a dinner in Beijing that perhaps Taiwan should be independent.

From the announcement of the Shanghai Communiqué onward the Chinese gradually increased the pressure on the White House to fulfil its promises regarding

³³⁷ Selig Harrison, 'China's New and Tougher Line on US-Taiwan Ties', *Los Angeles Times*, 24 July 1972.

³³⁸ Selig Harrison, 'China Hits Taiwan-US Ties: Polite Silence on Issue After Nixon Visit Ends', *Washington Post*, 12 July 1972.

³³⁹ House floor statement by Robert Leggett, 25 July 1972, *Congressional Record*.

Taiwan and normalisation. At the same time, the Congress provided constant reminders to the White House and the State Department how greatly it valued Washington's diplomatic and security ties with Taiwan. Broad support existed for normalisation with the Mainland, as long as that normalisation did not necessitate the breaking of the relationship with Taiwan. Kissinger was left, therefore, to attempt to find a means of moving toward full normalisation with Beijing while maintaining relations with Taipei, a difficult task made much more difficult by the disconnect between Beijing's expectations, which were created by Nixon and Kissinger's promises, and by the expectations of most of the Congress, reinforced by very different White House assurances, which was that ties with Taiwan would not be sacrificed for the sake of normalisation with the Mainland.

As many Members recognised, while giving lip service to a one China policy, Washington was pursuing a *de facto* two Chinas policy.³⁴⁰ Kissinger was hoping that Beijing's concerns about the Soviet Union would cause Chinese leaders to ignore the issue of Taiwan for some time, and perhaps even establish full diplomatic relations with Washington while allowing it to maintain ties with Taipei. Pursuant to their promises in Beijing, Kissinger and Nixon began to distance the United States from Taiwan little by little, gradually withdrawing US military forces and instituting an informal ban on high level meetings with Nationalist officials. At the same time, however, US-ROC military cooperation continued (the Pentagon remained strongly supportive of the relationship with Taiwan).^{341 342}

By early 1973 Senate liberals were pressing for full normalisation. And even though they were willing to go much further than many others within Congress in terms

³⁴⁰ House floor statement by Richard Hanna, 20 February 1973, *Congressional Record*.

³⁴¹ Military journals contained a constant string of articles emphasising Taiwan's strategic value to the United States, questioning that of Mainland China, and attacking the move toward normalisation with Beijing. See the article by Colonel Angus Fraser in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 1973; see also the article by James Hessman in *Seapower*, November 1973.

³⁴² Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.61.

of de-recognition of Taiwan, their calls for normalisation were always tempered by the condition that Taiwan's security must be assured – it could not be placed in a position in which it would just collapse or be forced to reunify with the Mainland.³⁴³ On 21 February, while Kissinger was in Beijing negotiating the establishment of joint Liaison Offices with Zhou Enlai, Ted Kennedy introduced a bill calling for full normalisation with China. Kennedy's bill was willing to 'accept the Government of the PRC as the sole legitimate Government of China', and 'reaffirm the commitments contained in the Cairo Declaration of 1943 and the Potsdam Declaration of 1945 that the island of Taiwan shall be restored to China'.³⁴⁴ He also, however, called for 'the peaceful reunification of Taiwan with mainland China' and declared that 'we should make a unilateral guarantee of the security of the people on Taiwan until peaceful reunification has been achieved'.³⁴⁵ Kennedy's resolution was referred to the Foreign Relations Committee, from which it never emerged. However, the resolution did receive support from other liberals, illustrating the fact that some support did exist among Congressional liberals for normalisation that involved de-recognition of Taiwan and the formal breaking of the Mutual Security Treaty, as long as a continuing American security guarantee took its place ensuring that Taipei was not forced to reunify with the Mainland on Beijing's terms. Kissinger knew that the Chinese would not have accepted a unilateral American security guarantee for Taiwan, yet even liberals such as Kennedy were unwilling to go so far as to allow Beijing a completely free hand with Taiwan.

The announcement shortly after Kennedy's speech that Kissinger and Zhou had agreed to establish joint Liaison Offices was greeted with approval by liberals and

³⁴³ Senate floor statement by Edward Brooke, 1 February 1973, Box 549, Edward Brooke Papers.

³⁴⁴ Senate Resolution 68.

³⁴⁵ Senate floor statement by Edward Kennedy, 21 February 1973, *Congressional Record*.

cautious approval by conservatives.³⁴⁶ It appeared to validate Kissinger's claim, made in internal White House discussions, that the Chinese were more concerned about the Soviet Union than they were about regaining Taiwan. The establishment of liaison offices, which were *de facto* if not *de jure* embassies, was seen as evidence that the Chinese would accept diplomatic relations with the United States even while Washington maintained diplomatic relations with Taipei, contributing to hopes that full normalisation might be achieved while diplomatic ties with Taiwan continued.

The Nixon Administration initially hoped to be able to establish liaison offices, which were to have all of the legal rights and diplomatic privileges of official embassies, without the involvement of the Congress. Administration attorneys, however, informed the White House that in the absence of formal recognition legislative action was necessary in order to guarantee the diplomatic immunities and various other rights and privileges that would be necessary for a fully functioning diplomatic entity. The need for legislation was unwelcome by the White House, which was concerned that it not give conservatives in Congress a vehicle through which to express support for Taiwan and criticism of mainland China through innumerable amendments.³⁴⁷ Finding no way around the requirement for legislation, however, White House and State Department congressional liaison officers successfully lobbied conservatives (and all others who might be tempted to use the legislation to express their opinions on Sino-American relations and normalisation) to allow the legislation to go forward unencumbered by extraneous amendments.³⁴⁸

In mid March the White House turned to two unlikely allies in the Senate, William Fulbright and Mike Mansfield, to get the legislation through the Senate cleanly. White

³⁴⁶ Senate floor statement by Mike Mansfield, 26 February 1973, *Congressional Record*.

³⁴⁷ Interview with Chas Freeman, 4 October 2011, Washington DC.

³⁴⁸ *ibid.*; also, interview with Tom Korologos, 29 September 2009, Washington, D.C.

House lobbying, together with the efforts of Fulbright and Mansfield, were successful. Fulbright introduced White House-authored legislation on 22 March and reported it out of the Foreign Relations Committee with no amendments, and Mansfield ensured that it was shepherded to a voice vote without debate on the Senate floor on 13 April. The House leadership, which unlike the Senate was accustomed to working closely with the White House on foreign policy issues, handled the legislation in a similar manner, reporting it out of Doc Morgan's Foreign Affairs Committee to passage by voice vote without debate in the full House on 17 April. Likely reflecting the verbiage utilised by the White House's lobbying effort, conservatives stated that they supported the legislation and its quick passage out of the belief that it 'represents no special concession to China' with regard to Taiwan.³⁴⁹ This was the last time that a move in the direction of diplomatic normalisation with China would receive such broad bipartisan support. It also marked the high water mark in the growth of the early relationship. After this point, the relationship was characterised increasingly by Chinese disappointment in the lack of progress from the American side in fulfilment of the promises made by Nixon and Kissinger.

Following Kissinger's announcement of the establishment of joint liaison offices, Senate liberals followed the pattern they had followed since 1969, challenging the Administration to move further and faster and calling for complete normalisation. Unlike the case of the initial opening to China, however, this time the liberal position was not indicative of a consensus within Congress. With a few exceptions, such as Scoop Jackson, attitudes within Congress remained essentially static toward the issue of normalisation on Beijing's terms through 1973 and 1974 due to concerns about Taiwan. From the spring of 1973 onward the White House weakened by the day as the Watergate scandal absorbed

³⁴⁹ Harry Byrd, Jr., letter to a constituent, 22 June 1973, MSS 10320-a,-b, Box 266, Harry Byrd, Jr., Papers, Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

ever greater amounts of its attention and foreclosed its ability to take any major foreign policy initiative, particularly one that would require so much attention to the domestic political scene. Nixon therefore had no political capital to expend on trying to sway the views of the many in Congress who were protective of Taiwan, and Kissinger put forth no effort to do so. Far more widespread than liberal advocacy for full normalisation with the Mainland and de-recognition of Taiwan was the misgivings expressed by the majority regarding such a route. Senator Harry Byrd, Jr., expressed the dominant sentiment when he responded to the call of Senate liberals by saying, 'Personally, as much as I want to see cordial relations established between Red China and the US, I would hope that we would not throw over-board our long-time Chinese friends in Taiwan'.³⁵⁰

Significant numbers in both the House and the Senate went on record as opposing normalisation with the Mainland at the cost of ties with Taiwan. In the House, conservative Members whose suspicions had not abated sought to foreclose the possibility that Nixon and Kissinger would break ties with Taiwan by introducing a series of concurrent resolutions 'providing for continuing close relations with the ROC', which received broad support.³⁵¹ Concern was expressed in the introduction of these resolutions that the breaking of ties with Taiwan after years of repeated commitments and numerous formal agreements would irreparably harm American credibility as a reliable ally, and hence that normalisation with China on such terms would harm the national interest far more than normalisation would help it.³⁵² In the Senate, a bipartisan group of twenty two Senators, including those who had earlier aggressively advocated for an opening to China, cosponsored another concurrent resolution, S.Con.Res. 52, 'Expressing the sense of Congress relative to friendship with the Republic of China'. Numerous similar concurrent

³⁵⁰ Senate floor statement by Harry Byrd, Jr., 1 March 1973, *Congressional Record*.

³⁵¹ One example was H.Con.Res. 263, introduced by Representative Trent Lott (R-MS), 12 June 1973.

³⁵² House floor statement by Trent Lott, 19 February 1974, *Congressional Record*.

resolutions in both the House and the Senate warned Kissinger not to break ties to Taiwan for the sake of normalisation with Beijing.

Realising that, at least for the foreseeable future, it would be impossible to move forward on full normalisation along the lines discussed with Zhou Enlai in 1972, when Kissinger travelled to Beijing in November 1973 he made an offer to Zhou in which the United States would establish formal diplomatic relations with Beijing while retaining diplomatic and military ties with Taipei, with the understanding that as soon as it was feasible domestically, Nixon would move to break those ties. Shocked to be receiving such a proposal after having believed that the White House had already committed to meeting Beijing's demands, Mao gave Kissinger a dressing down after Zhou had relayed Kissinger's offer.³⁵³

Frustrated by what he viewed as Congressional obstruction of the path of normalisation, Kissinger attempted for Nixon's last few months in office to keep the relationship with China moving forward by attempting to create progress in other areas so that the perception of forward momentum in the Sino-American relationship would keep the pressure on the Soviets. Mike Mansfield had noted earlier in the year that, 'Until the Taiwan situation is clarified, we shall find ourselves probably looking primarily to trade and other exchanges for the cement of relations with the new China'.³⁵⁴ Kissinger was, indeed, limited to that from late 1973 onward. He hoped that attempts to increase trade and to strengthen the anti-Soviet aspect of the relationship would help maintain a sense of forward momentum. However, in each of these areas he would also be disappointed, with significant constraints on the growth of trade (importantly including Congress's

³⁵³ Memcon between Henry Kissinger, Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong, 12 November 1973, RG 59, PPS, Box 372, NARA II.

³⁵⁴ Speech by Senator Mike Mansfield, 'The New Congress and the New China: An Agenda for Action', before the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., 16 March 1973, read into the *Congressional Record* 19 March 1973 by Senator George Aiken.

unwillingness to pass legislation authorising MFN trade status for China in the absence of such an extension to the Soviets), and the Chinese unwilling to allow him to play on their fears of possible Soviet invasion.

Small movements of opinion within Congress were seen in 1974 in relation to attitudes toward normalisation, but these were isolated instances. Scoop Jackson's July 1974 announcement of support for a normalisation agreement that saw the United States maintain an embassy in Beijing and a liaison office in Taipei was a case in point. Although Jackson reaffirmed the American commitment to Taiwan's security, Members of Congress who normally agreed with Jackson's foreign policy preferences came out strongly against his proposal.³⁵⁵ By the time of Nixon's resignation, the vast majority in Congress remained opposed to normalisation at the cost of breaking ties with Taipei notwithstanding the support of Senate liberals and Scoop Jackson for this type of move, and Kissinger, unsure of what course to take, had made no further approaches to the Chinese since the rejection of his November 1973 proposal. The fundamental difference between Nixon and Kissinger's willingness to sacrifice Taiwan for the sake of their strategic objectives and the unwillingness of the vast majority of the Congress to do the same had made forward progress in the area of normalisation impossible, and had contributed to the souring of Sino-American relations.

Congress Wrestles With the Strategic Implications of the Opening

The triangular game was the primary purpose of Sino-American rapprochement in Nixon and Kissinger's conception of the relationship. However, they consistently denied this intent when discussing their China strategy with Congressional leaders, some of whom, ironically, had taken part in the hearings several years previously that had publicised the strategic opportunity afforded by the Sino-Soviet conflict before Nixon or

³⁵⁵ House floor statement by John Ashbrook, 10 July 1974, *Congressional Record*.

Kissinger had recognised such an opportunity. As Kissinger wrote to Nixon, 'the facts speak for themselves', and there was wide recognition on Capitol Hill of the triangular dynamic and that the opening to China would likely yield benefits in the Soviet-American relationship.³⁵⁶ Congress was not aware, however, of the specific way in which the White House sought to play China and the Soviets off against one another.

The focus of the new Sino-American relationship in Nixon and Kissinger's conception was on the coercive role it played. The goal was to provide just enough pressure on the Soviet Union through the threat of Sino-American collaboration to cause the Soviets to be more flexible in the three major forums of Soviet American dialogue then ongoing, as well as to prod Moscow to compete with Beijing for Washington's favour generally, while not providing so much pressure as to elicit a counterproductive Soviet reaction.³⁵⁷ At the same time, Washington needed to convince Beijing that the United States was dedicated to containing Soviet power. The White House was convinced that, in order to be effective, this strategy could not be made subject to a public debate. The reason for secrecy and the misleading of Congress was more compelling, therefore, than that used in relation to Taiwan. By pursuing this pattern of deception, Kissinger and Nixon were able to play the two communist giants against one another with no Congressional interference. This approach also ensured, however, that there would be no one to question their assumptions.

The White House was concerned that many on the Hill, particularly Congressional liberals, would view such a triangular game as dangerous, given its potential to anger the

³⁵⁶ House floor statement by Lee Hamilton, 9 February 1972, *Congressional Record*; Interview of Senator Edward Brooke in the Senate Cloakroom, 20 June 1973, Box 563, Edward Brooke Papers; Talking points for Senator Hugh Scott, 22 April 1972, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 4, Hugh Scott Papers; and Press release by the office of Senator Thomas Eagleton for the week of 11-15 December 1972, Accession WUNP4720, Box 187, Thomas Eagleton Papers.

³⁵⁷ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, (Boston, 1982), p.54.

Soviet Union and to alienate Beijing if it came to see itself as being used. It was also concerned that sharing this information with even a limited number of Congressional leaders would lead to a leak, which would undercut the White House ability to pursue this strategy. When meeting informally with the SFRC shortly after his return from China with Nixon in March 1972, Kissinger, while acknowledging that 'since his first trip to China, relations with the Soviets have improved', went on to tell them that 'it would be extremely short-sighted to think that the Administration was attempting to play off the PRC against the Soviets because, first, we couldn't do it if we wanted, and second, that even if we could do it, it would be a great mistake'.³⁵⁸ In fact, playing the Chinese off against the Soviets and vice-versa was precisely what Nixon and Kissinger were seeking to do.³⁵⁹

Within the Nixon White House, while the tactical issues had been addressed, such as the fact that the United States would attempt to use its new relationship with China as leverage over the Soviet Union in order to further détente and strengthen Soviet-American relations, more fundamental questions such as whether the development of a *de facto* coalition with China, even a limited one, was consistent with the goal of furthering US-Soviet détente, and what the precise role of Sino-American relations would be with regard to US strategy towards Moscow, were not answered.³⁶⁰ Later, as détente faltered and an increasing number of people both inside and outside of government became involved in the debate over the role of China in US-Soviet relations, Congress began to make a greater contribution to the debate. With the limited information to which it had access, however, various Congressional bodies were able to address in at least a modest

³⁵⁸ National Security Council Memo, John Lehman to Henry Kissinger, 'Notes From Session With the SFRC, March 28', 1 May 1972. NSC Files, Subject Files, Box 316, NPMP, NARA II.

³⁵⁹ As one example, see Nixon to Kissinger, 22 September 1969, NSC Files, Kissinger Office Files, Transition, Kissinger Administrative and Staff Files, Box 6, NPMP, NARA II.

³⁶⁰ Banning Garrett, *The 'China Card' And Its Origins: US Bureaucratic Politics and the Strategic Triangle*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 1983, pp.27-8.

way some of the larger issues that did not seem to have been addressed within the Executive Branch. Congress's attempt to address these issues were not appreciated by Kissinger, or later by Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security advisor. However, such attempts to question the larger suppositions and unanswered questions that lay behind each Administration's policy in this area supports the argument that Congress's contribution on the area of foreign policy is many times one of raising the 'big picture issues' that those in the Executive Branch, who have become wedded to a given policy view, and/or are so at the mercy of constant crises that they do not have sufficient time to reflect on many of the larger issues underpinning their preferred policies, do not consider.

Despite the fact that Congress had only a limited understanding of how the Nixon White House was hoping to use the opening to China, and, hence, the path that relations with China were taking, the interest shown in this aspect of the relationship illustrated Congress's desire to be involved in the policy-making process in this area. Through hearings and debate and comments made on the floor of the House and Senate, Members contributed to the public education and debate over these issues that were so important to American strategy and the course of the Cold War. While the SFRC expended its energy continuing the attempt to exonerate the Truman Administration's record on China through hearings in early 1972, the House became the first chamber to attempt to examine the strategic impact of Sino-American rapprochement when the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee undertook hearings on 'The New China Policy: Its Impact on the United States and Asia' that May.

The staff who created and shaped these hearings were less sanguine than were Nixon and Kissinger regarding the effects of the Sino-American rapprochement on America's global position as well as on the overall global balance of power. Henry Lloyd,

the subcommittee staff member responsible for organising the hearings, was concerned that Nixon and Kissinger had sacrificed Taiwan for the sake of strategic objectives that were overly-optimistic. Lloyd and his colleagues sought to dampen what they believed to be the White House's overly-optimistic conception of the impact of that Sino-American rapprochement would have on the global power structure, arguing that not as much would change, implicitly challenging Nixon's characterisation of his visit as 'the week that changed the world'.³⁶¹ The subcommittee invited witnesses with unimpeachable credentials to question Nixon's claim in order to make their political point as credibly as possible. As Lloyd had planned, the witnesses, in broad agreement, provided evidence that Sino-American rapprochement, while a positive development, had also resulted, in combination with the American withdrawal from South Vietnam and concerns about possible American abandonment of its commitments to Taiwan, in substantial concern among Washington's Asian allies in the value of American commitments. The importance of American credibility, therefore, normalisation was pursued, was one of the key factors highlighted.

The change in attitude on the part of the House Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee between 1969, when it had believed that the United States should pursue a sort of tacit alliance with China aimed at containing Soviet power, and 1972, when it attempted to minimise the strategic value of Nixon's move, is striking. The difference can partially be explained by a change in staff. In 1969 Jack Sullivan, who favoured opening relations with China and sought to wean the subcommittee chairman, Clement Zablocki, away from the Committee of One Million, was subcommittee chief of staff. In 1972, Zablocki had moved to the chairmanship of the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and had taken his staff members, Sullivan and Marion Czarnecki, with him. The

³⁶¹ Interview with Henry Lloyd, Washington, D.C., 29 September 2009.

Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific was now chaired by Robert Nix (D-PA), and the senior subcommittee staff member, Henry Lloyd, while supporting the opening to China, was also much more protective of the relationship with Taipei and more ambivalent regarding the strategic value of the opening. It is also likely that sentiment in the Congress, while supportive of the opening to China, was still angry about the undignified manner in which Taiwan had been ejected from the UN and Beijing seated in its stead. As the decade progressed and the international climate worsened, Congressional sentiment would become more positive in its assessment of the potential strategic value to Washington of military ties with Beijing, yet remained just as protective of Taiwan.

While the Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee was questioning the strategic value of the opening to China, Zablocki's new subcommittee, the Subcommittee on National Security Policy, also held a series of hearings examining the strategic implications of the opening from May through August 1972. Zablocki's purpose and point of view differed from that of the Nix Subcommittee. Zablocki and his staff sought to question the assumptions and logical underpinnings of Nixon's implementation of the White House's new security structure. Their intent was not to challenge Nixon's basic strategy in Asia, with which they agreed, but to ensure that its implementation would be successful, illustrating their belief in the constructive role that can be played by the Congress in policy formulation and the Congressional conviction that public debate of major policy shifts result in a policy that is ultimately stronger and enjoys greater Congressional and public support than one that has not been the subject of an open debate.³⁶² Just after Nixon returned from China, Sullivan wrote a memo to Zablocki

³⁶² Interview with John Sullivan, 1 October 2009, Alexandria, Virginia. See also Clement Zablocki to Dean Rusk letter, 2 March 1972, in which Rusk is invited to testify and Zablocki writes that he seeks witnesses who can question assumptions and think 'in new and imaginative terms', Series 2.2, Box 2, Clement Zablocki Papers.

outlining the subcommittee attitude toward the new White House strategy and a plan to examine the new strategy in public hearings:

[The] Nixon-Kissinger policy may prove to be a more rational, less-expensive, more peaceful way for the US to conduct policy in the Pacific. . . Nixon and Kissinger have, so far, played this thing so close to the vest that none of us can be sure that they have thought through the many problems and sticking points which could arise in a new system or in the period of transition leading to a new system. If that work is not done, we are heading for even rougher times than we are now experiencing - rather than Nixon's generation of peace. Your forthcoming hearings could be a forum for obtaining expert opinion on some of the ramifications of the new system, and getting some of the information in the open for public debate. Further, you could use the current hearings on the State Department authorization to urge that the necessary back-up work be done there . . . to ensure that the new policy can be implemented intelligently and successfully.³⁶³

Sullivan's memo, in addition to affirming the subcommittee's support for Nixon's new Asian strategy, also expressed concern that White House use of secrecy had been so effective that Congress, particularly the relevant Congressional bodies such as Zablocki's, had been unable to gauge whether the White House had adequately considered the full implications of its new Asian strategy. Another Member, echoing Sullivan's perspective on Congress's responsibility to examine the new policy, noted that:

There has been . . . virtually no cogent examination of the political assumptions and purposes of the Nixon-Kissinger grand design for the reorientation of American foreign policy, or of the place of the Peking initiative in that design.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ John Sullivan to Clement Zablocki, 3 March 1972, Series FA-3.1, Box 3, Clement Zablocki Papers.

³⁶⁴ House floor statement by Phil Crane, 19 March 1974, *Congressional Record*, citing an article by James Dornan in the February 1974 issue of *The Alternative*.

The subcommittee's extensive hearings were held from May through August 1972 and featured numerous high-profile witnesses. The introduction to the hearing report, authored by Zablocki, noted that the hearings provided 'more questions than answers', explaining that the role of the hearings was to initiate a public debate through asking the right questions.³⁶⁵ The hearings were meant to start an ongoing conversation about the new departure in Asian policy and, together with the other hearings examining this aspect of the relationship, they did so.³⁶⁶

Congressional inquiry into the meaning of the new relationship for broader United States foreign policy was undertaken in the context of a severe weakening of the Executive Branch that was brought about both by the debilitating impact of the Watergate scandal on Executive Branch authority, and by the increasing Congressional assertiveness in the wake of Vietnam. The crippling of the presidency due to Watergate created an opening that was successfully used by those in Congress seeking to challenge Executive Branch authority in order to increase Congressional power over foreign and national security policy. The Executive progressively weakened throughout 1973 and 1974, and Congressional assertiveness grew proportionately. From the summer of 1973 onwards, such legislation as the War Powers Act, and the Congressional use of its power of the purse to cut off funding for American military operations in Southeast Asia and to cut the annual defence budget severely curtailed the freedom to control foreign and national security policy relatively unhindered by Congress. This dynamic would shape Executive-Legislative relations through the remainder of the decade, and create conditions within which Nixon's successors would need to work much more cooperatively with Congress if

³⁶⁵ Clement Zablocki, in the Introduction (p.vi) to 'National Security Policy and the Changing World Power Alignment', Hearing-Symposium Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1972).

³⁶⁶ Telephone interview with George Berdes, a subcommittee staff member who helped organise the hearings, 30 October 2009.

they were to achieve their policy goals. This trend would accelerate shortly after Nixon resigned when the Watergate scandal decimated Republican ranks in Congress in the midterm elections of 1974, giving Democrats more than a two to one majority in each chamber and seeing the entrance of an extremely liberal, activist freshman class of Democrats determined to shape policy.

The conversation begun by the various hearings on Sino-American relations continued through 1973 and 1974 as various Congressional panels considered the strategic aspects of the new relationship from differing perspectives. Beginning in September 1973 and continuing through March 1974, for example, the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs held hearings on the competition between the Soviet Union and China focusing on petroleum as a strategic issue and linking Sino-Soviet competition to global security trends. The House was much more active in pursuing these issues than was the Senate during this period. In the Senate, although individual members expressed interest in these issues, no hearings were held. The various House panels attempted in a preliminary manner to address issues such as that of the nature of the impact of the Sino-American relationship on the US-Soviet relationship – a key determination necessary to inform policy and an issue that would grow in importance as relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated throughout the decade. Their attempts to examine policy were necessarily limited by their lack of knowledge of White House intentions. Neither the Nixon nor the Ford White Houses themselves undertook a study of these vital questions, as China policy in both was tightly controlled Henry Kissinger, who did not wish to share his policy-making prerogatives.

Unaddressed by the Congress during 1972 and 1973 were any of the issues that were related to the development of a *de facto* coalition with China aimed at curbing

Soviet power, which was what Nixon and Kissinger were pursuing, albeit in a very limited form. There were three main reasons for this. One was the fact that the Congress was unaware that this was the strategy being pursued by the White House. A second reason was the fact that an alliance of any sort with Maoist China would have been an alien concept to most policy-makers at the time - the idea would not have been something that would have been considered a viable possibility. A third reason was the fact that with American involvement in the war in Vietnam ending and US-Soviet détente seemingly burgeoning, the security environment appeared benign, creating little incentive for Members to believe it to be in Washington's interest to create an informal alliance of any kind with China.³⁶⁷ The belief that the security environment was relatively benign, combined with a mistrust of the Pentagon in the wake of Vietnam, were two of the motivating factors behind Congressional attempts to reduce defence spending and suspicion of Pentagon programmes in the early 1970's. This attitude was to play an important role in Pentagon policy planning regarding security policy in East Asia and delay a more extensive consideration within the Nixon and Ford Administrations of the extent to which Washington should attempt to develop a security relationship with China.

As various Congressional bodies were examining the affect of Sino-American rapprochement on the international security environment, the opening salvo was fired in what would become a growing debate within the Executive Branch over the desirability of military ties with China. A young RAND Corporation analyst and China specialist named Michael Pillsbury had been approached by senior Chinese military officers attached to China's UN mission. These senior officers (who apparently were representatives of the PLA General Staff) met with Pillsbury at regular intervals for

³⁶⁷ Interview with John Sullivan, 30 June 2009, Alexandria, Virginia. Several other former Members of Congress and former senior staff affirmed Mr. Sullivan's perspective.

several years beginning in early 1973, an indication that the approval for these contacts existed at the highest level in Beijing. They informed Pillsbury that they were interested in advanced military technology, technology transfers, US intelligence studies on the Soviet military, and technology related to electronic intelligence gathering.³⁶⁸

Pillsbury immediately made these approaches known and, after each such encounter, wrote memcons that were passed to relevant officials at the CIA, the various US military intelligence offices, the State Department, the NSC and the Pentagon, where they were seen by Andrew Marshall, director of the Office of Net Assessment.^{369 370}

Marshall believed the development of Sino-American military ties would be useful in efforts to contain the Soviet Union. In an effort to build support within the Pentagon, Marshall instructed Pillsbury to author a study, based upon his conversations with the Chinese, that would examine the shape that a possible Sino-American military relationship might take.³⁷¹ The study, which was labelled L-32, was completed in March 1974, and outlined arguments in favour of beginning a limited security relationship with China involving intelligence sharing, the export of dual-use technology, both from the United States and from western allies, and possibly even the sale of US weapons systems to fill weaknesses in PLA capabilities.³⁷² This study, which will be discussed in the next chapter, was to become the basis of a presentation made to Secretary of Defence James Schlesinger later that year by the Pentagon's office of International Security Affairs, the impact of which was influenced greatly by prevailing Congressional attitudes towards national security policy.

³⁶⁸ Garrett, *The 'China Card' and its Origins*, pp.33-4. Confirmed through extensive communication with Michael Pillsbury, 2009-2011.

³⁶⁹ *ibid.*

³⁷⁰ These approaches continued for several years. See Michael Pillsbury to Richard Solomon, 27 September 1974, WHCF, Subject File, Box 13, Ford Library.

³⁷¹ Garrett, *The 'China Card' and its Origins*, pp.42, 45.

³⁷² *ibid.*, p.42. This and the above footnotes confirmed via extensive correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, 2009-2011.

Conclusion

Whereas a broad consensus had existed in Congress supporting rapprochement with China, that consensus had been based upon the belief that Washington's commitments to Taiwan were inviolable and would not be negotiated away by the White House. The direct exposure of Congress to Chinese leaders through the programme of Congressional visits to China helped to undermine Nixon and Kissinger's claims regarding what they had conceded in Beijing vis-a-vis Taiwan and normalisation by making plain the nature of Chinese expectations. The realisation on the part of Congress that it had not accurately understood the nature of Chinese expectations changed Congressional perceptions of the sacrifice that would be required to fully normalise relations with Beijing, and gave Congress pause as it wrestled with the implications.

Congress had been able to claim authority from a drastically weakened Executive over important aspects of foreign and national security policy in 1973 and 1974, and Kissinger's promotion to Secretary of State improved Congressional access to him, which should have resulted in greater influence over the development of China policy. On the one hand, the direct Congressional influence over China policy was minimal due to Kissinger's continued micromanagement of the relationship. On the other hand, strongly expressed Congressional attitudes and the inability of a weakened Nixon to bridge the gap in Congressional and White House attitudes toward Taiwan and to build any sort of consensus behind normalisation meant that the Congressional influence on the process of normalisation was great.

**CHAPTER 3: AUGUST 1974–1976 -
A LACK OF CONSENSUS OVER TAIWAN, AND CONGRESS BEGINS PUBLIC
DEBATE OVER SINO-AMERICAN MILITARY RELATIONS**

Richard Nixon's resignation and Gerald Ford's ascendance to the presidency seemed to portend a possible reinvigoration of American foreign policy. Yet nothing had changed with regard to the fundamental challenge facing the path to normalisation of Sino-American relations. Ford inherited Nixon's foreign policy and his Secretary of State, and also inherited Nixon's challenge on Taiwan and China. Despite starting with a clean slate, Ford, who as a longtime Congressional leader understood Congress better than most, was in no position to confront the issue with conservatives, needing their support to win nomination to the presidency in his own right and facing a nomination challenge on his right from Ronald Reagan.

Although one of the first foreign policy acts of the Ford Administration was to communicate to the Chinese that the new president was just as committed to the normalisation of Sino-American relations as had been his predecessor (and the Administration attempted over the next couple of years to move toward that goal), a continuation of the *de facto* 'one China, one Taiwan' policy that tried the patience of the Chinese leaders continued to be forced upon the Administration by a reluctant Congress. Congressional debate over China became increasingly divisive during the years of the Ford Administration. The issues of Taiwan, the terms on which normalisation of relations with mainland China should be pursued, a potential military relationship with Beijing, and the relationship between China policy and policy toward the Soviet Union were all major areas in which consensus was elusive.

This chapter will focus on the two most important aspects of the domestic political debate over the new relationship during Gerald Ford's tenure in the White House. The

first is the debate over Sino-American normalisation and the nature of the American relationship with Taiwan. The realisation on the part of Congress that Chinese expectations regarding Taiwan and the path to Sino-American normalisation differed greatly from what Members had been told by Nixon and Kissinger, and the fundamental difference between Congressional and Executive Branch attitudes toward Taiwan, continued to block the path to normalisation during Ford's presidency. The use on the part of Chinese leaders of militant language regarding the forceful takeover of Taiwan reinforced Congressional reticence to support normalisation on Beijing's terms. Adding to the difficulty was the rise of conservatism within the Republican Party and a growing national challenge to Ford and Kissinger's foreign policy across the board. Ford, despite his years of experience as a Congressional leader, did not have Nixon's ability to convince and cajole conservatives in Congress into following his lead on normalisation. Nixon himself would have faced an extremely difficult task in this regard partly due to the fact that he created difficulties for himself by telling Congress one thing and the Chinese another. Given enough time and a strong presidency, Nixon may have proved capable of moving Congressional sentiment in the direction he wished it to go. Ford proved utterly unable to do so, having inherited a weakened Executive Branch, holding a weak position within his own party, and being unable to build a case for normalisation that could win Congressional support.

The second focus of this chapter is the strategic implications of the new relationship with China, and the Congressional debate over the possibility of a security relationship with China having as its aim the containment of Soviet power. Congress was as divided on this issue as it was on the issue of normalisation. Congress's initial impact on Executive Branch consideration of potential Sino-American security ties was to

constrain such cooperation as a policy option in 1974 due to Congress's known hostility to the Pentagon, to defence spending, and particularly to a muscular American military posture in Asia. The deteriorating international security environment in 1975 and 1976, however, began to alter Congressional attitudes toward defence spending, as well as toward potential Sino-American security cooperation meant to offset growing Soviet power. Ultimately, Congressional consideration of the idea of Sino-American security ties, sparked by publication of an article in a policy journal in October 1975, played a significant role in legitimising a concept that sounded radical when first suggested, making it sound plausible and increasing the likelihood that a cautious national security bureaucracy would later consider the idea as a legitimate policy option.

The Continuing Debate Over Taiwan and Normalisation: Militant Language From Beijing and An Acute Lack of Consensus

Most of Gerald Ford's Congressional career had been spent advocating for strong support for Taiwan and opposing recognition of and UN membership for mainland China. In this respect, he was no different from most other Members of Congress during the 1950's and much of the 1960's. Like many Republicans, however, Ford had supported a rapprochement with China out of a hope that it could help the United States in Vietnam³⁷³, as well as the belief that it was a farsighted move to develop better communication with a nation that would only grow in importance in the future.³⁷⁴ Like most Members, however, he remained strongly supportive of Taiwan,³⁷⁵ and promised constituents that Nixon 'is not going to "let down" Taiwan'.³⁷⁶ Once in the White House, however, Ford's words and actions raised fears among many of his former colleagues that he would do just that. A

³⁷³ Gerald Ford to a constituent, 28 July 1971, Gerald Ford Congressional Papers, Series B, Legislative File, Box B189, Ford Library.

³⁷⁴ Gerald Ford to a constituent, 26 October 1971, Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Gerald Ford to a constituent, 30 November 1972, Ibid., and 7 March 1972, Ibid., Box B219; see also 'House Backers of Aid for Taiwan Knew of Surplus Jets', *Washington Post*, 14 January 1970.

³⁷⁶ Gerald Ford to a constituent, 3 March 1972, Ibid., Box B219.

few days after taking office, Kissinger prepared a briefing paper for Ford explaining the commitments that he and Nixon had made in Beijing and need to make progress in meeting Beijing's expectations.³⁷⁷ Although not part of that briefing paper, it seems impossible to escape the conclusion that upon taking over the presidency Kissinger also would have confided in him the details of the Sino-Soviet-American triangular strategy that he and Nixon had been pursuing, and Kissinger's perception of the importance of forward momentum in the Sino-American relationship to the success of Soviet-American détente. Ford inherited Nixon's foreign policy, and his nearly complete dependence upon Kissinger, particularly in the early days of his presidency, for foreign policy guidance certainly helped to ensure the new president's changed perspective on Taiwan.

Gerald Ford's first statement to the Chinese as president was to reaffirm the strategic vision of his predecessor, to reaffirm the direction of China policy established by Nixon and Kissinger, and to pledge that he would continue to pursue normalisation. Ford, however, until recently a Congressional leader himself, was acutely aware of the danger of making a major foreign policy move, such as cutting ties with Taipei and recognising Beijing in its stead, in the absence of a consensus in Congress willing to support such a move. Also, the rise in Congressional assertiveness that had begun in 1973 continued unabated after Ford's accession to power, making relations with Congress increasingly difficult. The voter backlash against the Watergate scandal decimated Republican ranks in Congress, bringing to the House of Representatives a large freshman class of very liberal, very activist Members who successfully sought to diminish the authority of committee chairman and devolve power downward so that the rank and file, such as themselves, could have a greater voice in policy formation. As Robert Johnson has noted, this attempt to give themselves greater influence over policy backfired as the resulting diffusion of

³⁷⁷ 'Briefing Paper for the President', 14 August 1974, Box 376, SPC/SP Winston Lord, NARA II.

lines of authority in the House ultimately diluted that body's ability to effectively shape policy.³⁷⁸ However, it did build on the existing dynamic of Congressional assertiveness, and, therefore, heavily shaped the environment within which the Ford Administration attempted to shape policy itself.

A harsher tone on the part of Beijing made Ford's task of attempting to move Congress toward acceptance of Beijing's terms for normalisation even more difficult, particularly since China used the new, harsh language in meetings with Congressional visitors, most of whom were already reticent to cut ties with Taiwan. China's leaders now believed themselves to be in a superior negotiating position vis-a-vis Washington because US-Soviet détente was encountering difficulty and Sino-Soviet tensions were somewhat lessened, with the Chinese no longer believing a Soviet invasion to be a realistic possibility. For these reasons, in addition to the rise of leftist radicals to positions of prominence in Beijing, the Chinese attitude in talks with Members of Congress was uncompromising and militant. In talks with Kissinger, the Chinese held firmly to their demands for complete breakage of American diplomatic and military ties with Taiwan, rebuffing his argument that Congressional and public opposition to normalisation on such terms foreclosed the ability of the new Administration to pursue normalisation in the absence of a Chinese willingness to compromise.

Until September 1974 much of the Congress had hoped that a compromise with China over Taiwan might be possible. From late 1974 through 1976, however, Members travelling to Beijing encountered a militant tone regarding Taiwan that reinforced their concern for Taiwan's security and their determination that it not be left at the mercy of Beijing. The Congressional delegation that travelled to Beijing in September 1974 (led by William Fulbright, who had finally been given a slot on a delegation to China in his last

³⁷⁸ Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War*, pp.205-6.

three months in office) was faced with the most uncompromising Chinese statements to date regarding Taiwan, the harshness of which shocked the Members. Meeting with Vice Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua, conservative Republican Senator Hiram Fong (who was the only ethnically Chinese member of the Senate) expressed the hope that negotiations between the Mainland and the Nationalists on Taiwan would bear fruit and lessen tensions. Qiao responded that if normalisation was to take place Washington would need to abrogate the Mutual Defense Treaty, pairing that pronouncement with the declaration that 'peaceful reunification is an impossibility'.³⁷⁹ Kissinger and Nixon had heard Mao and Zhou say this in 1972 and 1973 privately, but this was the first time that Members of Congress were faced with such a statement of Beijing's uncompromising position. Clement Zablocki, next in line to the chairmanship of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, seemed not to believe what he had heard, asking what was the alternative to peaceful reunification. Qiao coldly replied, 'It is simple logic. The opposite of a peaceful solution is a non-peaceful solution'.³⁸⁰ The bluntness and militant nature of the Chinese statements angered the delegation. Even Fulbright, who had held the most benign views of China and been one of the strongest advocates of normalisation, was taken aback.

The American negotiating strength with Beijing was weakened due to the abatement of Chinese fears of a Soviet attack, which coincided with worsening Soviet-American relations. Nor did it help that Kissinger's position with the Chinese was continuing to deteriorate. Not only were the Chinese disappointed that Kissinger had reneged on the assent they believed that he and Nixon had given to their demand that Taiwan be isolated and allowed to fall into their hands, but the Fulbright delegation heard the Chinese openly ridicule Kissinger's over-used refrain that a Soviet invasion of China

³⁷⁹ USLO (Beijing) to State Department, 5 September 1974, NSA, Presidential Country Files for East Asia and the Pacific (hereafter, PCF/EAP), Box 15, Ford Library.

³⁸⁰ Tylor, *A Great Wall*, pp.186-7.

was imminent. The manner in which Kissinger had handled the Chinese, by playing on their Soviet fears, undermined his credibility and, hence, his ability to reinvigorate the relationship as the Sino-Soviet-American triangle began to deteriorate. Kissinger's credibility on Capitol Hill was likewise ebbing, handicapping any ability he may have had to move Congressional opinion toward acceptance of Chinese normalisation demands.

The most obvious way to improve the American position in the triangle and to increase American leverage over Moscow was to reinvigorate relations with China. Progress on normalisation would be the most effective way to do this, but Congressional opposition to normalisation on the terms of cutting ties with Taiwan made this task difficult. The State Department was well aware of the difficulties it faced in this regard as during the autumn of 1974 it wrestled with possible formulations that would allow for normalisation. just prior to Kissinger's November 1974 trip to Beijing, the State Department's legal advisor, George Aldrich, noted in particular the problem of attempting to gain a pledge of peaceful reunification from Beijing, writing that: 'I have Serious doubts that a solution that leaves US dependent solely upon good faith of the present and future leaders of the PRC for assurance against invasion of Taiwan will be acceptable to the American public and the Congress'.³⁸¹

Indeed, a Gallup Poll conducted in August 1974 had recorded that only eleven percent of respondents favoured full normalisation with China if breaking relations with Taiwan was required.³⁸² Public opinion polls through 1974, 1975 and 1976 continued to show support for normalisation, but not at the price of cutting ties with Taiwan. A Gallup poll in the autumn of 1975 resulted in sixty one percent of respondents favouring normalisation with China, yet only ten percent favoured normalisation if it meant de-

³⁸¹ George Aldrich to Arthur Hummel, 14 November 1974, NSA Files, Presidential Name Files, 1974-1977, Box 38, Ford Library.

³⁸² Poll results found in WHCF, Subject File, Box 12, Ford Library.

recognition of Taipei.³⁸³ Congressional attitudes, as they so often do, mirrored those of the public.

In Kissinger's talks with the Chinese in New York in October 1974 and in Beijing the next month, he attempted to convince them that Washington should not be expected to follow the Japanese formula for normalisation due to the differences between the American and Japanese relationship with Taiwan and differing domestic political situations. In Beijing, he argued that if the Chinese handled the issue inflexibly (as they had with the Fulbright delegation) and with little reference to the sensitivity of the issue in American domestic political debate, strong opposition to normalisation could arise out of the Congress just as the Congress was now challenging Kissinger's handling of US-Soviet détente:

What we have to keep in mind for our common interest is to prevent Sino-American relations from becoming an extremely contentious issue in the United States. It is not in your interest, or in that of the United States, to have emerge a Senator or Senatorial group which does to Sino-American relations what Senator Jackson has attempted to do to United States-Soviet relations.³⁸⁴

Kissinger then made an offer based upon the proposal made by Scoop Jackson the previous July, and which he had broached the previous month in New York, that Washington establish an embassy in Beijing and a liaison office in Taipei, reversing the current situation. Knowing that Congress and the public would see the cutting of the defence relationship with Taiwan as abandonment of Taiwan to coercion from the Mainland, Kissinger explained that the maintenance of the defence relationship with

³⁸³ Poll results found in MSS 10320-a,-b, Box 266, Harry Byrd, Jr. Papers, Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

³⁸⁴ Memcon between Henry Kissinger and Deng Xiaoping, 26 November 1974, China Memcons and Reports, November 25–29, 1974, Kissinger's Trip, NSA Files, Kissinger Reports on USSR, China, and Middle East Discussions, Box 2, Ford Library.

Taipei was a domestic political necessity for the United States. He believed that the Administration could eventually 'condition' public opinion so that the cutting of defence ties would be accepted, but that this would take time. 'We need a transition period for our public opinion in which this process can be accomplished without an excessive domestic strain. . . The question of the defence commitment is primarily a question of the way it can be presented politically'.³⁸⁵

He ended by reiterating his promise that if the Chinese could allow a US defence relationship with Taiwan to continue for awhile as a bow to Ford and Kissinger's domestic political difficulties, that relationship would at some point end, with the implication that Taiwan would then be vulnerable to pressure from Beijing: 'It is not a question of maintaining it for an indefinite period of time'.³⁸⁶ Kissinger attempted to make his offer more appealing by arguing precisely what many in Congress suspected was his position: 'There is no doubt that the status of Taiwan has been undermined by the process which we have followed. And this process would be rapidly accelerated by the ideas which we have advanced'.³⁸⁷ Deng rejected the proposal, and in blunt terms that made clear the depth to which his credibility had fallen in Beijing.³⁸⁸

Mike Mansfield was scheduled to visit Beijing in December, and Kissinger, aware that Mansfield was highly susceptible to Chinese attempts at persuasion and concerned that Beijing might attempt to use against the Administration Mansfield's greater willingness to accede to Chinese demands, attempted to marginalise the views Mansfield was likely to express. He also attempted to dissuade Deng from signing any type of statement on normalisation with Mansfield, concerned that the Chinese government may

³⁸⁵ *ibid.*

³⁸⁶ *ibid.*

³⁸⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸⁸ *ibid.*

attempt to do something along these lines in order to pressure the Administration to normalise on Chinese terms, declaring that the Administration determined foreign policy and that individual Members of Congress did not speak for the US Government nor would any agreements signed with Members be valid or express US policy.³⁸⁹ When Mansfield visited China the next month Deng was much more diplomatic with him than Qiao Guanhua had been with the Fulbright delegation in September. Deng reiterated, however, that the Chinese were dissatisfied with the lack of progress toward normalisation and expected Washington to agree to 'the Japanese formula' - i.e., the formula whereby Tokyo had normalised relations with Beijing in 1972, which included cutting diplomatic ties with Taiwan.³⁹⁰

Mansfield's report to Congress expressed his sympathy with the Chinese point of view. In fact, Mansfield was so sympathetic that his statements were cited approvingly in the communist Chinese press. The US Consulate in Hong Kong reported that the communist press in Hong Kong was quoting Mansfield as stating that the US military relationship with Taiwan was 'interference with China's internal affairs'.³⁹¹ In his report to Congress, Mansfield suggested that Washington end its military relationship with Taiwan, and decried the Nixon White House's decision to send a new ambassador to Taipei upon the retirement of Walter McCaughy and to allow Taiwan to open two new consulates in the United States in 1974. These decisions, in his point of view, strengthened the relationship with Taiwan, bringing false hope, at a time when the White House should have been creating more distance in the relationship with the Nationalists.³⁹² Mansfield

³⁸⁹ *ibid.*

³⁹⁰ USLO (Beijing) to State Department, 17 December 1974, NSA, PCF/EAP, Box 15, Ford Library; see also 'Mansfield, in China, Finds Impatience on US Policy', *Reuters*, 14 December 1974.

³⁹¹ 4 February 1975 cable from US Consul General, Hong Kong, to State Department, NSA, NSC East Asian and Pacific Affairs Staff: Files, (1969) 1973-1976, Box 7, Ford Library.

³⁹² 'China: A Quarter Century After the Founding of the People's Republic', A Report by Senator Mike Mansfield, Majority Leader, United States Senate, Submitted to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate (Washington, D.C., 1975), p.23.

argued, 'The Shanghai Communiqué was designed as a transitional arrangement; it did not predicate an indefinite ambivalence in our China policy'.³⁹³ Mansfield, unaware that Deng had just rejected Kissinger's November proposal that the status of the US Embassy in Taipei and the US Liaison Office in Beijing be reversed, also rejected the idea as 'unacceptable by the Chinese'.³⁹⁴ He concluded that Washington must in the near future meet the three Chinese demands, 'terminating our defense treaty with Taiwan, withdrawing all US troops from Taiwan, and severing diplomatic relations with Taiwan'.³⁹⁵

The proposal Mansfield made following his trip reflected thinking among Senate liberals. Senator Thomas Eagleton argued in June 1975, for example, that the US should remove the remaining US military presence on Taiwan so that 'the Taiwan issue is [not] permitted to foment to the detriment of our relationship with . . . China'.³⁹⁶ Throughout 1975 and 1976 a number of liberals called for the continued removal of the US military presence from Taiwan, which they hoped would move the relationship with Beijing toward normalisation. Such views were not shared by most of the rest of Capitol Hill, and were ridiculed by conservatives. Representative Phil Crane (R-IL) noted with sarcasm that Mansfield 'is eloquent in extolling the Peking regime'³⁹⁷, and the conservative publication *Human Events* published an article entitled 'Red China Through Mansfield's Rose Glasses'.³⁹⁸

The reaction to the announcement, made after Kissinger's China November trip, that Ford would be visiting China in late 1975 illustrated the depth of concern among

³⁹³ *ibid.*

³⁹⁴ *ibid.*

³⁹⁵ *ibid.*

³⁹⁶ Press release by the office of Senator Thomas Eagleton, 3 June 1975, Accession WUNP4720, Box 91, Thomas Eagleton Papers.

³⁹⁷ House floor statement by Phil Crane, 4 September 1975, *Congressional Record*.

³⁹⁸ 'Red China Through Mansfield's Rose Glasses', *Human Events*, 30 August 1975,

many in Congress that a normalisation agreement might be reached that would involve de-recognition of Taipei and the severing of the defence relationship. A *New York Times* article recounted the argument being made by liberals that the US should pursue normalisation in order to solidify the position in Beijing of those officials who were pro-US and to solidify Sino-US relations lest they slide back toward confrontation. The article argued, however, that given the fact that Zhou and Mao were about to pass from the scene and uncertainty surrounded who would be in control after their passing, now was not the time to normalise. The article concluded by pointedly asserting: 'Of China's future, only one thing is sure: Neither Mao nor Chou will be around to influence it. By committing the US to them, Mr. Ford and Mr. Kissinger will only make it likelier that the same can be said of us'.³⁹⁹

John Ashbrook read the article into the *Congressional Record*, intimating that Ford's decision on normalisation would affect his political fate.⁴⁰⁰ For the next two years conservatives threatened complete rebellion should normalisation be pursued with China in a manner that included the cutting of ties with Taiwan. Although it may not have been expressed as strongly by others, conservative reticence to renounce American commitments to Taiwan was shared by the vast majority of Members. A large part of the concern was the belief that Washington's promises to Taipei carried moral weight, and that breaking those promises would be a stain on the national honour.⁴⁰¹ Many Members also argued that breaking Washington's oft-repeated and long-standing commitments to Taiwan would prove the United States to be an unreliable ally and damage her credibility.⁴⁰² Liberals were just as apt to be swayed by this logic as were conservatives.

³⁹⁹ 'Caution Toward China', *New York Times*, 8 December 1974.

⁴⁰⁰ House floor statement by John Ashbrook, 16 December 1974, *Congressional Record*.

⁴⁰¹ Statement by Hugh Scott in luncheon in Beijing with Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee, 23 July 1976, MSS 10200-n-p, Box 5, Hugh Scott Papers.

⁴⁰² See 'The China Knot', *New York Times*, 17 June 1976.

Inter-office policy memoranda from the office of Senator Walter Mondale gave weight to this point,⁴⁰³ and Senator Ernest 'Fritz' Hollings (D-SC) considered it to be an important factor shaping his attitude toward normalisation.⁴⁰⁴ Hollings informed Ford that he 'did not think the Congress . . . would with the sweep of a hand abandon Taiwan. It wasn't that Taiwan was fundamental to national security. It was our credibility in international affairs that was at stake'.⁴⁰⁵ The Chinese were unwilling to compromise, and most of Congress supported the *status quo*.⁴⁰⁶

Counsel for caution was received from within the Administration, as well. In February 1975, George Bush, who had replaced David Bruce as chief of the US Liaison Office in Beijing, visited Washington and also counselled caution on pursuing normalisation out of concern for Ford's ability to win nomination in 1976.⁴⁰⁷ Bush repeated that advice in a cable from Beijing four months later, arguing that the Chinese needed to compromise and writing that although:

I would love to find the correct formula so that full diplomatic relations between the USA and the PRC can be accomplished when the President comes here I do think we must continue to ask, 'What's in it for the USA?', and the President must not be in a position of getting clobbered from his right.⁴⁰⁸

The militant Chinese attitudes and intemperate language that were becoming common in talks with Members contributed to the unwillingness of Members to meet Chinese demands and their lack of sympathy with Beijing's point of view. Congressional

⁴⁰³ Anonymous policy memorandum from the office of Senator Walter Mondale, undated, but late 1974, Location 153.L.10.2F, Walter Mondale Senatorial Papers.

⁴⁰⁴ Brent Scowcroft to Gerald Ford, reporting on what Hollings said to the Chinese during his November 1976 trip to Beijing, 10 January 1977, WHCF, Subject File, Box 13, Ford Library.

⁴⁰⁵ 'Fritz' Hollings to Gerald Ford, 6 December 1976, *ibid*.

⁴⁰⁶ House floor statement by Roger Zion, 10 December 1974, *Congressional Record*.

⁴⁰⁷ Richard Solomon to Brent Scowcroft, 3 February 1975, NSA, Presidential Name File, 1974-1977, Box 40, Ford Library.

⁴⁰⁸ 12 June 1975 cable from George Bush to Gerald Ford, *ibid*.

delegations travelling to China in 1975 and 1976 continued to hear the Chinese demand, with varying degrees of vehemence, that Washington terminate diplomatic and military ties with Taipei as a condition of normalisation. House Speaker Carl Albert and Minority Leader John Rhodes led a delegation from 29 March to 7 April 1975, during which period both South Vietnam and Cambodia were collapsing in the face of communist onslaughts. The delegation heard the same message from Deng as that given to Mansfield the previous December. The House leadership, however, did not respond to the Chinese demands as sympathetically as had Mansfield, recording in their trip report that:

In our talks, we explained to the Chinese the widespread and bipartisan support in the United States for the policy of normalizing relations between our two countries. We made it clear that we wished to see further progress, but we were also frank in explaining that longstanding involvement necessitated caution and gradualism in matters affecting Taiwan.⁴⁰⁹

An aged Chiang Kai-shek died on 5 April, while Albert and Rhodes, both of whom had close relationships with Chiang, were in China. Chiang's death brought an outpouring of sympathy for Taiwan from Congress, and heightened sensitivity to any intimation that the Administration was distancing itself from Taiwan.⁴¹⁰ The Administration's original plan to send as the US representative to Chiang's funeral only the Secretary of Agriculture so as not to offend Beijing was reconsidered when conservative Members threatened a revolt. NSC staff members counselled Kissinger, 'We feel very strongly that we will be making a mistake of the most serious proportions if Secretary Butz heads up the delegation'.⁴¹¹ Kissinger and Ford finally backed down,

⁴⁰⁹ 'China: One Step Further Toward normalisation', Report by Carl Albert, Speaker, and John Rhodes, Minority Leader, US House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1975).

⁴¹⁰ 'Tributes by Senators', *UPI*, 6 April 1975.

⁴¹¹ Richard Smyser and Richard Solomon to Henry Kissinger, 11 April 1975, NSA, PCF/EAP, Box 4, Ford Library.

instead sending Vice President Nelson Rockefeller.⁴¹²

Along with Chiang's death, the continued deterioration of the strategic environment and of the American position in Asia and globally also contributed to a climate within which it would have been extremely difficult to cut ties with Taipei. The collapse of three American allies in Asia, South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, to communism between April and December 1975 contributed, along with the continuing massive Soviet military build-up and Soviet/Cuban intervention in Angola, to the Congressional perception of a deteriorating American position internationally. Representative Jack Kemp (R-NY) called it 'a rude awakening'.⁴¹³ The perception that the United States was on retreat throughout the world, and particularly the losses in Asia, strengthened the unwillingness of most of the Congress to cut diplomatic and defence ties with Taiwan leaving it vulnerable to pressure from Beijing. The Administration, for its part, could not be seen to be leaving yet another Asian ally vulnerable to communist takeover.

Still, numerous State Department and NSC officials, while recognising the barriers to normalisation, pressed Kissinger in the summer of 1975 to attempt to reach a normalisation agreement with China by the end of the year. A memorandum written by Phil Habib and William Gleysteen, Assistant and Deputy Assistant Secretaries of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, respectively, Winston Lord, Director of Policy Planning, and Richard Solomon of the NSC acknowledged the domestic difficulties faced by Ford, yet urged Kissinger to attempt to move forward:

⁴¹² Strom Thurmond to Gerald Ford, 9 April 1975, Counselors to the President, John Marsh Files, 1974-1977, Box 107, *ibid.*; See also letters to Ford from Senators Hiram Fong and Jesse Helms, and Representative John Myers, NSA, PCF/EAP, Box 4, *ibid.*; White House to Senators Hiram Fong and Barry Goldwater and Representative John Myers announcing the decision, 14 April 1975, WHCF, Subject Files, Box 12, *ibid.* See also 'Rockefeller, not Butz, to Attend Chiang Rites', *Washington Post*, 14 April 1975.

⁴¹³ House floor statement by Jack Kemp, 15 December 1975, *Congressional Record*.

The short-run costs of moving to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing are substantial for the President, particularly in the wake of developments in Indochina and in the context of the approaching 1976 election campaign. All the same, we remain convinced that there are strong reasons for attempting to negotiate a normalisation agreement within the coming five months which would help to stabilize a non-confrontational relationship with PRC.⁴¹⁴

Yet, within a few days of that memorandum Ronald Reagan gave his first foreign policy address of his campaign to wrest the nomination away from Ford and attacked Ford for ignoring Taiwan and pandering to Beijing.⁴¹⁵ Democratic presidential candidate Jimmy Carter also expressed reticence to cut ties with Taiwan. Congress continued to emphasise its opposition to normalisation on Beijing's terms through concurrent resolutions declaring support for Taiwan. In 1973 and early 1974 several concurrent resolutions were initiated in both the House and the Senate reminding Nixon and Kissinger of the Congressional commitment to Taiwan. The number of such resolutions rose during the Ford years as Members grew concerned that Ford was planning to attempt to reach a normalisation agreement on Beijing's terms, possibly hoping that a foreign policy triumph would help him win election in his own right in 1976, with little or no protections for Taiwan. The first of these was introduced in December 1974 at the time that Ford's late 1975 trip to China was announced. As this trip neared, the number of such resolutions increased. Conservative Republicans, whose support Ford needed in his nomination contest with Reagan, made up the bulk of the signatories.⁴¹⁶ The names of

⁴¹⁴ Phil Habib, William Gleysteen, Winston Lord and Richard Solomon to Henry Kissinger, 3 July 1975, NSA, NSC Staff for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, Convenience File, Solomon Chron File, July 1–3, 1975, Box 40, Ford Library.

⁴¹⁵ Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.74.

⁴¹⁶ A Gallup Poll taken in late November 1975 showed that Reagan was besting Ford among Republicans 40% to 32%, see 'Reagan Tops Ford as Gallup Finds a Sharp Reversal: Republicans Said to Choose Californian, 40 to 32% - Independents Also Shift', *New York Times*, 12 December 1975.

moderate and liberal Republicans and Democrats were also seen, however, including some of those who had advocated along with Senators Fulbright, Kennedy and McGovern for an opening to China in 1969 and 1970 (including Mark Hatfield, Daniel Inouye, Jim Pearson, Edward Brooke, and Howard Cannon). As Ford's trip neared, on 19 November 1975 a bipartisan group of twenty seven Senators wrote a letter to Ford in which they stated:

We the undersigned members of the Senate are in agreement with the House Concurrent Resolution . . . which states, in essence, what you have said yourself, that while engaged in a lessening of tensions with the PRC, nothing will be done to compromise the freedom of our friend and ally, the ROC and its people. We express this to you in the form of a letter because we would not like to have you feel pressured or tied by any formal action of the Senate.⁴¹⁷

The State Department nervously noted to the NSC that the letter 'has some very important signatures'.⁴¹⁸ Max Friedersdorf, an Presidential Assistant, signed a White House response a few days later reaffirming the White House goal of full normalisation with China while offering the vague and not very convincing pledge that 'at the same time, however, I assure you this policy will reflect a prudent and responsible regard for the interests of America's traditional friends and allies'.⁴¹⁹

The plethora of such concurrent resolutions (seven in the House) caused Doc Morgan, the chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, who maintained a close working relationship with the Administration, to write to the State Department asking for its position on the resolutions.⁴²⁰ Robert McCloskey, Assistant

⁴¹⁷ Letter from 27 members of the Senate to Gerald Ford, 19 November 1975, WHCF, Subject Files, Box 13, Ford Library.

⁴¹⁸ Robert Wolthuis to Les Janka, 22 November 1975, Congressional Relations, Robert Wolthuis, Special Assistant to the President: Files, 1974-1977, Box 3, *ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ Max Friedersdorf to Bob Packwood, 25 November 1975, WHCF, Subject Files, Box 13, *ibid.*

⁴²⁰ Thomas Morgan to Henry Kissinger, 20 October 1975, *ibid.*

Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, responded:

The perceived need for and passage of the proposed resolutions, in and of themselves, could be interpreted as implying a Congressional view of China policy at variance with that of the Administration and thus further complicate an already complex and delicate situation. We would therefore prefer that the proposed concurrent resolutions not be adopted.⁴²¹

Of course, the impression that the State Department wished to avoid, that of 'a Congressional view of China policy at variance with that of the Administration' reflected reality, not just perception - a reality of which the State Department and White House were well aware. At the State Department's request, Morgan did not pass the resolutions through the committee and on to the full House. Their presence was, nevertheless, obviously felt.

During Ford's December 1975 trip to Beijing, Ford did attempt to reach an understanding on normalisation, just as many Members of Congress had feared. Abandoning Kissinger's earlier attempts to reach a compromise by which the United States could retain some ties to Taiwan, Ford promised to move forward on normalisation according to the terms of the 'Japanese formula' following the election if he should win the following November. The press contained numerous stories upon Ford's return testifying to this part of the talks and to Administration intentions to meet China's demands. Barry Goldwater, who had supported Nixon's opening to China due to Nixon's promise that the opening would not portend the ending of diplomatic or defence ties with Taiwan, had lunch with Kissinger upon his return from Asia and asked him about the media stories. Kissinger denied their accuracy. Not completely convinced, Goldwater wrote to the President the next day seeking an appointment to speak with him about the

⁴²¹ Robert McCloskey to Thomas Morgan, November 1975, *ibid.*

issue, implying that he suspected he was being misled.⁴²²

William Kendall, a Ford assistant, responded briefly to Goldwater within a few days letting him know that his letter had been received and that he would be hearing more later. The NSC and the State Department then took nearly two months to debate the reply. Among their concerns was that 'It is possible, if not likely, that the Senator will provide the text of a Presidential reply to the ROC Embassy, and that it will find its way into the press'.⁴²³ The goal was to calm Goldwater's fears while not putting on paper any firm promises, such as had apparently been made to him verbally by both Kissinger and the President. The reply finally sent with Ford's signature in mid February was less than satisfactory from Goldwater's perspective, as evidenced by his continued, and increasingly heightened expressions of concern over the following months. Ford's letter concluded with a vague pledge: 'Let me assure you that, as we pursue our goal of a better relationship with Beijing, we will continue to be mindful of the interests of our friends and allies, including the Republic of China on Taiwan'.⁴²⁴ Goldwater's request for an appointment with Ford was ignored.

Media stories continued throughout the spring of 1976 reporting, accurately, that Administration was hoping to pursue normalisation with China on Beijing's terms should Ford win in November. Such stories continued to draw a strong conservative reaction. Goldwater, openly doubting Ford and Kissinger's repeated verbal commitments to him, was feeling angry and betrayed. He wrote Kissinger in late April that he had seen evidence that the Administration was planning to do precisely what it had promised Goldwater that it would never consider. He ended with a political threat:

⁴²² Barry Goldwater to Gerald Ford, 10 December 1975, NSA, Presidential Name File, 1974-1977, Box 1, Ford Library.

⁴²³ National Security Council memorandum, 12 January 1976, *ibid.*

⁴²⁴ Gerald Ford to Barry Goldwater, 12 February 1976, *ibid.*

I would like to know immediately the President's position and the Department of State's on this because I don't mind telling you if we are going to sell Taiwan down the river its going to have a decided effect on what I do for the rest of the campaign.⁴²⁵

Again, the State Department and the White House together crafted a letter designed to neutralise Goldwater.⁴²⁶ It was ineffective, however, as one month later, Goldwater, who had continued to see news stories regarding Ford's plans to normalise with the Mainland on Beijing's terms after the election, concluded that there must be some truth to the reports. On 28 May he wrote in a similar vein to Kissinger:

On numerous occasions you have told me that recognition of Red China was not even being considered. I heard on the news this morning that it is being considered and that we will recognize her after the elections. I would like to have immediate verification or non verification of this because it will strongly affect whether or not I support the President. . . . I don't intend to stay quiet about it, so please within 24 hours let me know what the truth is – and I mean the truth.⁴²⁷

A handwritten notation was made on the bottom of the Goldwater letter that read, 'Henry called the Senator this afternoon. Says he turned him off'.⁴²⁸ No other record exists of Kissinger's conversation with Goldwater, but the only thing that could have 'turned Goldwater off' was a promise by Kissinger that the media stories were incorrect, that he had not lied to Goldwater in the past, and a pledge that the Administration would not consider normalisation with the Mainland and the cutting of diplomatic and defence ties with Taipei after the election.

⁴²⁵ Barry Goldwater to Henry Kissinger, 29 April 1976, Counselors to the President, John Marsh Files, 1974-1977, Box 101, Ford Library.

⁴²⁶ White House covering note attached to Goldwater's 28 April 1976 letter, *ibid.*

⁴²⁷ Barry Goldwater to Henry Kissinger, 28 May 1976, Box 7, *ibid.*

⁴²⁸ *ibid.*

Goldwater's reputation as a firebrand may make it easy to dismiss his concerns, yet they were widely shared. News reports were published in March 1976 quoting unnamed 'senior government officials' to the effect that Ford had made a secret pledge while in Beijing the previous December promising to cut the 2,200 remaining American military personnel on Taiwan in half during 1976 as a 'holding action' meant 'to show the good faith of American intentions while getting the Administration past the presidential elections and into a position for more dramatic moves, assuming Mr. Ford is re-elected'.⁴²⁹ Media reports such as these reinforced the fears that many Members had held since Ford's accession to the Presidency, that a secret deal would be made with Beijing and Congressional wishes ignored. Within a few days of these news reports, 217 House Members had signed on as cosponsors of a concurrent resolution expressing the Congressional expectation that the Administration make no agreement with China that would involve the cutting of ties with Taiwan.

As much as significant opposition existed to the cutting of ties with Taiwan, two very powerful Senate figures in 1976 each recommended that Ford do just that, signifying that at least some in the Congress were willing to meet Beijing's terms. In the latter half of 1976 the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders would each travel to China separately, would each be confronted by uncompromising and militant Chinese statements regarding Sino-American normalisation and the planned recovery of Taiwan, and would each return home and recommend to Ford that he undertake normalisation on Beijing's terms.

Hugh Scott was the first.⁴³⁰ By the time Scott arrived in July 1976, Zhou Enlai had died the previous January, Zhou's ally, Deng Xiaoping, had again been purged, Mao was

⁴²⁹ 'Ford Made Secret Pledge to Peking', *Boston Globe*, 11 March 1976.

⁴³⁰ Upon the departure of George Bush from Beijing in late 1975 to become Director of Central Intelligence, Ford had asked Scott to head the US Liaison Office in Beijing. Scott, concerned among other things that the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania would then name a Democrat to his vacated Senate seat, turned Ford down. See 10 January 1976 telcon between Hugh Scott and Gerald Ford, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 9, Hugh Scott Papers.

dying and the radical leftists were in the ascendancy in Beijing. The vehemence of the rhetoric used by the leaders with whom he met shook Scott. Qiao Guanhua, now the Foreign Minister, reiterated Chinese demands, laying full responsibility for the lack of progress in normalisation on Washington. Scott attempted to explain the need 'to ensure that the American public will not regard as abandonment' the abrogation of the defence treaty, and stressed the American expectation of a peaceful resolution to the dispute between the Mainland and Taiwan, which demand was rejected by Qiao. Scott explained that the presidential campaign would necessarily constrain Ford's ability to move forward with normalisation, but pointed out that Ford had made some 'symbolic moves' by having 'removed a minor presence from Quemoy and Matsu'. He followed this up by explaining that no matter the outcome of the election 'we have a public opinion problem', but promising that 'we are preparing the minds of the people for normalisation'.⁴³¹

The next day, Scott meet with Chang Chun-qiao, the Vice Premier and a member of the 'Gang of Four'. Scott reprised the points he had made with Qiao, and then outlined the American movement toward fulfilment of its promises to withdraw all American forces from Taiwan. Chang responded by saying, 'They should have left a long time ago', and pointedly stating that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was 'making preparations' for an invasion of Taiwan (indeed, the PLA was undertaking major manoeuvres opposite Taiwan, rehearsing an amphibious assault, while Scott was in China).⁴³² Scott again attempted to explain the role of American public and Congressional opinion in foreign policy-making in the United States, to which Chang retorted, 'You can't place this responsibility on the American people'.⁴³³ Scott expressed his desire that there would be a

⁴³¹ Memcon between Qiao Guanhua and Hugh Scott, 12 July 1976, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 5, *ibid.*

⁴³² Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.85.

⁴³³ Memcon between Chang Chun-qiao and Hugh Scott, 13 July 1976, MSS 10200-n,-p, Box 5, Hugh Scott Papers.

peaceful solution to the dispute in the Taiwan Straits, to which Chang responded with sarcasm, and a threat to invade Taiwan in order to 'help the United States solve the problem by our bayonets'.⁴³⁴

Scott responded diplomatically, given the intemperance of the verbal assault, pointing out that 'we stand ready to back up our commitment to Taiwan', and that a Chinese assault on Taiwan 'would arouse 215 million Americans'.⁴³⁵ Robert Gates, the man who had succeeded George Bush as head of the US Liaison Office, intervened to confirm that the US was committed to normalisation and that 'only the timing and formula remain indefinite', but to explain that the agreement to abrogate a treaty, as the Chinese were demanding, 'ultimately requires the consent of the Congress. . . . What [Scott] hopes will happen is that a favorable consensus will develop'. Scott then added, 'We are seeking a strong majority approval in Congress. We do not want a one vote majority which will then result in dispute'.⁴³⁶ This exchange is particularly interesting in light of President Carter's later decision to abrogate the treaty without reference to Congress and without building a Congressional consensus.

Scott cabled a report of these difficult conversations to the White House. Brent Scowcroft, who had succeeded Kissinger as national security advisor, asked Scott to keep 'the substance of your talks . . . completely confidential until you can discuss them with the President'.⁴³⁷ When Scott talks were transcribed, the State Department note to Scott indicated the desire that the specifics of the Chinese statements not be known within the US Government, fearing the likely negative reaction. Oscar Armstrong, Director of the China desk, noted that the transcripts 'were . . . given very limited distribution, even in the

⁴³⁴ *ibid.*

⁴³⁵ *ibid.*

⁴³⁶ *ibid.*

⁴³⁷ Brent Scowcroft (Washington) to Hugh Scott (Beijing), 21 July 1976, *ibid.*

Department of State'.⁴³⁸ Scott abided by Administration wishes that he not publicly discuss the content of his talks. The day after his return from China, he joined the weekly luncheon of Senate Republicans, reporting only 'that government officials have turned a harder line toward the US', and that 'it was apparent that the Chinese leadership intended not to wait very long during the next Administration before bringing up the Taiwan question'.⁴³⁹

In his report to the President, Scott argued that the passing of Zhou and Mao would not be a threat to Chinese attitudes toward the United States as the relationship with the US helped China to meet 'its pressing economic and strategic necessities'. Scott wrote:

Last December, Beijing was prepared to understand and to acquiesce in your wish to postpone until after the . . . election . . . a decision to establish full diplomatic relations with the PRC and in so doing abrogate the 1954 Mutual Defense Treaty. However, Chinese reaction to intimations from Washington that China would be willing to acquiesce in a postponement for an indefinite period of time was that this was unrealistic and unacceptable. That is, while they have heretofore been talking with US about a variety of global strategic concerns, to the apparent exclusion of their concern over Taiwan, it was because they believed that their unchanging interest in resolution of this part of their unfinished civil war had been taken for granted.⁴⁴⁰

Scott went on to assert his belief, despite all evidence to the contrary, that 'that there is very wide Congressional and public support for rapid movement towards normalization of relations with the PRC, even at the price of severing diplomatic ties with our friends on

⁴³⁸ Oscar Armstrong to Hugh Scott, 27 July 1976, *ibid.*

⁴³⁹ Minutes of Senate Republican Policy Committee Meeting, 27 July 1976, MSS 10200-af, Box 3, *ibid.*

⁴⁴⁰ Hugh Scott to Gerald Ford, 27 July 1976, WHCF, Subject File, Box 13, Ford Library.

Taiwan'.⁴⁴¹ He did advise, however, that in order to further strengthen public support for such a move, a case should be made that 'the longer-term interests, safety and prosperity of Taiwan are not damaged by terminating our diplomatic relations', and that Taiwan's security will not depend upon the existence of the defence treaty.⁴⁴²

Scott also argued that China was not likely, whatever its rhetoric, to attempt to recover Taiwan militarily given the irreparable damage this would do to Sino-American relations, to Sino-Japanese relations and Japan's military posture in the region, and given huge Soviet military presence on China's northern border, 'where the easing of Beijing's present anxieties is not soon probable'. He concluded by urging, 'that on a bipartisan basis we make preliminary moves which will envisage the establishment of normal diplomatic relations between Washington and Beijing before the end of 1977'.⁴⁴³

An NSC memorandum to Ford on the results of Scott's trip made the obvious point that the result of China's 'toughened language' was 'to complicate the possibility of finding a mutually acceptable formula on the Taiwan issue that would meet US political needs, both international and domestic'.⁴⁴⁴ Ford and Kissinger asked Scott to keep quiet about the militant attitudes he encountered when they met with him the day after his return. Ford asked, 'Do you have to report that to the Senate? I would soften it somewhat'. Kissinger immediately followed up by saying 'If you stress their insistence on a military solution . . . the right-wingers might say, "Okay, forget it"'. Scott agreed not to detail the militant statements made by the radical leaders in Beijing in his Senate report, and repeated his belief that the Administration needed a strategy for influencing

Congressional and public attitudes.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴⁴² *ibid.*

⁴⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ NSC memorandum to Gerald Ford, 27 July 1976, NSA, Presidential Name File, 1974-1977, Box 3, Ford Library.

⁴⁴⁵ Memcon between Ford, Kissinger, Scowcroft, and Scott, 28 July 1976, Memoranda of Conversations,

Scott's report to Congress noted the 'vehemence' with which the Chinese addressed the issue of Taiwan without giving details, and made the same policy suggestion supported by the same reasoning as outlined in the letter to the President.⁴⁴⁶ Political conditions, however, and widespread Congressional misgivings about cutting ties with Taiwan, minimised the impact of Scott's report and recommendation. Although a strategy for attempting to shape Congressional opinion in favour of normalisation was needed, as Scott suggested, Kissinger and Ford were too pre-occupied with day to day political survival to pursue any type of campaign which might have pushed Congressional attitudes in their direction.

Mansfield, who, like Scott, was soon to retire, travelled to China from 21 September to 12 October 1976. His visit followed immediately after Mao's death, during a time of intense transition in Beijing, with the Gang of Four, led by Mao's estranged wife, Jiang Qing, being arrested and removed from all positions of authority on 6 October. The two substantive meetings in which Mansfield took part were markedly different in tone, reflecting the different personalities involved. A meeting with the Vice Foreign Minister, Mao's niece, was noted by the White House as being 'somewhat contentious' and 'included expressions of Chinese impatience with the pace of US disengagement from Taiwan and the inevitability of forceful "liberation" of the island'.⁴⁴⁷ The second meeting, with Vice Premier Li Xianian, was more patient in tone and did not emphasise forceful reunification. Mansfield left Beijing with a similar impression as Scott had gained during his trip, despite the fact that the radicals had been purged from government just prior to Mansfield's meetings. In his confidential report to Ford,

NSA, Box 20, Ford Library.

⁴⁴⁶ 'The United States and China: Report by Senator Hugh Scott, Minority Leader, US Senate, to the Committee on Foreign Relations' (Washington, D.C., 1976).

⁴⁴⁷ Brent Scowcroft to Gerald Ford, 5 November 1976, NSA, Presidential Name File, 1974-1977, Box 2, Ford Library.

Mansfield told him that:

It would appear that we remain enmeshed in Taiwan on the basis of past policies and because of developments in our own political situation. . . The longer the Taiwan issue remains in limbo, the more pressure seems to be building for continuing indecision as a substitute for policy.⁴⁴⁸

Mansfield, showing a greater sense of urgency than even Scott, suggested that Ford 'act now' to cut ties with Taiwan and normalise with Beijing.⁴⁴⁹ In his report to Congress, printed three weeks after Ford had lost the presidential election, Mansfield took an even more urgent tone than he had in his private recommendation to Ford. Mansfield echoed Scott's argument that despite the uncertainty of who would gain ultimate authority in China following Mao's death 'It is highly unlikely that . . . it will make any significant difference who controls China insofar as United States-China relations are concerned'.⁴⁵⁰ After acknowledging that 'we are both greatly concerned about the Soviet Union and its intentions', Mansfield concluded:

The national interest is deeply involved . . . in moving without further delay to settle the Taiwan problem. Gambling for more time? For what? Further delay could well prove to be another in the long series of disastrous miscalculations which have afflicted US foreign policy in Asia since World War II. Solving this problem will put the United States in a unique position in the triangular relationship.⁴⁵¹

He ended by arguing that normalisation with China was 'fundamental to the safeguarding' of 'American interests in the Western Pacific'.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁸ Mike Mansfield to Gerald Ford, 26 October 1976, Presidential Handwriting File, Box 6, Ford Library.

⁴⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁵⁰ 'China Enters the Post-Mao Era', Report by Senator Mike Mansfield, Majority Leader, US Senate, to the Committee on Foreign Relations (Washington, D.C., 1976).

⁴⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁴⁵² *ibid.*

Mansfield and Scott's recommendations marked the most significant movement in Congress toward acceptance of Beijing's demands since Congress had become aware of those demands and begun wrestling with their implications through direct interaction with the Chinese leadership several months after Nixon's trip. Their journey had not been shared by many, however. An article in the *New York Times* a month before Scott's China trip encapsulated well the widespread attitude that was at variance with Mansfield and Scott's recommendations. The author wrote, 'The geopolitical facts of life in the Sino-Soviet-American triangle require efforts to improve relations with Beijing. But there are many ways to do this short of abandoning 14 million Taiwanese'.⁴⁵³ Mansfield and Scott's positions were not widely shared, and Scott's reading of Congressional sentiment was clearly flawed. The majority of Congress, while supporting the goal of normalisation, continued, as did the vast majority of the US public, to oppose normalisation at the cost of ties with Taiwan – particularly since it was now clear that the intention behind Beijing's demand that Washington cut all ties with Taiwan was to isolate Taipei and make it vulnerable to coercion.⁴⁵⁴ Even Ford, responding to Scott's report and recommendation, noted that 'your proposal regarding Beijing/Taipei negotiations goes somewhat beyond the position we adopted in the Shanghai Communiqué'.⁴⁵⁵

The 'Abramowitz Study' of 1974 and Congress's role in Pentagon Security Planning

Notwithstanding the stalemate on normalisation, the strategic aspects of the relationship with Beijing came increasingly to the fore during 1974-1976 due to perceptions of a rapidly deteriorating Cold War environment. The rapid deterioration of the international environment, coupled with high inflation and other economic difficulties, resulted in a feeling of impotence and insecurity within the United States, and

⁴⁵³ 'The China Knot', *New York Times*, 17 June 1976.

⁴⁵⁴ Harry Byrd, Jr. to a constituent, 1 December 1976, MSS 10320-a,-b, Box 266, Harry Byrd, Jr. Papers.

⁴⁵⁵ Gerald Ford to Hugh Scott, 1 September 1976, WHCF, Subject File, Box 13, Ford Library.

created the conditions in which Congress, and the national security bureaucracy, began to become more accepting of the concept of a possible military relationship with Mainland China in opposition to the Soviet Union.

In late 1974 Congressional attitudes toward defence spending and security alliances of any sort were still primarily shaped by the experience of Vietnam and suspicion toward the Pentagon, and the international strategic environment was still perceived as being relatively benign. These known attitudes on the part of the Congress, which were reinforced the overwhelmingly liberal and activist cast of the freshman Congressional class who had won election in November due to Watergate, served to constrain planning by a few senior Pentagon officials who considered increased defence expenditures to bolster the American position in the Asia-Pacific in combination with an informal security alliance with China. The debate over potential security ties with China that the Pentagon leadership had hoped to enlarge within the Executive Branch, therefore, was not initiated out of the belief that with Congressional attitudes to such an idea certain to be negative it would have been pointless to fight for a policy that could not gain broader acceptance in Washington.

In late 1974 a study of various policy alternatives for the Asia-Pacific region, written by the office of International Security Affairs (ISA), which was then headed by Morton Abramowitz, was undertaken on the topic of US security policy in Asia in light of the Sino-Soviet split and the new US relationship with China. Labelled 'Defense Alternatives for East Asia and the Pacific', it was the first major government study that paid attention to the possibility of security ties with the Chinese and the effect of such ties on the US position in Asia as well as globally. The study was prepared for the Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger, and shaped the thinking of the Office of the Secretary of

Defense on this issue for the rest of the decade.⁴⁵⁶

The study argued for the importance of preserving 'China as a significant counterweight to the Soviet Union' and 'to exploit the deterrent effect of the Soviet fear of a two-front war'.⁴⁵⁷ It laid out four major defence alternatives in the Asia Pacific region. The first was labelled 'Focus on the Soviets'. It noted the growth of Soviet military power and, hence, political influence in Asia, and the fact that the European and Asian theatres of Cold War conflict were integrally linked, giving American strategic behaviour in Asia direct import for Washington's European strategic position. It stated that 'this alternative seeks to assure that there are forces that can balance Soviet power by trying to take maximum advantage of the Chinese as a counterweight to the Soviets in Asia'.⁴⁵⁸

The study then turned to factors that might weigh against the implementation of the recommended option. It noted that, although the first defence alternative was the most desirable in terms of its ability to counter the growth of Soviet power in Asia, it carried with it significant political costs that would not make it an option 'that a policy maker could easily choose' given the larger defence spending that it would necessitate in order to increase US force structure in Asia. Conceding that 'we could not be oblivious to current trends', the study acknowledged that the force and budgetary increases envisioned to implement Option One ran counter to the post-Vietnam war attitude among Congressional liberals. Anticipating the likely arguments that opponents of such a strategy, in the Congress as well as elsewhere within the Executive Branch, would make against it, the study noted that 'some may . . . object to its pro-PRC aspects and its possible adverse effects on US-Soviet détente'. One of the biggest objections noted was perhaps the most

⁴⁵⁶ Garret, *The 'China Card' and Its Origins*, p.46.

⁴⁵⁷ Abramowitz Study, declassified through a FOIA request made by Banning Garrett and given to the author.

⁴⁵⁸ *ibid.*

obvious – that, given American retrenchment from Asian commitments following the disastrous experience in Vietnam, 'much of the Congress and articulate public is openly skeptical about the necessity of our East Asian deployments'.⁴⁵⁹

Schlesinger was favourably disposed towards the study's recommendations but decided to put those recommendations on hold, at least for the time being, primarily out of the belief that Congress was unwilling to support such a policy due to its requirements for an increased defence posture in Asia and increased defence spending, as well as due to its departure from an evenhanded approach to Beijing and Moscow.⁴⁶⁰ Schlesinger was deeply suspicious of Soviet intentions and knew that he would find some support for the policy proposed by the study on Capitol Hill and that he had Congressional allies upon whom he could depend to help him to influence the policy debate. One example was Scoop Jackson, a close friend who was as sceptical as was Schlesinger regarding Soviet intentions and therefore of US-Soviet détente, and had called on normalisation with China and a more forceful playing of the 'China card' against the Soviets.⁴⁶¹ Members who shared Jackson's perspective on the international situation were fighting an uphill battle in the Congressional environment of 1973 and 1974, however, and therefore Executive Branch officials advocating positions at variance with the dominant trends were unable to find sufficiently broad Congressional support for their positions to make them viable policy options. The fact that Congress's clear attitudes on an important area of security and foreign policy could kill an Executive Branch policy initiative before it had even seen the light of day in terms of a real policy debate, illustrates the extent to which Congress can constrain policy choices within the Executive Branch merely through its known attitudes.

⁴⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁶⁰ Interview with Morton Abramowitz, 27 August 2009, Washington, D.C..

⁴⁶¹ See 'Jackson on China', *National Review*, 16 August 1974, pp.907-8.

Public Debate Over Sino-American Security Cooperation Legitimises a Radical Policy

Concept

Nixon and Kissinger's conception of the role of China in their new security framework was altered by deteriorating relations between Washington and each of the communist giants in the mid 1970's. The lack of progress toward Sino-American normalisation and Kissinger's search for means to reinvigorate relations, on the one hand, and the deterioration of US-Soviet détente and Kissinger's need to regain leverage over Moscow, on the other, contributed to Kissinger's decision to attempt to build a minimal security relationship with China in 1975 and 1976.

Unlike the early 1970's, a more positive Congressional attitude toward defence issues beginning in 1975 resulted in a growing level of Congressional support for a potential Sino-American security relationship. Whereas the Congress had been highly critical of defence spending and Pentagon initiatives of any kind from the late 1960's through 1974, as détente soured and Indochina fell to communism, attitudes changed. Sam Stratton, a conservative Democrat who sat on the House Armed Services Committee which was later that year to investigate the possibility of Sino-American security ties, noted in May that sentiment was beginning to move toward the realisation that 'this is not the year to cut back our military strength'.⁴⁶² That year, rather than fighting heavy opposition, as it had in previous years, the defence authorisation bill passed the full House by a vote of 332-64, with every amendment by Pentagon foes defeated, most by significant margins.⁴⁶³ Republican Senator Howard Baker (R-TN) also saw the change of attitude in the Senate, noting that after the spring of 1975 there existed, in stark contrast with previous years, 'a comfortable margin in support of the recommended defense

⁴⁶² House floor statement by Sam Stratton, 20 May 1975, *Congressional Record*.

⁴⁶³ Johnson, *Congress and the Cold War*, p.208.

funding levels'.⁴⁶⁴

The change of attitude on the part of liberal House and Senate members was particularly illustrative of the effect of the changed strategic perceptions. Liberal Republican Senator James Pearson (R-KS) wrote to a constituent in early September 1974, proud of the fact that 'the entire defense budget was reduced by the largest amount in recent years'.⁴⁶⁵ By the next April, as South Vietnam and Cambodia were collapsing before communist onslaughts, Pearson wrote:

While I am deeply concerned by counterproductive and unnecessary defense programs and ensuing costs associated with military hardware, I nevertheless believe that . . . US military strength is declining while that of potential enemies is increasing.⁴⁶⁶

Liberal House Member Les Aspin (D-WI) in early 1976 undertook a comparison study of US and Soviet military spending which had minimised the disparity, and excused what increases in Soviet military spending he admitted as inspired by an attempt to counter the perceived threat to the Soviet Union from China. Stuart Symington's aides ridiculed Aspin's study, noted that 'all one has to do is look at the continual rise since 1965 in most categories of the total Soviet military structure to see the increasing imbalance between the East and the West'. The staff memo to the Senator went on to rebut Aspin's assertion that the growth of Soviet military power was primarily aimed at China, concluding that it was aimed at Europe and the United States.⁴⁶⁷

The impression was growing among both left and right on Capitol Hill that détente

⁴⁶⁴ Speech by Howard Baker before the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, 6 June 1975, Box 138, Howard Baker Papers, Modern Political Archive, Howard Baker Center for Public Policy, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

⁴⁶⁵ James Pearson to a constituent, 5 September 1974, Box 148, James Pearson Papers.

⁴⁶⁶ James Pearson to a constituent, 14 April 1975, Box 165, *ibid.*

⁴⁶⁷ 'George' to Stuart Symington, 5 April 1976, Box 281, Stuart Symington Papers.

was not resulting in Soviet restraint as had been hoped.⁴⁶⁸ Senator Edward Brooke, who earlier had been critical of defence spending and continued to remain confident of American superiority over the Soviet system, was nevertheless also becoming concerned about the Soviet buildup. His attitude was somewhat typical of those of many liberals and helps to explain why the idea of a tacit alliance with China was beginning to gain adherents. In May 1976 Brooke wrote that:

The task before US now is not to seek to thwart trends over which we have little control, but rather to structure our own alliance relationships and the international system in such a way that the Soviets Union will not be tempted to seek political supremacy through military superiority.⁴⁶⁹

Within this environment, the debate over Sino-American security ties that had been percolating quietly within hidden corners of the Executive Branch came out into public view, and Congress, with its newfound interest in security policy, was eager to involve itself in the debate. Michael Pillsbury, the author of the L-32 study that had made a big impact within the Pentagon in 1973, wrote an article that was published in the *Foreign Policy*, a respected journal read by academics, members of the informed public, and Congressional Members and their staff. Pillsbury had been encouraged to publish the article by Andrew Marshall, who had been quietly advocating the concept of a Sino-American security relationship inside the Pentagon since 1973. Marshall hoped, by making public the arguments in favour of developing security ties with China, to place political pressure on those within the Administration, primarily Kissinger, who opposed any plan to overtly tilt toward China. Marshall and Pillsbury succeeded in this goal. Congressional interest in security issues, together with perceptions of a worsening

⁴⁶⁸ See 'White House Gaining in Debate on Defense Budget', *New York Times*, 11 February 1976.

⁴⁶⁹ Edward Brooke to Dale Read, 15 May 1976, Box 224, Edward Brooke Papers.

strategic environment in 1975 provided the fuel, and Pillsbury's article provided the match that lit a major public and Congressional debate over the nature of US-China relations and its affect on US-Soviet relations.

Appearing in the September 1975 issue of *Foreign Policy*, Pillsbury's article advocated the initiation of a limited military and intelligence relationship with China.⁴⁷⁰ Pillsbury was unaware at the time that Kissinger had developed a limited security relationship himself during his high level talks in Beijing, which Kissinger had kept secret not only from the Congress and the public, but even from most other members of the Executive Branch. This relationship had begun on Kissinger's 1971 trips, in which he took along US satellite imagery of Soviet military emplacements along the Chinese border and briefed China's aged Marshall, Ye Jianying, on military issues.⁴⁷¹ The scope and purposes the security relationship that Dr. Kissinger had initiated was far more limited than was that proposed by Pillsbury and Marshall, and sought to do just enough to build Chinese confidence in the United States as a counterweight to the Soviet Union while not doing so much as to alienate the Soviets and elicit an angry reaction.

Pillsbury's article made public many of the details of a debate that had been taking place within the Nixon and Ford Administrations, primarily within the Pentagon but also in the other agencies that had been receiving reports of Pillsbury's conversations for at least two years, over the extent to which Washington should potentially collaborate with China against the Soviet Union. That debate, however, was still in embryonic form when Pillsbury's article publicised it. Pillsbury later noted that during the 1973-1976 period 'how bizarre the various ideas of security cooperation with China . . . struck literally everyone'.⁴⁷² This is certainly understandable, given the fact that the whole strategic

⁴⁷⁰ Michael Pillsbury, 'US-Chinese Military Ties?', *Foreign Policy* 20 (Autumn 1975), pp.50-64.

⁴⁷¹ Mahmud Ali, *US-China Cold War Collaboration, 1971-1989*, (London, 2005), p.75.

⁴⁷² Correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, 6 September 2009.

posture of the United States in Asia since 1950 had been formed with the goal of containing Chinese communist influence, and that Beijing had been both perceived and portrayed in internal government debates, as well as to the public, as a revolutionary state bent on overturning the established order and fomenting violent communist insurgencies around the region. The idea of having some sort of even informal alliance with Maoist China, which, despite the development of Sino-American reconciliation was still perceived by most American as an opponent, appeared totally unrealistic.

The idea was not met with warm approval on the part of the national security bureaucracy, partly due to the concept's revolutionary nature but also partly due to the fact that the bureaucracy itself was naturally cautious and conservative about new ideas, making it very difficult for any new ideas, much less one as seemingly revolutionary as this, to gain acceptance.⁴⁷³ Also hindering the ability of the national security bureaucracy to think of Communist China as an ally in any sense was the history of close cooperation between the US military and the military and intelligence agencies of their Nationalist counterparts in pursuit of the goal of the blunting of Communist Chinese power.⁴⁷⁴ The military and intelligence agencies had long viewed Taipei as an important American Cold War ally, and their all-consuming focus on the war in Vietnam, which had only just ended, had reinforced this sympathetic attitude toward the Nationalist military, intelligence services, and government, which had provided unparalleled support and cooperation.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷³ Chester Bowles said of the introduction of new ideas, 'Getting the bureaucracy to accept new ideas is like carrying a double mattress up a very narrow and winding stairway. It is a terrible job, and you exhaust yourself when you try it'. Quoted in Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston, 1965), p.683.

⁴⁷⁴ For a popular history of US-ROC cooperation in the area of intelligence overflights of the Mainland, see Chris Pocock, with Clarence Fu, *The Black Bats: CIA Spy Flights Over China From Taiwan, 1951-1969* (Atglen, Pennsylvania, 2010).

⁴⁷⁵ Much documentary evidence of this attitude on the part of the American military and intelligence agencies exists. See the 31 March 1967 briefing notes of Admiral Gentner of the Thailand Defense Command of a visiting group of US Senators, in which the admiral praises the speed and quality of Taiwan's defence cooperation with the US, Box 259, Harry Byrd, Jr., Papers; See also the testimony of General Ciolella before the Symington Subcommittee in late 1969 and early 1970, f.2229-30, Start Symington Papers.

Taipei had long believed, correctly, that together with the Congress, the Pentagon was its strongest base of political support in Washington and was highly sympathetic with Nationalist goals.⁴⁷⁶

In order for the idea of Sino-American security cooperation to gain credibility within the government and be implemented as policy, these ideas needed a much broader base of support in Washington. Opening the subject to Congressional debate would raise its profile within the media and the informed public. Pillsbury's article began a prolonged process by which support was gradually built, a process which was aided by the continued degeneration of Soviet-American détente and perceptions of a worsening of the strategic environment.

During the autumn of 1975 the idea of Sino-American security ties was becoming a more important issue within the Ford Administration. The two most important protagonists in this debate within the Administration were Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger and Henry Kissinger, who still jointly held the positions of Secretary of State and national security advisor.⁴⁷⁷ Whereas Kissinger sought to take a strictly evenhanded approach to China and the Soviets as part of his triangular strategy that had as its primary goal the facilitation of Soviet-American détente, Schlesinger was much more sceptical of Soviet intentions and favoured leaning toward the Chinese in order to better balance Soviet power.

After initially putting the idea on hold for nearly a year, by the fall of 1975 Schlesinger, sensing the shift in public and Congressional sentiment in the past year, had begun to advocate within the Administration for the idea of using China as a

⁴⁷⁶ See, for example, US embassy (Taipei) to Dean Rusk, reporting that Chiang believed that the 'Pentagon are behind him in his efforts to build up GRC military and his attempt at mainland recovery', 31 March 1962, Box 442, Averell Harriman Papers.

⁴⁷⁷ Tyler, *Great Wall*, pp.198-9. Interview with James Schlesinger, 8 August 2012, Arlington, Virginia,

counterweight to the Soviets and making China a stronger partner in the American system of containment.⁴⁷⁸ Schlesinger, who had knowledge of Chinese probes through Michael Pillsbury and Andrew Marshall, argued that the Soviets would put up with stronger Sino-American ties than Kissinger assumed to be the case and that a strengthening of such ties would not necessarily result in a worsening of relations with Moscow.⁴⁷⁹ When Schlesinger was fired in early November 1975, although other reasons existed⁴⁸⁰, a significant factor that is often ignored was the impact of his deep disagreements with Kissinger over policy toward both the Soviet Union and China.⁴⁸¹ Schlesinger's firing removed the most powerful Administration proponent of Sino-American military ties, although there were those within the CIA (including the National Intelligence Officer [NIO] for East Asia, Jim Lilley⁴⁸²) and the Pentagon who still advocated for a tilt towards China. Within a very short period of time after Schlesinger's departure, however, the increasing coolness of relations with Beijing and the lessening of American leverage over Moscow would motivate Kissinger to move in the direction that had been advocated by Schlesinger.

In the Congress, the competing ideas of Kissinger and Schlesinger both found advocates. Liberals tended to be most concerned that Sino-American security relations would further harm Soviet-US relations. Scoop Jackson, who had long advocated tilting toward China, was joined by colleagues such as Republican Senator Robert Taft, who had been advocating the sale of military equipment to China since 1974.⁴⁸³ The publication of Pillsbury's article initiated a long-term debate over these issues within the Congress and

⁴⁷⁸ Garrett, *The 'China Card' and Its Origins*, p.48.

⁴⁷⁹ *New York Times*, 9 November 1975.

⁴⁸⁰ For an overall view, see Bob Woodward, *Shadow* (New York, 1999).

⁴⁸¹ Garrett, *The 'China Card' And Its Origins*, pp.67-70.

⁴⁸² Interview with Jim Lilley.

⁴⁸³ 'Taft asks US arms for China', *Cincinnati Post*, 3 July 1974.

among the informed public that would shift in favour of closer security ties with China due to the sustained advocacy of such views by Pillsbury and like-minded individuals, and due to steadily worsening relations with Moscow.

Change in the thinking of the national security bureaucracy took place due to a combination of forceful and articulate advocacy of this new idea on the part of Pillsbury and like-minded individuals, key support from prestigious security studies and international affairs journals, which served to spread the idea among Congressional members and key staff as well as among the informed public, and Congressional consideration of the idea in public debate. Congressional hearings that examined the topic lent credibility to the issue, which, together with its persistent advocacy by key intellectual policy journals, such as *Foreign Policy* and *International Security* beginning in late 1975, played a significant role in legitimising the concept and making it sound plausible and less radical, which in turn increased the likelihood that the national security bureaucracy might consider the idea as a legitimate policy option.⁴⁸⁴ Articles in the popular media also contributed to 'normalising' the radical concept of Sino-American security cooperation.

Members of Congress and their staffs invariably read policy journals in order to keep abreast of the issues involved in the latest policy debates. *Foreign Policy* was (and remains) one of those influential journals regularly consulted by Congressional officials.

⁴⁸⁴ A series of articles authored by Pillsbury, whose ideas were supported by the editors of *Foreign Policy*, *International Security*, and other key policy journals, were published over the next several years, which advocacy contributed to acceptance of the growth of a limited Sino-American security relationship. Such articles included, in addition to those already cited: Michael Pillsbury, 'Future Sino-American Security Ties: The View From Tokyo, Moscow and Peking', *International Security* 1:4 (Spring 1977), pp.124-42; 'A Japanese Card?' *Foreign Policy* 33 (Winter 1978-1979), pp.3-30; and 'Strategic Acupuncture', *Foreign Policy* 41 (Winter 1980-1981). It is worth noting that the editor of *Foreign Policy* during the mid 1970's was Richard Holbrooke, who would go on to become Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs under Jimmy Carter and would in that position support the development of a prominent security relationship with Beijing.

In 1975 and 1976 it was edited by Richard Holbrooke, who liked Pillsbury's ideas and began to advocate on their behalf, knowing that many among Congressional Members and staff read the journal and would be influenced by Holbrooke's editorial advocacy.⁴⁸⁵ The editor of *International Security*, Derek Leebaert, also advanced the idea. Such promotion by these two influential journals, as well as by various other media, immediately piqued Congressional interest. As soon as Pillsbury's article was published in September 1975, Members took notice and began to comment on it. Senator Taft publicly endorsed Pillsbury's proposals, echoing Pillsbury's argument that the sale of defensive arms to China would strengthen the Sino-American relationship, help forestall a potential Sino-Soviet rapprochement, and hopefully act as a constraint on increasingly aggressive Soviet behaviour.⁴⁸⁶ Taft then continued to advocate on behalf of the idea on the Senate floor.⁴⁸⁷

Although such support for Pillsbury's ideas was not widespread at the time, the moderately positive overall reception, and particularly the support from the Hill from conservatives, gave Pillsbury and allies hope that they could eventually convince enough people within the government that their ideas could become policy.⁴⁸⁸ The public debate increased through the fall of 1975 and into 1976. A *New York Times* editorial in December 1975 echoed Pillsbury's argument and supported the idea of military assistance, and even the possibility of arms sales to China to build it up as a counterweight to the Soviet Union.⁴⁸⁹ Taft immediately wrote a letter to the *Times* supporting their position and arguing that 'the US should be willing to provide . . . defensive weaponry and weapons technology to deter or, if necessary, defeat, a Soviet conventional attack'. Such sales, he

⁴⁸⁵ Correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, 6 September 2009.

⁴⁸⁶ Senate floor statement by Robert Taft, 9 October 1975, *Congressional Record*.

⁴⁸⁷ Senate floor statement by Robert Taft, 23 September 1975, *Congressional Record*.

⁴⁸⁸ Personal correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, 2009-2011.

⁴⁸⁹ *New York Times*, 18 December 1975.

argued, would not be a threat to US interests, but only 'to the 50 Soviet divisions lined up along its frontier'.⁴⁹⁰

Support was expressed by Democrats, as well. No less a figure than Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield also spoke late in 1975 in favour of selling arms to China should the Chinese request them. He noted that, being a communist country, current law prohibited the sale of weapons to China, and that implementation of a policy of arms sales to Beijing would therefore require legislation (and hinting that he would possibly be favourably disposed to such legislation).⁴⁹¹

Over the next three years after the initial publication of Pillsbury's ideas, as competing bureaucratic interests argued over them within the Ford and Carter Administrations, a series of hearings were held by various House panels on the topic of the Sino-Soviet-American triangle and potential Sino-American security cooperation. From October 1975 to June 1976 the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy of the House International Relations Committee, chaired by Lester Wolff, held a series of hearings on the triangle, in which witnesses representing different perspectives examined the various aspects of the debate, educating Members and the public as to the issues involved.⁴⁹² The subcommittee had been created in January 1975 as part of the larger reorganisation of the House and particularly of the Foreign Affairs Committee (whose name changed to the Committee on International Relations) in order to give the House a platform from which to provide structural analysis of foreign policy trends and options.⁴⁹³

In the subcommittee hearings Members probed Administration officials over the

⁴⁹⁰ Robert Taft, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 22 December 1975.

⁴⁹¹ Michael Pillsbury, 'Future Sino-American Security Ties: The View from Tokyo, Moscow and Peking', p.125.

⁴⁹² 'United States-Soviet Union-China: The Great Power Triangle', Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy Research and Development of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1976).

⁴⁹³ Interviews with former Representative Lester Wolff, 9 and 10 October 2010, Crystal City, Virginia.

debate within the Executive Branch, attempting to obtain information regarding the current status of policy on this issue.⁴⁹⁴ Kissinger's characteristic use of secrecy and deception of the Congress obtained in this area of policy as well. Reflecting the fact that Kissinger, the primary Administration figure involved in the issue, wished to keep Administration thinking on this topic from Congressional knowledge and from public view, Congressional probes did not elicit an accurate picture of the current state of debate within the Administration. As one example, Winston Lord misleadingly responded to a question from Lester Wolff in March 1976 regarding whether the issue of military assistance and arms sales to China was at that time being debated within the Administration by stating that 'It hasn't been an active issue'.⁴⁹⁵ Lord's response was typical of the misleading communications between Kissinger, who was Lord's boss, and the Congress. Although it was true that the debate within the Administration was in embryonic form, it was not true that it had 'not been an issue' as the disagreement over policy towards the Soviet Union and over the place that Sino-American ties should hold in larger American strategy had been one of the major, unacknowledged causes for the firing of James Schlesinger.

Congress received misleading information about the potential for Sino-American security ties from the Chinese, as well. The House Armed Services Committee also held a series of hearings on the issue beginning in October 1975, and a special panel of the committee travelled to China in August 1976 in order to discuss potential military cooperation with the Chinese leadership. The panel came away from its visit with an inaccurate impression that the Chinese did not want a military relationship with the

⁴⁹⁴ Interview with Joyce Lasky Shub, the subcommittee staff member who organised the hearings, 21 July 2009, Friendship Heights, Maryland; Interviews with Lester Wolff.

⁴⁹⁵ 'United States, Soviet Union, China: The Great Power Triangle', 23 March 1976 testimony. It is worth noting that Lord was Michael Pillsbury's cousin.

United States. The panel's trip report recorded that the Chinese 'expressed no interest at all in acquiring US weapons or military technology, preferring instead to rely on "independence and self-reliance".⁴⁹⁶ Partially, the impression given the panel was given by members of the radical faction of Chinese leadership who truly did not wish to have a military relationship with the United States. However, even at this high-tide of radical influence in the Chinese government, Chinese probes for Western military technology continued through other channels.⁴⁹⁷ This indicates that, while the radicals may have had control over much of the propaganda in Beijing and held a few leadership posts, they did not, even at the height of their influence, have unchecked control over policy. It is also an indication that Kissinger was correct in his conviction that national interests trumped ideology as a determinant of national policy, even in a nation as seemingly ideologically driven as Maoist China.

Another reason that the House panel was not informed about Chinese interest in western arms and dual-use technology was that the Chinese did not wish to broadcast their need for such weapons and technological modernisation, which would amount to a public admission of weakness.⁴⁹⁸ In the belief that any frank discussion of such Chinese needs with a Congressional delegation would likely have been leaked by the Members, those Chinese officials who were in favour of Chinese purchases of Western weaponry and military technology were reluctant to share their interest, deeming it safer to make such inquiries in an unofficial capacity that was more low key and had the benefit of deniability should news of the approach be leaked.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁶ Report of the Visit to the People's Republic of China by the Special Study Panel of the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1976).

⁴⁹⁷ See *New York Times*, 25 April 1976; *Aviation Week*, 24 May 1976; *Forbes*, 1 June 1976, and *South China Morning Post*, 11 June 1976.

⁴⁹⁸ Correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, who remained a point of contact on the part of the Chinese for such inquiries, August 2009. Also, Michael Pillsbury to Henry Kissinger, 13 October 1975, from the private collection of Banning Garrett.

⁴⁹⁹ *ibid.*

The result was the receipt of inaccurate information by the panel and, therefore, an inaccurate perception of Chinese desires. This was beneficial to Kissinger, who shared with the Chinese a desire to keep secret Chinese interest in this area. Due to Kissinger's need to give the impression that the Sino-American relationship was moving forward despite lack of progress on normalisation and to attempt to regain leverage over the Soviets, he pursued a policy shift in 1975 and 1976 that involved a departure from the evenhanded approach which he had to that point pursued between Beijing and Moscow. Accordingly, Kissinger secretly informed the British in late 1975 that he approved of them selling Rolls-Royce jet engines to China, which was in violation of COCOM regulations (the Coordinating Committee of NATO allies plus Japan that governed the transfer of advanced technology to communist nations), despite publicly protesting the move, and informed the Chinese that the move had his approval.⁵⁰⁰ A year later, Kissinger instructed the NSC to approve the sale to China of Control Data Corporation's Cyber 172 computer, a move that was protested by Moscow.⁵⁰¹ The departure from the policy of evenhandedness that had characterised the Nixon and Ford Administration's handling of the Sino-Soviet-American triangle to that point was a major one, and was made with no consultation within the Administration, much less with the Congress.

Beijing did not respond to Kissinger's overtures, having come to the conclusion that he was merely attempting to use China in order to better Washington's relations with Moscow.⁵⁰² Kissinger's move was a tactical one, made out of frustration and a desire to reinvigorate cooling Sino-American ties and regain leverage over Moscow. Part of the purpose of the hearings of the House Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy, however,

⁵⁰⁰ Robert Ross, *Negotiating Cooperation: The United States and China, 1969-1989* (Stanford, 1995), p.89.

⁵⁰¹ The decision was reported in *Aviation Week and Technology Review*, 25 October 1976 issue, p.18.

⁵⁰² Ali, *US-China Cold War Collaboration*, p.108.

was to examine some of the fundamental issues surrounding the debate over potential Sino-American security ties that appeared to be unaddressed within the Administration. Wolff and his staff hoped that the hearings would address fundamental questions such as whether the development of a *de facto* coalition with China, even a limited one, was consistent with the goal of furthering US-Soviet détente, and what the precise role of Sino-American relations should play with regard to US strategy towards Moscow.

Doak Barnett led those Sinologists who testified against development of a Sino-American military relationship, arguing that the United States knew too little about decision-making in Moscow and Beijing to justify the risk of attempting to work one side against the other – a point of view with which Wolff was sympathetic.⁵⁰³ Michael Pillsbury testified in favour of developing security cooperation with China, repeating the argument made in his article: that a limited military relationship would serve to bolster American credibility as a dependable counterweight to the Soviets, strengthen the pro-American element within Beijing (including giving the Chinese military a vested interest in the continued growth of the relationship with Washington), forestall potential Sino-Soviet reconciliation, and, if the level of military cooperation kept limited, serve as an inducement to the Soviet Union to moderate its behaviour while not sparking an angry counter-reaction on Moscow's part.⁵⁰⁴

Other hearings that touched on the subject of Sino-American security cooperation during 1976 included those by Subcommittee on International Trade and Commerce of the House International Relations Committee, which looked at the export licensing of advanced technology with an emphasis on dual-use technology transfers to China. These hearings examined questions such as whether the export of military technology, such as

⁵⁰³ 'United States, Soviet Union, China: The Great Power Triangle' hearings.

⁵⁰⁴ *ibid.*

the recently approved British sale of Spey jet engines to China, would in any way harm American interests or those of America's allies, or would primarily serve to strengthen China's defensive strength vis-a-vis a potential Soviet attack.⁵⁰⁵ The primary division in this debate was over the issue of evenhandedness, which many believed an essential element of a US-Soviet-Chinese triangular dynamic that would most benefit Washington. In all of these hearings, the witnesses displayed major disagreement over the key issues addressed, mirroring the lack of consensus within Congress over these issues. The lack of consensus, however, masked the fact that the most important effect of the debate was the fact that it was occurring at all.

Conclusion

Congressional attitudes toward normalisation with China did not evolve significantly during Gerald Ford's tenure in the White House, despite the decision on the part of the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders to support normalisation on Beijing's terms. Nixon had told Zhou in February 1972 that he believed he could mould Congressional attitudes over time. Had Watergate not intervened, that may have been true. Gerald Ford faced an increasingly assertive Congress, had inherited a weak Executive, and was not in a position to confront conservatives in his party. However, Ford was a former well-respected Congressional leader with much experience building coalitions within Congress, and despite this background put forth little effort to address Congressional concerns, short of misleading conservatives by telling them that he did not intend to cut ties with Taiwan and to recognise Beijing on its terms should he win re-election. The Administration also made no attempt to answer the widespread Congressional concern that breaking the long-held American commitments to Taiwan

⁵⁰⁵ See 'Export Licensing of Advanced Technology: A Review', Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Trade and Commerce of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, Part II, 12 April 1976.

would harm American credibility, and its disingenuous attempts to convince conservatives that it did not plan to normalise with Beijing at the cost of ties with Taiwan were disbelieved partially due to Kissinger's lack of credibility with Congress. The result was not just a lack of movement toward normalisation, but an increase of distrust between the two branches.

The example of the Congressional impact on debate over Sino-American security ties reveals an increasing level of involvement from the early 1970's onwards, as the Congress was made aware of Executive Branch consideration of such ties under Presidents Nixon and Ford, and began to educate themselves on the issues involved after learning of the Executive Branch debate over the issue. Kissinger did not appreciate the Congressional attempt to involve itself with this issue, an attitude that was noted by Members and Congressional staff, who attributed it to institutional arrogance.⁵⁰⁶

In fairness to Kissinger, it should be noted that when he took office with Nixon in 1969, he and Nixon had very large security challenges to face and confronted a Congress hostile to defence spending, weapons programs, military activity undertaken in opposition to communist actions, and the foreign basing of American military personnel. All of these were important aspects of national strength that both Nixon and Kissinger believed must be upheld if the United States were to remain strong in a world in which they believed America's national strength to be declining in relative terms. The delicate balancing act that Kissinger believed needed to be undertaken in order to ensure success in balancing relations with China and the Soviet Union and playing each off against the other was not one that he believed could be run by committee, particularly a very large, unwieldy organisation known for its lack of ability to keep secrets.⁵⁰⁷ Also, Kissinger believed that

⁵⁰⁶ This perception of Kissinger's attitude towards Congress was confirmed in numerous interviews of former Members and Congressional staff.

⁵⁰⁷ A *Washington Post* article by Victor Zorza reported that Pillsbury's article had annoyed Kissinger, who

public examination of the mechanics of playing a 'China card' undercut his strategy due to the fact that the card was most effective when it was implied and covert, not when it was overt. A public debate over the issue, in Kissinger's mind, made use of the card less effective.

As his strategy was failing, however, Congressional examination of the issue in 1975 and 1976 helped, not hurt. The statements of individual Members on the issue, the various committee hearings, and CoDels, all began a process of educating the public and the Members themselves on the issues, a process that would lead to stronger appreciation of China and its role in American security strategy, thereby helping to build public support for a potential policy shift in favour of security ties with China. Congressional consideration of this issue illustrates the role that Congressional attention can play in evaluating an idea and providing it with momentum as a policy option within the government. In this case, Congressional debate over the issue of potential security ties with China helped to 'normalise' the concept and make it more likely to be accepted by the national security bureaucracy as a legitimate policy option later in the decade as US-Soviet relations further deteriorated and Washington began to search for greater security.

did not want attention drawn to the fact that he was considering such a relationship with China. On 13 October 1975, Pillsbury wrote to Kissinger, pleading his case and apologising for any annoyance he may have caused through the publication of his article. Pillsbury's letter was released to Banning Garrett in response to a FOIA request and given to the author.

CHAPTER 4: 1977–1978 - CONGRESS CIRCUMVENTED AND A TILT TOWARD CHINA

As a new Administration took office in Washington the relationship with China had been stagnating for several years due largely to Congressional opposition to normalisation on Beijing's terms. Although there had been some movement toward greater acceptance that ties with Taiwan would have to be at least lessened somewhat in order to pursue normalisation with Beijing, Congress nevertheless remained unanimously opposed to normalisation on terms that would leave Taiwan vulnerable to coercion from Beijing. Also, although appreciative of the strategic value of relations with China in the face of the growing threat from the Soviet Union, Congress did not believe, as Carter came to believe, that Taiwan should be sacrificed in order to pursue closer security cooperation with China.

This chapter will focus on these two primary issues, the debate over normalisation and the nature of the post-normalisation relationship with Taiwan, and the debate over the role of China in Washington's attempt to come to grips with a quickly growing threat from the Soviet Union. The continuing disconnect between White House and Congressional attitudes toward Taiwan and the manner in which the White House undertook normalisation, with little reference to Congressional concerns, resulted in deepened distrust between the Executive and Legislative branches, ensured a lack of political consensus to support the White House initiative, and also ensured that the bilateral relationship, which would become the nation's most important, would be given an unstable foundation. Similarly, the White House policy shift away from a position of evenhandedness between Moscow and Beijing and toward a greater tilt toward Beijing was also undertaken with no consultation, which further weakened support for the Administration's China policy despite growing Congressional sentiment in favour of a

limited security relationship with China.

Circumventing Congress

Jimmy Carter's statements during the campaign that he would be reluctant to cut ties with Taiwan had worried the Chinese, but were likely merely the expediencies of a presidential campaign. Carter was aware that polls showed the public to be overwhelmingly opposed to the cutting of ties with Taiwan. When he took office, however, several key members of his foreign policy team were committed to early normalisation. Aside from the President himself, the key actors within the Administration were Cyrus Vance, Secretary of State, Richard Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, and the NSC staff member for China, Michael Oksenberg. At the State Department, Vance and Holbrooke each were very aware of the role that had been played by Congress in blocking the path to normalisation under President Ford, and Vance, in particular, showed a realisation that Congressional support was necessary for any normalisation agreement if the relationship was to be given a firm foundation for the future. The efforts of these men, however, were undermined by Carter's perception of Congress as a hindrance to be circumvented, and the disdain with which Brzezinski held Congress.

Carter and Brzezinski's attitudes shaped the broader culture among Administration officials who dealt with Congress, who had a reputation for being insensitive to Congressional wishes and refusing to take part in the system of compromise and exchanging of favours that was necessary to pass the President's legislative agenda. Hamilton Jordan, Carter's chief of staff, and Frank Moore, the head of the White House Office of Congressional Liaison, both had extremely difficult relations with

Congressional leaders.⁵⁰⁸ The Administration's failure to effectively deal with Congress

⁵⁰⁸ See 21 February 1977 exchange between Frank Moore and Jimmy Carter on this issue, White House

undermined its foreign policy across the board, including in the area of China policy.

From the spring of 1978 onward, as the President grew impatient with the Soviets, he came increasingly to share Brzezinski's view of the utility of closer relations with China. Brzezinski's China hand, Michael Oksenberg, met with Members and key Congressional staff taking soundings of Congressional attitudes regarding potential normalisation formulas, giving the impression that the NSC was attempting to actively consult. The record of the next two years, however, would show that the NSC's primary goal was to circumvent Congress. Oksenberg shared Brzezinski's perspective on the strategic importance of normalisation, as well as his boss's view of Congress as a barrier that needed to be overcome. Partially due to Soviet aggressiveness, which assisted Brzezinski's ability to shape the President's thinking in a manner more critical of Moscow, China policy came increasingly to be controlled by Brzezinski and the NSC rather than the State Department during 1978, which contributed to Congress being frozen out of the process. Brzezinski sought quick normalisation due to his belief in the strategic importance of ties to China in the context of US-Soviet relations, and, like Kissinger, was willing to sacrifice Taiwan for the sake of the strategic benefits that he envisioned would accrue to Washington through normalisation. However, while Nixon and Kissinger had at least lobbied and misled Congress so that they could be assured of broad Congressional support for their initiative, Carter and Brzezinski ultimately ignored Congress and undertook the policy shift in complete secrecy. The result was that a critical opportunity to build consensus behind normalisation and the new relationship was lost, and the consequent Congressional action ensured that Taiwan remained a divisive issue both in Sino-American relations and in American domestic political debate over China policy. It is somewhat ironic that although the White House sought to minimise the Congressional

Office of Congressional Liaison (hereafter, WHOCL), Box 26, Carter Library.

role, the manner in which it pursued normalisation effectively ensured a long-term Congressional oversight role with regard to policy toward Taiwan.

The Carter Administration faced, if anything, a tougher task in pursuing normalisation than had Nixon in his pursuit of the original opening in terms of gaining Congressional support. The problem was partly of Carter's own making. The President believed that the rightness of his policy choices were self-evident, and that he should not have to explain his reasoning nor lobby Congress to support his positions. Tip O'Neill, the Democratic Speaker of the House of Representatives, decried this attitude on the part of the President, noting that much more could have been accomplished, given the fact that Democrats controlled both the White House and both chambers of Congress, had Carter made a more serious attempt to engage Congress.⁵⁰⁹ Members of Carter's cabinet, similarly, recall that he saw lobbying the Congress as being somehow beneath him, and viewed interaction with Congress with a certain amount of distaste.⁵¹⁰ This attitude was bolstered by his view that Congress had been allowed to short-circuit the progress of normalisation.⁵¹¹ These attitudes and beliefs on Carter's part, combined with Brzezinski's disdain for the role of Congress⁵¹², ensured that little effort would be expended by the White House to attempt to build a consensus in support of normalisation.

Carter entered office proclaiming an intention to make Congress a partner in the policy-making process.⁵¹³ These pronouncements were seen by many on the Hill, however, and even by some within his own Administration, as largely lip-service necessitated by the obvious difficulties that his predecessors had had with Congress over

⁵⁰⁹ Tip O'Neill, with William Novak, *Man of the House: The Life and Political Memoirs of Speaker Tip O'Neil* (New York, 1987).

⁵¹⁰ Interview with James Schlesinger, who also served as CIA Director under Nixon, Secretary of Defense under Nixon and Ford, and Secretary of Energy under Carter, 8 August 2012, Arlington, Virginia.

⁵¹¹ Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p.197.

⁵¹² Interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski, 6 October 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁵¹³ *New York Times*, 13 January 1977.

foreign policy and Executive powers.⁵¹⁴ Within two weeks of taking office, one of the White House staff responsible for liaison with the Senate reported that Scoop Jackson, who was deeply disappointed that Carter's early decisions projected an overly-dovish image, 'is extremely upset with the President' and 'believes all of the President's talk about consultation, cooperation and coordination with the Congress is a lot of bunk'.⁵¹⁵ Jackson's criticism cannot be dismissed simply due to the obvious differences in geostrategic views between himself and the new, liberal President. The next day, Frank Moore reported to Carter that 'Jackson exemplifies a growing sentiment in the Senate among some of the older heads that the President is insulating himself from them and avoiding even soliciting their advice'.⁵¹⁶ This belief among Senate leaders was reinforced by the fact that Carter discontinued the tradition, which had dated back to the 1930's, of holding meetings with the bipartisan Congressional leadership.⁵¹⁷ A Congressional liaison staff member warned that this lack of consultations was ultimately going to hurt Administration foreign policy, but was ignored.⁵¹⁸

In addition to this lack of interest in consulting Congress, Carter had none of Nixon's political advantages in seeking to advance the relationship with China. Whereas Nixon had entered office having a reputation as a tough anticommunist, which he leveraged in order to minimise conservative opposition to the opening to China, Carter's early days in office reinforced conservative views that he was a dove, leaving him vulnerable to conservative attacks on his approach to relations with the Soviet Union as well as on the Sino-American normalisation issue. Even Senate Democratic leaders including Majority Leader Robert Byrd and John Glenn, chairman of the Subcommittee

⁵¹⁴ Interview with James Schlesinger.

⁵¹⁵ Dan Tate to Frank Moore, 3 February 1977, WHOCL, Box 24, Carter Library.

⁵¹⁶ Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 4 February 1977, *ibid*.

⁵¹⁷ Max Friedersdorf to Howard Baker, 19 December 1977, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 1, Howard Baker Papers.

⁵¹⁸ Ann Dye to Frank Moore, 12 July 1977, WHOCL, Box 21, Carter Library.

on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, doubted Carter's approach to the Soviets.⁵¹⁹ Carter's aloof attitude did not help matters.⁵²⁰ These patterns did not portend a successful resolution of the issue of normalisation, which so clearly required presidential credibility and a substantial investment of presidential energy and attention to Congress.

Brzezinski and Vance took the initial steps toward normalisation. Even before the inauguration, Vance assembled a team of Asia and China specialists, which included Holbrooke and Oksenberg, and gave them access to what Nixon and Ford papers were available with instructions 'to argue the case for normalisation in a relatively short period of time'.⁵²¹ Vance forwarded the result of their research to the President, and argued that normalisation would reinvigorate the Sino-Soviet-American triangle, and, hence, US-Soviet détente, would contribute toward the 'stabilisation' of East Asia, and that Taiwan would survive normalisation but that delay would give Taipei 'opportunities to attempt spoiling efforts (lobbying the Congress, etc.)'.⁵²² Although noting that 'the American people overwhelmingly favor continued close ties with Taiwan' and that 'a demonstrable "sellout" of Taiwan would provoke a serious outcry', Vance argued that, if handled in such a way that Taiwan's future security were protected and the US were able to retain significant relations with Taipei, the public would support normalisation.⁵²³ Vance's assertion was correct that broad support existed for normalisation provided the two concerns that he listed were addressed. Also, despite referring to Congress as a potential 'spoiler', he took Congressional concerns seriously, shared many of those concerns, and

⁵¹⁹ See Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 16 February 1977, Box 24, *ibid.*; Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 14 December 1978, *ibid.*; and Frank Moore to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 4 April 1977, Box 87, *ibid.*

⁵²⁰ *ibid.*; Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 23 August 1977, Box 18, *ibid.*; and interview with James Schlesinger.

⁵²¹ Vance, *Hard Choices*, p.76; Cyrus Vance to Jimmy Carter, 15 April 1977, Plains File, Box 6, Carter Library.

⁵²² *ibid.*

⁵²³ *ibid.*

realised the need to work with Congress to build consensus behind normalisation. In addition to the concerns over Taiwan, Vance also shared Congressional concern that if the United States pursued normalisation in such a way that the rest of the world perceived Washington as betraying Taiwan, or renegeing on treaties and years of repeated commitments because those treaties and commitments were no longer convenient, American credibility would be severely harmed – a theme that would be repeated by many Members of both parties over the next two years.⁵²⁴

From the beginning of 1977, conservatives in Congress watched for any signs that the new Administration was willing to acquiesce to Beijing's demands and to cut ties with Taiwan. Noting that Oksenberg had advocated, while part of the University of Michigan faculty, that President Ford acquiesce to Beijing's demands and that he now held a key position at the NSC, Barry Goldwater labelled this fact 'highly disturbing', and reminded the Administration of the 'clear majority' of the House of Representatives which had signed onto the previous year's House Concurrent Resolutions expressing opposition to such a course of action.⁵²⁵ Goldwater also reminded the White House of 'Mr. Carter's pledge to just tap the sound common sense and the good judgement of the American people in developing our foreign policy', implying that a decision to cut ties with Taiwan would contradict Carter's promise given overwhelming public support for continuing ties with Taipei.⁵²⁶

The Congressional concerns that had been raised in the previous several years were repeated to the new Administration, including concerns about the moral import of renouncing years of commitments to Taiwan, and the damaging impact on American

⁵²⁴ Vance, *Hard Choices*, p.77.

⁵²⁵ Senate floor speech by Barry Goldwater, 7 February 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵²⁶ *ibid.*

credibility of appearing to leave a close ally vulnerable to takeover.⁵²⁷ The President's vocal emphasis on human rights as a centrepiece of American foreign policy created a new point of leverage for conservatives, who believed that Carter's emphasis in this area made him vulnerable since he did not offer even the most gentle criticism of Beijing, despite the fact that China had arguably a worse human rights record than did the Soviet Union.⁵²⁸ Typical of conservative arguments was a speech by Senator Jesse Helms, which asserted that 'The disappearance of 16 million Taiwanese into the limbo of totalitarianism might be regarded as a more significant setback for human rights than the arrest of a few Soviet dissidents'.^{529 530} The paradox between Carter's proclamation that universal human rights would be a centrepiece of his Administration's foreign policy, on the one hand, and his public determination to normalise relations (with the implications that this had for Taiwan) with a nation that had perhaps a worse human rights record than even the Soviet Union, on the other, was indeed a point on which Carter was vulnerable, nor did the

⁵²⁷ See Harry Byrd, Jr., to a constituent, 27 December 1978, MSS 10320-a,-b, Box 266, Harry Byrd, Jr. Papers;

House floor speech by Robert McClory, 4 October 1977, *Congressional Record*;
Report by Senator Jacob Javits of a trip to East Asia, December 1977, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, Howard Baker Papers.

⁵²⁸ Senate floor speech by Barry Goldwater, 5 May 1977, *Congressional Record*; House floor speech, by Larry MacDonald, 'Rights Denied in Red China and Vietnam', 20 June 1977, *Congressional Record*; House floor speech by Edward Derwinski, 12 July 1977, *Congressional Record*; House floor speech by Robert Sikes, 15 July 1977, *Congressional Record*; Personal notes by House International Relations Committee Chairman Clement Zablocki, 16 December 1978, Series FA-3.1, Box 2, Clement Zablocki Papers; Buchanan, Pat, 'No Cries of Outrage Heard: Chinese Youth Murdered For Marking on a Billboard?' *Birmingham [Alabama] News*, 16 February 1977.

⁵²⁹ Senate floor speech by Jesse Helms, 24 June 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵³⁰ Liberal House Members also criticised Taiwan's record of political repression. Don Fraser, by now chairman of the Subcommittee on International Organisations of the House International Relations Committee, regularly communicated with Taiwan's ambassador, James Shen, and sought State Department intervention on individual cases of political repression in Taiwan. See Don Fraser to Cyrus Vance, 9 February 1977, Box 93, Location 151.H.3.8F, Don Fraser Papers; Don Fraser to James Shen, 9 February 1977, *ibid.*; Don Fraser to James Shen, 22 March 1977, *ibid.*

Fraser's subcommittee also held a hearing in June 1977 on the topic of political repression by Taipei that briefly became the centre of a political war on Capitol Hill between staunch supporters of Taiwan and liberals. See 'Human Rights in Taiwan', Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Organisations of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, 14 June 1977 (Washington, D.C., 1977); See also summary of the 14 June 1977 hearings, sent as a memo from Don Fraser to all members of the House International Relations Committee, 16 June 1977, Box 93, Location 151.H.3.8F, Don Fraser Papers.

Administration have a strong defence of itself to this criticism.

Many moderates and liberals agreed with their conservative colleagues that China's poor record on human rights protections dictated an approach to normalisation that would not leave Taiwan vulnerable to the Mainland or result in Taiwan being brought under Communist rule. While acknowledging the political repression that also existed on Taiwan, some House liberals argued that 'There is appreciably more freedom on Taiwan than on Mainland China, although Taiwan has a long way to go by our standards'.⁵³¹ The White House never responded to these Congressional charges, although Brzezinski noted in a memo to Carter that Congressional objections on human rights grounds to leaving Taiwan vulnerable to coercion by Beijing had a valid point.⁵³² Brzezinski's pursuit of normalisation and a tacit security alliance with China appeared to validate conservative accusations hypocrisy, since it appeared that the White House was punishing some Asian allies, such as the Philippines and South Korea, over human rights concerns even as it ignored China's much poorer record. Cyrus Vance, in distinction to Brzezinski, agreed with the Congressional conviction that the American relationship with China was limited in some important areas due to the complete lack of human rights protections in China.⁵³³

Oksenberg and Holbrooke did meet with some key Members in order to get a feel for attitudes toward normalisation. In early May, Oksenberg lunched with Scoop Jackson and reported that primarily due to Jackson's belief that ties with China were of great benefit to Washington in its competition with Moscow, he remained supportive of normalisation. Oksenberg found that Jackson 'seems willing to play a leading role in Congress in generating the support necessary for such a move', as long as 'an adequate

⁵³¹ House floor statement by Paul Simon, 6 June 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵³² Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 'The Taiwan Lobby and Its Significance', 29 July 1977, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Subject Files, Box 41, Carter Library.

⁵³³ Memcon between Cyrus Vance and Senators Abraham Ribicoff, Sam Nunn, Adlai Stevenson, and Henry Bellmon, 8 November 1978, Box 572, Abraham Ribicoff Papers.

substitute for the Defense Treaty with Taiwan can be arranged'.⁵³⁴ Over the next year, however, Jackson's continuing disenchantment with Carter's approach to the Soviet Union limited his willingness to work with the Administration to advance the cause of normalisation.⁵³⁵

Throughout 1977 and 1978, Congress continued to express its concern, which had been consistently expressed since 1973, that the Executive Branch would move to meet Chinese terms for normalisation, leaving Taiwan vulnerable. Now it began to emphasise that any change of China policy must be taken only after consultation with Congress, and that the Administration must attempt to build a consensus behind an approach to normalisation that had broad support. Shortly after Oksenberg's meeting with Jackson, Clement Zablocki, now chairman of the House International Relations Committee, gave a major address on China policy in which he emphasised the need to build a 'broad consensus on the major outlines of our strategy and goals', and that if a fully normalised relationship were to be successful in the long term, 'it needs to have broad bipartisan support'.⁵³⁶ Zablocki called on the Administration to consult with Congress, warning that precipitate action would 'set off a bitter debate and undermine policy before it is set'.⁵³⁷ Zablocki's warning appears prescient in light of subsequent events.

Administration policy toward normalisation began to take shape with Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM) 24, a broad Administration study of options with regard to normalisation that was commissioned in April 1977 and completed that summer. The study listed four options for normalisation: 1) acquiescence to Beijing's demands and

⁵³⁴ Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 11 May 1977, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Subject Files, Box 41, Carter Library.

⁵³⁵ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 25 April 1978, RAC, NLC-10-11-4-13-0, Carter Library.

⁵³⁶ Address by Clement Zablocki, 'US Policy Toward China: A Congressional View', 14 May 1977, Series FA-3.1, Box 2, Clement Zablocki Papers.

⁵³⁷ *ibid.*

cutting all formal ties with Taiwan, 2) recognition of China while retaining diplomatic and military ties with Taiwan, 3) a unilateral effort on Washington's part, during which Washington would gradually reduce ties with Taipei on its own terms, and 4) continue all diplomatic and military ties with Taiwan while simultaneously pursuing a military relationship with China. The Presidential Review Committee unanimously recommended the first option.⁵³⁸ Members of Congress were aware that the study was being undertaken and were intensely curious as to its conclusions, but its recommendations were tightly held. The only thing that Members could do was to watch for signs from the Administration that would give them some clue as to which direction policy was going. Administration actions during the summer of 1977 indicated to Members that their concerns were being ignored, which further increased Congressional nervousness.

Carter's commencement address at Notre Dame University on 22 May, in which he said that the relationship with China was 'a central element in our global policy' and spoke of the intention to complete normalisation, sparked fears again in Congress that some Administration action on China was imminent, despite the lack of consultations.⁵³⁹ A month later, as a preliminary draft of PRM-24 had been completed, Vance gave an address billed as a major statement of Administration foreign policy, in which he reiterated Carter's statement of intent to complete the normalisation process. Troubling from the perspective of many Members was Vance's statement that, 'We acknowledge the view expressed in the Shanghai Communiqué that there is but one China'.⁵⁴⁰ While this wasn't technically a concession, merely an acknowledgement of China's view, many Members did not see it that way, and being unaware of the extent of Vance's sympathy

⁵³⁸ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 'China Policy Review:Recent Developments', July 1977, NSA, Staff Material, Far East, Box 4, Carter Library.

⁵³⁹ *Department of State Bulletin* (13 June 1977), p.625; House floor statement by Paul Simon, 6 June 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁴⁰ *Department of State Bulletin*, 1 August 1977, p.142.

with their views, feared the worst. The next day, Carter held a news conference in which he expressed the hope that Vance's trip would lead to an agreement resulting in full normalisation.⁵⁴¹ Conservative Republicans and Democrats immediately expressed concern that the Administration might be planning to cut ties with Taiwan.⁵⁴²

The Administration also revealed in June that Vance would visit China in late August, which elicited worried expressions from Capitol Hill that the Administration not betray Taiwan and recapitulations of the arguments that caution be used in approaching normalisation.⁵⁴³ When PRM-24 was discussed by the Policy Review Committee in late June, Vance and Holbrooke raised several Congressional concerns that they believed the Administration should address, noting that 'the Congressional role in normalization will be important'.⁵⁴⁴ Vance suggested that 'Congress should be brought openly into the issue before his trip', but David Aaron, the assistant national security advisor, retorted that confiding in Congress would be 'premature'.⁵⁴⁵ Congress, therefore, was told nothing, with the result that its fears continued to grow about what was occurring behind closed doors.

David Aaron's disposition against including Congress in the normalisation process reflected the attitude of both Brzezinski and Carter. In late July, in preparation for Vance's trip, Brzezinski wrote a memo to Carter warning him that Taiwan and Taiwan's friends in Congress were 'actively campaigning to derail recognition'.⁵⁴⁶ The memo reflected Brzezinski's perception of Congress as an obstacle to be bypassed, and played on that sentiment within Carter. Brzezinski went on to outline some of the arguments being made

⁵⁴¹ President's press conference, 30 June 1977, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Jimmy Carter, 1977-1981*.

⁵⁴² House floor statement by John Ashbrook, 12 July 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁴³ Senate floor statement by Jesse Helms, 24 June 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁴⁴ Minutes of Policy Review Committee meeting, 27 June 1977, NSA, Staff Material, Far East, Box 56, Carter Library.

⁵⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁴⁶ Zbigiew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 'The Taiwan Lobby and Its Significance', 29 July 1977, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Subject Files, Box 41, Carter Library.

by Taiwan and its Congressional supporters against cutting ties with Taipei, stressing that Taiwan's supporters in Congress were not as powerful as some in the Administration feared, and concluding that, 'The Taiwan Lobby does not constitute a major obstacle to normalization. The real issue concerns our willingness to grasp this thorny issue at a time that is strategically and politically advantageous to us'.⁵⁴⁷ [Emphasis in the original.]

As this memo makes clear, Brzezinski saw Congress as an obstacle to normalisation with China that had as its primary goal the gaining of leverage over the Soviet Union. Brzezinski's estimation that Congressional supporters of Taiwan would be unable to stop normalisation was accurate. However, the memo is also revealing for what it says about how greatly the White House misunderstood attitudes in Congress toward normalisation. Although a very small minority among conservatives was opposed to normalisation, the vast majority of Congress supported it. As will be seen, even arch-conservatives such as Senator Jesse Helms and Representative Lester Wolff, who was very close to Taipei, supported the goal of normalisation with China provided US-Taiwan relations remained close and an adequate substitute was found to the Mutual Defense Treaty to ensure Taiwan's security. Brzezinski under-estimated the breadth of support within Congress for Taiwan's security, as shown by his dismissive statement, 'The ROC is good at using mirrors to make us think they have a constituency'.⁵⁴⁸ Although Carter and Brzezinski, if they had had an accurate understanding of each of these points, were still likely to have attempted to bypass Congress rather than to work with it due to their personal inclinations, the factors illustrated above are evidence that space did exist within which the White House could have worked with Congress in an attempt to reach a consensus on normalisation. Its decision not to do so was not borne out of necessity, but

⁵⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁴⁸ *ibid.*

personal inclination.

During the summer of 1977 the White House continued to ignore repeated warnings from key Members that normalisation not occur at the cost of ties with Taiwan. John Sparkman, Fulbright's successor as SFRC chairman, visited Taipei and issued a strong statement in favour of retaining ties with Taiwan. Intentionally signalling the Administration prior to Vance's trip, Sparkman publicly promised Taipei that Washington, 'will not alter its relations with the Republic of China' as it considered formulas for normalisation with Beijing, and declaring that 'it is both unwise and unnecessary' to accept Beijing's normalisation terms.⁵⁴⁹ Howard Baker, Hugh Scott's successor as Senate Minority Leader, also advocated such a position on the Senate floor and in speeches around the country during the summer of 1977.⁵⁵⁰

As Vance's trip neared, Congressional warnings increased. Senator Bob Dole reminded the Administration of the oft-repeated Congressional expectation that no normalisation agreement be reached in the absence of Chinese 'assurances of a peaceful resolution' of the Taiwan issue.⁵⁵¹ The strongest statements, as usual, came from Barry Goldwater, who reprised the threat he had made to Gerald Ford the previous year, and threatened Carter with impeachment should he attempt to unilaterally abrogate the Mutual Defense Treaty, arguing that Carter did not have the constitutional authority to do so without Senate approval.⁵⁵² Conservatives also noted the pressures on China from the Soviet Union and the Chinese need for trade and US and Western technology, arguing that the Administration should use this

⁵⁴⁹ Quoted by Allan Brownfeld, 'We Must Not Sell Out Taiwan', *Lima News* (Georgia), 18 July 1977; read into the *Congressional Record* by Representative Larry McDonald on 28 July 1977.

⁵⁵⁰ Senate floor statement by Howard Baker, 2 August 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁵¹ Bob Dole to former Senator George Murphy, 16 August 1977, Accession 329-82-261, Box 67, Robert Dole Papers.

⁵⁵² See 'Goldwater Warns on Taiwan Treaty', *Reuters*, 27 August 1977; and Barry Goldwater, 'Abrogating Treaties', *New York Times*, 11 October 1977.

leverage to demand concessions from Beijing due to the fact that 'it is the Chinese mainland that stands to gain by a more formal relationship with the US'.⁵⁵³ In the absence of communication regarding the negotiating position that would be pursued by Vance, Congressional suspicions continued to be shaped by the signals that emanated from the Administration, which Congress saw was a conscious distancing of the Administration from Taipei. Congressman Larry McDonald's (D-GA) question was representative: 'If we are not preparing to abandon Taiwan, what is the purpose of such actions?'⁵⁵⁴

Members would have been surprised and heartened had they known that Vance's negotiating position sought to address Congressional concerns. Vance told the Chinese that he and Carter had determined 'that we must be partners with Congress in both the formulation and the implementation of foreign policy'.⁵⁵⁵ And since Congress, while supporting normalisation, would not accept it on Beijing's terms, Beijing would need to compromise.⁵⁵⁶ Vance then offered the same negotiating position that had previously been suggested by both Scoop Jackson and Henry Kissinger, and firmly rejected – that the Chinese allow Washington to maintain official representation in the form of a Liaison Office in Taipei, just as they now had in Beijing. Vance also asked the Chinese to soften their militant rhetoric on the forceful reunification of Taiwan with the Mainland, appealing to the impact of this rhetoric on Congressional and public support for normalisation.⁵⁵⁷ Vance's consistent positions in internal Administration discussions are evidence that he was not merely using Congress as a bargaining lever in his negotiations with Beijing.

⁵⁵³ House floor statement by Robert Sikes, 15 July 1977, *Congressional Record*; House floor statement by Phil Crane, 8 September 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁵⁴ House floor statement by Larry McDonald, 28 July 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁵⁵ Memcon between Cyrus Vance and Huang Hua, 22 August 1977, Vertical Files, Box 40, Carter Library.

⁵⁵⁶ Memcon between Vance and Huang Hua, 23 August 1977, *ibid*.

⁵⁵⁷ *ibid*.

Further commending this negotiating position, however, was the fact that his visit coincided with the beginning of a bruising Senate battle over the Panama Canal Treaty, which foreclosed the Administration's ability to undertake any other controversial foreign policy initiative that required legislative action, as de-recognition of Taiwan certainly would, until well into 1978.⁵⁵⁸

The Chinese were not receptive to Vance's offer and appeal to domestic political factors, just as they had not been when such proposals had been made previously.⁵⁵⁹ They also viewed Vance, whose priority was completing the SALT II negotiations with the Soviets, as being overly-sympathetic to Moscow – just as they had perceived Kissinger to be.⁵⁶⁰ Deng Xiaoping, who had just returned from his most recent political purging but had not yet consolidated his position in Beijing, angrily rejected the offer as a renunciation of Ford's promises made in December 1975.

Upon the failure of Vance's trip, Oksenberg expressed concern that normalisation may not be politically possible since the Chinese were sticking to their militantly expressed demands regarding Taiwan, and Congressional and public opposition seemed to foreclose Carter's ability to accept those demands.⁵⁶¹ The situation contributed to Oksenberg being in sympathy with Brzezinski and Carter's perception of Congress as an obstacle. This was particularly the case given the high value Oksenberg, like Brzezinski, placed on the strategic value of improved relations with China. Oksenberg complained to Brzezinski, 'One wishes that we

⁵⁵⁸ 'Carter, Panama and China', *New York Times*, 24 August 1977.

⁵⁵⁹ Memcon between Vance and Huang Hua, 24 August 1977, *ibid.*

⁵⁶⁰ Deng Xiaoping told a Senate delegation a few months later that he considered Vance 'anti-Chinese', and would prefer to meet with Brzezinski, whose anti-Soviet views he admired, *Christian Science Monitor*, 30 January 1978.

⁵⁶¹ Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.103.

could legally obtain more information about the activities of the Taiwan Lobby'.⁵⁶²

Congress continued to send signals that autumn of its expectation to be consulted prior to any change of policy. During September and October 1977 the House Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, chaired by Lester Wolff, held a series of hearings which examined the broader implications of normalisation for 'our policy throughout Asia, as well as with the Soviet Union'. Wolff emphasised that the hearings were meant to examine methods with which normalisation might take place, possible formulas that allowed continued close relations with Taiwan, broader implications for America's foreign policy, etc., but not whether normalisation should take place.⁵⁶³ That issue was treated as having been settled, even by someone known to be as strongly supportive of Taiwan as was Wolff, illustrating that Congressional opposition was not to the goal of normalisation but to the manner in which it might take place. Just as importantly, Wolff emphasised that giving Congress a voice in the normalisation process would result in a much less contentious China policy. He wrote in the forward to the hearing report that 'It is my hope that these hearings . . . will help . . . avoid the divisive sort of debate presently taking place on the Panama Canal, where a *fait accompli* of sorts has created uncertainty and mistrust'.⁵⁶⁴ The White House continued to ignore these repeated warnings.

Although it was clear to Congress that Vance's trip had failed to produce any movement toward normalisation, with little information flowing from the Administration, Members had to continue to hunt for signals of its intentions. Clement Zablocki had gained intelligence that the NSC had helped to write a recent speech given by Ted

⁵⁶² Far East to Brzezinski, 19 September 1977, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 5, Carter Library.

⁵⁶³ 'Normalisation of Relations With the People's Republic of China: Practical Implications', Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on International Relations (Washington, D.C., 1977).

⁵⁶⁴ *ibid.*

Kennedy calling for normalisation on Beijing's terms.⁵⁶⁵ Accordingly, Zablocki sought a meeting with Oksenberg in late September to discover whether Kennedy's recent speech reflected the results of PRM-24 and, hence, White House policy. Oksenberg denied collaboration with Kennedy on his speech, and told Zablocki that, although he had seen a draft of Kennedy's speech as a Kennedy staff member had asked him to do so in order 'to check it for accuracy' - 'This I would do for any Congressman or Senator, no matter what positions were represented in the speech'.⁵⁶⁶ After Oksenberg's denial, Zablocki asked to see a copy of the completed study (PRM-24) in order to understand how the Administration was approaching the issue of normalisation. Oksenberg demurred, instead summarising the four options outlined in the study and telling him that 'we had not selected from among the options, but were still in the process of exploring ways we could improve our relations with the PRC'.⁵⁶⁷

Oksenberg was less than honest on both counts, which Zablocki likely realised given Oksenberg's refusal to let him view PRM-24. While it was technically true that the Administration had not formally committed itself to the first option – that of acquiescing to Beijing's demands, it was also true that the Presidential Review Committee had unanimously supported that option.⁵⁶⁸ Only the timing was undetermined, in terms of when the Administration believed it would have a window of opportunity in the midst of its other foreign policy objectives that required Congressional action. Regarding White House collaboration with Kennedy, Zablocki's suspicions were also correct. Oksenberg

⁵⁶⁵ 'Kennedy Calls for Diplomatic Split with Taiwan and Ties With China', *New York Times*, 16 August 1977.

⁵⁶⁶ Far East to Brzezinski, 27 September 1977, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 5, Carter Library.

⁵⁶⁷ Michael Oksenberg to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 19 January 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 17, Carter Library;
Far East to Brzezinski, 27 September 1977, Box 5, *ibid*.

⁵⁶⁸ Minutes of Policy Review Committee meeting, 27 June 1977, NSA, Staff Material, Far East, Box 56, Carter Library.

met regularly with Kennedy and/or his foreign policy aide, Jan Kalicki, and privately referred to Kennedy as 'a spearcarrier on China policy for the Administration from the very offset'.⁵⁶⁹

The White House was attempting to use a very limited number of liberal Senators, including Kennedy and Alan Cranston, to attempt to push Congressional opinion in the direction of acceptance of Beijing's normalisation terms. This was not a very effective method of shaping Congressional opinion since conservatives, whose concerns most needed addressed, were not likely to be swayed by speeches by Senate liberals, and moderates, too, were reticent to cut ties with Taiwan and not likely to be convinced by liberal advocacy for that course of action. What was needed was presidential lobbying aimed at convincing conservatives and moderates that the Administration would ensure Taiwan's future security, and that relations between the United States and Taiwan, even if unofficial, would remain close.

Unfortunately, Carter had placed himself in a position from which his lobbying of Congress in this way, even had he been inclined to do so, was not likely to have been effective. His consistent demonstration of ambivalence toward Capitol Hill had alienated much of Congress. Also, conservatives, moderates and even some liberals were sceptical of his leadership, as demonstrated by the extreme difficulty in gaining passage of the Panama Canal Treaty and the doubts that most political observers had that the SALT II treaty would pass the Senate even prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.⁵⁷⁰

Whereas the White House was unwilling to attempt to address Congressional concerns, Deng Xiaoping, aware that Congressional reticence had been a key factor slowing progress toward normalisation, attempted to lower Congressional opposition

⁵⁶⁹ Michael Oksenberg to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 19 January 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 17, Carter Library.

⁵⁷⁰ *Evans-Novak Political Report*, 28 February and 7 June 1978.

beginning in early 1978. Alan Cranston, together with Kennedy one of the few liberal Senators with whom the White House had good relations,⁵⁷¹ had been chosen by the NSC to lead a joint delegation of the SFRC and the House International Relations Committee to China in January 1978.⁵⁷² Fortuitously, Cranston's trip came at a time when Deng Xiaoping was beginning to consolidate his position in Beijing, and attempting to soften Chinese rhetoric regarding the forceful 'liberation' of Taiwan which had been so dominant since 1974. Cranston's delegation was the first to note this change of tone. Deng expressed his 'hopes that the "reunification" of China would be peaceful and in the distant future', which message Brzezinski reported to Carter as a hopeful sign.⁵⁷³

Simultaneous with this signal, Brzezinski began pushing that Carter send him to Beijing to begin normalisation talks, placing the issue in the context of worsening relations with Moscow.⁵⁷⁴ Shortly afterwards, Kennedy gave another Senate speech advocating normalisation that was meant to support movement in that direction by the Administration.⁵⁷⁵ That March, the NSC sketched out a potential strategy, with a calculating eye toward how to use increasing tensions with Moscow to overcome objections from conservatives. Michael Armacost, who together with Oksenberg was responsible for East Asia policy at the NSC, argued that, 'Politically, the time is ripe for this. Rapid normalisation is more palatable when the Soviets are acting up'.⁵⁷⁶ Armacost's analysis, while correctly estimating that conservatives understood the strategic value of

⁵⁷¹ 'The Democrat's Whip, Senator Cranston, Emerges As Key Asset for Carter', *Wall Street Journal*, 15 March 1977.

⁵⁷² Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 16 December 1977, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 7, Carter Library.

⁵⁷³ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 'Information Items', 17 January 1978, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Trip Files, Box 34, Carter Library.

⁵⁷⁴ Weekly Report from Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 12 January 1978, Donated Historical Material, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Subject File, Seignious, George, II-[1/80] through Serial Xs-[10/80-12/80], Box 41, Carter Library.

⁵⁷⁵ Address by Senator Edward Kennedy before the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, 24 February 1978, Box 594, Averell Harriman Papers.

⁵⁷⁶ Michael Armacost to Mort Abramowitz (Seoul), 10 March 1978, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Subject Files, Box 7, Carter Library.

improving relations with China, miscalculated that this appreciation would result in a willingness to cut ties with Taiwan. Also, the memo did not suggest an attempt to ease concerns regarding Taiwan's future security, but seemed to assume that such concerns could be ignored and emphasis on the anti-Soviet aspects of normalisation would be sufficient to gain conservative support.

The strategic rationale behind closer relations with China was understood and appreciated by conservatives, moderates, and liberals, but few believed it to outweigh considerations of national credibility and the practical consideration of how to ensure Taiwan's future security.⁵⁷⁷ Additionally, conservatives believed that the military pressure on China was far greater than that faced by the United States, and that, therefore, Beijing had far more to gain by normalisation than did Washington and should show some willingness to compromise.⁵⁷⁸ The NSC, given its belief in the over-riding importance of the strategic benefits of normalisation to the United States, found it hard to believe that conservatives would not be swayed by the strategic logic they believed to be so persuasive. And unlike Nixon, who had overseen a lobbying effort to convince conservatives (although disingenuously) that he would continue to protect Taiwan, there is no evidence that the Carter White House sought to address such concerns.

Beginning the previous November, Brzezinski had gradually gained Carter's permission to take control of China policy from the State Department, and by late February had gained his permission to travel to China to attempt to start normalisation negotiations. Soviet aggressiveness also helped Brzezinski to convince Carter that normalisation should be pursued as a means of moderating Soviet behaviour.⁵⁷⁹ He

⁵⁷⁷ See 'Security Issues in the Far East', a report made by House International Relations Committee member Stephen Solarz on the subject of the likely effect of normalisation on broader American commitments and credibility in Asia (Washington, D.C., 1977).

⁵⁷⁸ Senate floor speech by Howard Baker, 2 August 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁵⁷⁹ Michael Oksenberg and Michael Armacost to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 24 March 1978, NSA, Staff Material—Far East, Armacost—Chron File, 2/1/78 through 4/1/78, Box 6, Carter Library.

travelled to China with a negotiating position now supported by Vance that recanted Vance's earlier request to retain a liaison office in Taipei, and for the first time confirmed Nixon, Kissinger, and Ford's earlier concessions. Brzezinski's talks with Deng set off several months of talks in Beijing which the Administration sought to keep secret.

Their suspicions aroused by Brzezinski's trip, Members continued to worry about Administration intentions over the coming months. Even most conservatives favoured normalisation. As Michael Armacost had correctly noted, conservatives supported the idea that closer relations with China would send a signal to Moscow. As Howard Baker wrote to a conservative Senate colleague, 'advantages do accrue to the US from improved relations with Peking'.⁵⁸⁰ The future security of Taiwan continued to be a sticking point, however. Even arch-conservative Republican Senator Jesse Helms appreciated the strategic logic and was willing to support normalisation 'provided we can remain confident that Taiwan's security will not be effected'.⁵⁸¹ Other conservatives had communicated the same attitude to the White House. Space existed for the Administration to work with conservatives and others who shared these concerns, despite their distrust of Carter's foreign policy in general, to win their support for normalisation by convincing them that Taiwan's security would not be put at risk. Such an effort would also have met Congress's expectation that it be consulted and made part of the normalisation process.

The White House made no such effort, and Carter and Brzezinski kept the negotiations secret. Nevertheless, the watchful Congress saw more signals that the Administration continued to distance itself from Taiwan. Noticing this, Vance reiterated his belief that consensus must be built before any movement on normalisation, arguing

⁵⁸⁰ 'US Senate Republican Declaration on National Security and Foreign Policy', US Senate Republican Policy Committee, May 1978, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 10, Howard Baker Papers; Howard Baker to Orrin Hatch, 30 May 1978, Box 3, *ibid*.

⁵⁸¹ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 31 May 1978, RAC, NLC-10-12-1-19-6, Carter Library.

for 'the fundamental importance of advance consultations . . . with the top congressional leadership'.⁵⁸² He was again rebuffed.

While concrete information regarding the normalisation negotiations in Beijing did not leak, unconfirmed reports reached Capitol Hill that the Administration was planning a major shift in China policy without consulting Congress. Fearing that the Administration would attempt to unilaterally abrogate the Mutual Defense Treaty without Senate action, Senators Bob Dole and Richard Stone (D-FL), a member of the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, authored an amendment to the International Security Assistance Act of 1978 that legally required the Administration to consult with the Senate prior to making any changes that would alter the defence agreement with Taiwan. A bipartisan group of eighteen senators co-sponsored the amendment. Jan Kalicki, Ted Kennedy's aide, gave Oksenberg advanced warning of the planned amendment, which allowed Oksenberg to work with Kennedy, Cranston, and John Glenn to water it down so that it no longer represented a legally binding requirement but simply an expression of Senate expectation.⁵⁸³ This was, nevertheless, only a partial victory for the White House, as the resolution passed unanimously, indicating that even such White House allies as Kennedy and Cranston expected that the Senate's institutional prerogatives be recognised and that it be consulted.

Conservatives in the House introduced a total of nine resolutions during 1977 and 1978 (four of them authored by Democrats) expressing the expectation that relations with Taiwan remain close and that Taiwan's future security be ensured. Although the White House ignored these Congressional expressions, the Chinese took a very different

⁵⁸² Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp.116-7.

⁵⁸³ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 17 July 1978, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 13, Carter Library; Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 'Weekly Legislative Report', 22 July 1978, Plains File, Box 6, *ibid*.

approach than did the White House, attempting to address these concerns. Deng's consolidation of power had provided him with a more firm political position from which he could moderate the militant rhetoric employed by the Chinese since 1974, and he had been attempting to do so since Cranston's delegation had visited in January.

In July, as Leonard Woodcock had begun a series of presentations to the Chinese on the Administration's proposal for normalisation, Deng chose a visiting delegation of House Members led by Lester Wolff to send a message both to Congress and the Administration that Beijing was for the first time prepared to show some flexibility on the issue of Taiwan. Wolff, along with many of his colleagues, were known to be highly sympathetic to Taipei, making them the perfect audience for such a gesture. Wolff had spent the past several years hiring staff with China expertise and building bridges to the appropriate offices within the State Department in order to increase his ability to shape China policy.⁵⁸⁴ There is little evidence that his efforts were succeeding, however, until his delegation's conversation with Deng turned to the issue of Taiwan's future.

Wolff's delegation had requested, as virtually all CoDel's did, to meet with China's top leadership. China's leadership viewed House Members as less important in the American political firmament than were Senators, however, and such requests usually went unfulfilled.⁵⁸⁵ To the surprise of all involved, from the delegation itself to their Chinese handlers, the request for a meeting with Deng was suddenly granted.⁵⁸⁶ Deng first addressed the strategic rationale for normalisation, asserting that the mere fact of normalisation would give Moscow pause.⁵⁸⁷ Then, after rejecting Wolff's suggestion that

⁵⁸⁴ Multiple interviews with Chris Nelson, a subcommittee staff member, Washington, D.C., March and July 2010; Multiple interviews with Joyce Lasky Shub, also a subcommittee staff member, Friendship Heights, Maryland, 2009-2010; Interviews with Lester Wolff.

⁵⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁵⁸⁷ Memcon between Deng Xiaoping and the Wolff Congressional delegation, 8 July 1978, taken from handwritten notes of the meeting in the possession of Chris Nelson, and given to the author. Additional

the Japanese formula would not work for the United States and that Washington needed to retain an official presence on Taiwan, Deng laid out a *quid pro quo*.

In exchange for Washington taking a tougher stand on the Soviet Union and for its agreement not to recognise Vietnam, which Beijing saw as part of the Soviet attempt to encircle China, Deng offered a compromise on Taiwan. Referring to the history of past collaboration between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalists, Deng suggested that cooperation between the two sides remained possible, implying a negotiated reunification based upon a 'united front'. Deng also would ensure that Chinese leaders no longer spoke of 'liberating' Taiwan by force and, while Beijing could not make a public declaration that it would renounce the potential for military force, it would announce that it would do all in its power to ensure that the eventual unification of Taiwan with the mainland was peaceful.⁵⁸⁸ Deng emphasised that the delegation was to publicly announce his offer, indicating that he was seeking to use the Congressional propensity to leak to the press in his favour in order to impact American public opinion.⁵⁸⁹

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The news of this offered compromise was welcomed both at the State Department and the White House.⁵⁹¹ This Chinese effort to compromise evidenced Deng's understanding of the constraining influence which Congressional and US public opinion had had upon Washington's ability to move forward in the

transcripts of the meeting were taken by USLO staff who took part in the meeting with the delegation. These transcripts track closely with the recollections and meeting notes prepared by subcommittee staff member Chris Nelson, and can be found in Vertical Files, Box 40, Carter Library.

⁵⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁸⁹ Interview with Chris Nelson, 15 July 2010, Washington, D.C.; Interviews with Lester Wolff.

⁵⁹⁰ *UPI*, 10 July 1978; 'Peking Called Willing to Negotiate Accord with Taiwan Regime', *New York Times*, 16 July 1978.

⁵⁹¹ Members of the delegation briefed Vance upon their return, and Chris Nelson met with Oksenberg in the White House. Evidence that the Administration believed the subcommittee had made a contribution to normalisation was the fact that Lester Wolff and Chris Nelson were invited to the White House to meet with Deng when he visited in January 1979 after normalisation; Interviews with Chris Nelson and Lester Wolff.

normalisation process. It was ironic that, although the White House had done little to address Congressional fears regarding Taiwan's security and to build a case for normalisation through dialogue with Members, Deng attempted to do so by addressing their fears on Taiwan and arguing for the strategic benefits of normalisation.

While Deng's outreach did not erase Congressional fears or reduce Members' determination to provide for Taiwan's security, it did serve to lessen their mistrust of Beijing's intentions.⁵⁹² The delegation was so impressed by Deng's compromising tone and offer that they titled their trip report 'A New Realism'. The report recommended that the Administration explore the new Chinese attitude, but also repeated the admonition that the Administration needed to demonstrate 'full cooperation with Congress regarding its normalisation plans and policies'.⁵⁹³

The Administration did not follow Deng's example of attempting to address Congressional concerns, but did turn to a high profile Republican to assist them in their attempt to get around Congress when the normalisation negotiations reached a denouement. As normalisation talks progressed, the Administration sought confidential advice from Herbert Brownell, who had served as Attorney General in the Eisenhower Administration, on how to terminate the mutual security treaty in a way calculated to allow the Senate as little grounds for complaint as possible. State Department lawyers argued that Senate approval for treaty abrogation was not necessary because once Carter had withdrawn diplomatic recognition from Taiwan, it would no longer have the legal status of a state, thereby automatically nullifying

⁵⁹² *ibid.*; Interviews with Lester Wolff.

⁵⁹³ 'A New Realism: Factfinding Mission to the People's Republic of China, July 3-13, 1978', Report by the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1978).

the security treaty.⁵⁹⁴ Brownell, too, concluded that Senate consent was technically not needed, but advised that the Administration terminate the treaty in compliance with its provisions, by giving one year's notice to Taipei, so as to minimise as much as possible Congressional anger.⁵⁹⁵ Brownell's advice proved useful to the White House, which followed his suggestion when normalisation was announced, but the Administration's use of Brownell also came close to breaking the veil of secrecy when a *TIME Magazine* journalist discovered why Brownell was being consulted.

With secrecy difficult to sustain, by mid December, just days before Carter expected to make a public announcement, Vance, Holbrooke, and Warren Christopher, Deputy Secretary of State, all advocated bringing Congressional leaders into their confidence. Vance argued that it would be a needless insult to continue to hide from Congress the fact that such an important policy shift was about to occur, particularly when Congress had so clearly and repeatedly expressed its expectation to be consulted. Oksenberg and Brzezinski disagreed and convinced Carter that the risks of giving Taiwan's supporters a chance to scuttle normalisation, even at this late date, was far greater than the risk of Congressional anger at learning that they had been cut out of the decision.⁵⁹⁶

In addition to its argument for Congressional consultation, the State Department challenged Brzezinski over the terms of the emerging agreement, being convinced that those terms would not meet even Congress's minimum concerns. The State Department, from which Brzezinski and Oksenberg had hid the cables from Beijing for a brief but crucial period near the end of the negotiations, was brought back into the loop to discover that there was no clear statement of Chinese understanding that Washington would

⁵⁹⁴ Vance, *Hard Choices*, p.77.

⁵⁹⁵ Tyler, *A Great Wall*, p.258; Tucker, *Strait Talk*, pp.104-5.

⁵⁹⁶ Vance, *Hard Choices*, p.118.

continue to sell defensive weapons to Taipei. Particularly with the absence of a Chinese pledge to not use force, they argued, Congress would never support the agreement if such a statement were not made explicit, and that would scuttle normalisation. Brzezinski was prepared to ignore their protest until a brief discussion with the head of the Chinese Liaison Office made it clear that the Chinese, too, had understood that Washington had agreed to permanently cease all arms sales to Taiwan.⁵⁹⁷ A heated last-minute meeting in Beijing between Deng and Leonard Woodcock achieved grudging Chinese acceptance of continuing arms sales.⁵⁹⁸

As Nancy Bernkopf Tucker has noted, everyone knew normalisation was coming at some point in the not too distant future.⁵⁹⁹ However, an announcement at that point had been unexpected, partially due to the fact that the Congress had recessed for Christmas and would need to act quickly to provide the legal framework for continuing economic and cultural relations with Taiwan in the absence of diplomatic relations, and also because Congress believed that it had received a commitment from the Administration that it would consult Congress prior to making a decision.⁶⁰⁰ When Carter had asked John Glenn to come to the White House on 15 December to be briefed about an undefined, imminent presidential announcement, his aide, Carl Ford, suggested that the announcement might be about normalisation. Glenn replied, 'That's impossible – the Administration has not consulted with us on a change of China policy yet!'⁶⁰¹ Also making it unexpected for Glenn was the fact that he had visited Carter in the White House the previous day in

⁵⁹⁷ Memcon between Zbigniew Brzezinski and Chai Zemin, 15 December 1978, Vertical Files, China, MR-NLC-98-2(5)(3) through Concorde, Airplane, Box 41, Carter Library.

⁵⁹⁸ Interview with Stapleton Roy, 21 September 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁹⁹ Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.100.

⁶⁰⁰ *Congress and the Nation, Vol. V, 1977-1980: A Review of Government and Politics* (Washington, D.C., 1981), p.377.

⁶⁰¹ Interview with Carl Ford, Senator Glenn's aide for policy towards China on the Foreign Relations Committee staff, 9 September 2009, Tyson's Corner, Virginia.

order to discuss Senate debate on the SALT II Treaty, and the President knew that Glenn would be travelling to China in early January, yet had mentioned nothing.⁶⁰² In the House of Representatives, likewise, neither Clement Zablocki nor Lester Wolff had any awareness that such a decision was pending.⁶⁰³ The manner in which Carter and Brzezinski managed the process and the announcement angered even Administration supporters, who felt that Carter had openly slighted Congress, and ignited a political backlash as Vance had predicted.⁶⁰⁴

Although there was some liberal praise for the secret initiative⁶⁰⁵, far more noticeable were expressions of anger at the complete lack of consultations. Congressional leaders were informed of the decision at a meeting in the White House an hour prior to Carter's nationally-televised address. Brzezinski made a brief appearance at the meeting out of necessity, then left as quickly as possible so as not to be made a target of Congressional scorn.⁶⁰⁶ Following President Carter's brief announcement to the Congressmen and Senators, Zablocki, his anger evident, asked, 'Would it be fair to say that what we've just heard are the "consultations" that you promised? Is this it?'⁶⁰⁷ Zablocki's personal notes on the announcement, made the next day, sum up well the Congressional reaction, which was strikingly uniform, and illustrate why the creation of a new domestic political consensus regarding China policy remained out of reach. Zablocki confided in his diary his impression that Carter was determined to pursue normalisation 'at any cost', and that Carter had 'caved in to all the demanded conditions of the PRC'. Zablocki's private venting

⁶⁰² Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 14 December 1978, WHOCL, Box 18, Carter Library; Interview with Carl Ford.

⁶⁰³ Interviews with Lester Wolff.

⁶⁰⁴ 'Old China Debate Flares', *New York Times*, 17 December 1978.

⁶⁰⁵ Press release by office of Senator Harrison Williams, 15 December 1978, WHOCL, Box 219, Carter Library.

⁶⁰⁶ Interview with Walter Mondale.

⁶⁰⁷ *ibid.*

reflected the myriad concerns that were so prominent within Congress, not just about the Administration's lack of consultation, but also regarding the expectation that abrogation of the defence treaty opened Taiwan to eventual takeover by Beijing, and the impact of this move on American credibility.⁶⁰⁸

These concerns, and anger at what was perceived to be an act of contempt for Congress as an institution, crossed partisan and ideological boundaries, and none believed that Taiwan's future security had been provided for. Members as diverse as John Glenn, Howard Baker, Thomas Eagleton, Barry Goldwater, Joe Biden, Jacob Javits, Clifford Case and Harry Byrd, Jr., in the Senate, and Clement Zablocki, Lester Wolff and Minority Leader John Rhodes, in the House, all expressed their anger, distrust, and in some cases, sense of betrayal, both privately to the White House and publicly.⁶⁰⁹ The most forceful response was that of Barry Goldwater and a bipartisan group of twenty four other Members, who filed a lawsuit in federal court asking that the judicial branch declare unconstitutional Carter's unilateral action abrogating the defence treaty.⁶¹⁰ Five days after the announcement, Oksenberg, in an understatement, reported to Brzezinski that the Congressional reaction had been 'more difficult than expected'.⁶¹¹ The overwhelming dynamic in the face of Carter's announcement was a sense of institutional aggrievement and a bipartisan conviction that Congress needed to step in and ensure Taiwan's future security.

⁶⁰⁸ Personal notes by Clement Zablocki, 16 December 1978, Series FA-3.1, Box 2, Clement Zablocki Papers.

⁶⁰⁹ Howard Baker to Jimmy Carter, 18 December 1978, WHOCL, Box 219, Carter Library; Bennett to Frank Moore, 26 December 1978, *ibid.*; *New York Times*, 16 December 1978; 'A Senator Charges Deceit on China Tie', *New York Times*, 20 December 1978; Ann to Thomas Eagleton, 19 December 1978, Accession C674, f.4474, Eagleton, PRC, 1978-1979, Thomas Eagleton Papers.

⁶¹⁰ 617 F.2d 697: Senator Barry Goldwater, et al., v. James Earl Carter, President of the United States, et al., Appellants.

⁶¹¹ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 20 December 1978, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 17, Carter Library.

Vance had been correct when he later wrote that the risk of offending Congress had far outweighed the risk of a leak.⁶¹² Carter and Brzezinski had incorrectly believed the opposite to be the case. History had repeated itself, and once again, a White House had used secrecy to micromanage a process that led to closer relations with China in pursuit of strategic goals with disregard for the negative repercussions of their choices. This time the White House in question, due to the personality and inclinations of the President and his national security advisor, had not made an effort to ensure that Congressional support was sufficient to secure the success of their course of action. The White House had succeeded in forcing the completion of the normalisation process, but the manner in which it had done so had resulted in a relationship lacking the consensus that was needed to ensure solid footing for the future and instead ensured continuing conflict, both between Washington and Beijing and between the Administration and Congress.

Shifting Strategic Perceptions and a Tilt Toward with China

When Jimmy Carter took office in January 1977 the domestic political scene was characterised by widely divergent views of the international security environment. A substantial portion of the American public was growing increasingly sceptical that US-Soviet détente was beneficial to the United States, and the political right, as well as many moderates and liberals, saw a security environment that was continuing to deteriorate before what looked like an unrelenting Soviet bid for military and geopolitical superiority. The new President, on the other hand, initially believed the security environment to be relatively benign. His commencement address at Notre Dame University on 22 May 1977, in which he declared a determination to normalise with China, deplored 'an inordinate fear of communism' within American politics.⁶¹³ This, and many other signals

⁶¹² Vance, *Hard Choices*, p.118.

⁶¹³ *Department of State Bulletin*, 13 June 1977, p.625.

early in his Administration, including appointments to key positions with relevance to national security and arms control negotiations with the Soviets, led to the widespread opinion among not just conservatives, but also many Democratic Congressional leaders, that Carter held an overly-benign view of the strategic environment.⁶¹⁴

Although Carter had narrowly defeated Ford in 1976, several important Congressional races, particularly in the Senate, replaced more liberal Republicans with conservatives. This ideological shift, coming just over a year after Congressional attention had begun to be paid to the issue of potential Sino-American security cooperation, would have an impact on Congressional attitudes toward the development of a security relationship with China by increasing the number of Senators who were not concerned that such ties would offend Moscow. A trend within Congress toward greater support for defence spending and a harder line on the Soviet Union had begun in 1975 with the loss of Southeast Asia and the faltering of détente, and was reinforced by the continued degeneration of détente and of US public support for it at the end of the decade. The views of moderate and even some liberal Senators had been evolving due to the above dynamics, and continued to do so in 1977 and 1978. As one example, Edward Brooke explained in March 1977 that 'changed strategic circumstances' had caused him 'as well as others to review previous positions advocated in the late 1960's and early 1970's'.⁶¹⁵ Writing to a constituent a few weeks later, Brooke concluded that, given the geostrategic trends, the United States 'can no longer afford to show unilateral restraint as it has for the past decade'.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁴ Frank Moore to Jimmy Carter, 16 February 1977, WHOCL, Box 24, Carter Library. Interviews with numerous former Members and Congressional staff also highlighted their belief in Carter's dovishness and naivete, including telephone interviews with Richard Perle, 9 December 2009, and Bill Gribbon, December 2008; and interviews with former Senator Harry Byrd, Jr., 5 January 2010, Winchester, Virginia; James Lucier, 18 January 2010, Leesburg, Virginia; and Charles Horner, 27 August 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁶¹⁵ Senate floor speech by Edward Brooke, 9 March 1977, *Congressional Record*.

⁶¹⁶ Edward Brooke to a constituent, 21 April 1977, Box 77, Edward Brooke Papers.

The political right had always been convinced that the Soviet threat was an existential threat which needed to be met with all of the resources at Washington's disposal. Conservatives were now being joined by many moderates. Those who took a more benign view of Soviet intentions, including Carter and Vance, believed, as had Nixon and Kissinger, that an interlocking network of legal agreements would give Moscow a greater stake in the existing global order. These assumptions highlighted a key factor in the debate over Sino-American security ties, which was the issue of whether or not the Soviet Union and China each remained revolutionary powers or were becoming *status quo* powers. Vance and, initially, Carter, believed that the Soviet Union was becoming a *status quo* power, a view that was shared by many Congressional liberals, including Ted Kennedy, Alan Cranston and Adlai Stevenson. From this assumption came the belief that détente should be reinvigorated and that the development of military ties with China would be counterproductive.

Brzezinski was the most forceful advocate within the Administration of the belief that the Soviet Union remained a revolutionary power, and was joined in his advocacy by Michael Oksenberg and General William Odom, Brzezinski's military assistant at the NSC.⁶¹⁷ Congressional conservatives shared this assumption, believing that Soviet behaviour was aggressive in any case and that the only thing that constrained Moscow was forceful action.⁶¹⁸ The difference in assumptions in 1977 between Vance, Carter and most Congressional liberals on the one hand, and Brzezinski and Congressional conservatives, moderates and a few liberals on the other, regarding whether the Soviet Union remained a revolutionary power or was becoming a *status quo* power, shaped each group's strategic perceptions and attitude toward the relationship with China. Another

⁶¹⁷ Oral History Interview with General William Odom, 18 February 1982, Miller Center Interviews, Research Room Copy, Box 3, Carter Library.

⁶¹⁸ 'US Senate Republican Declaration on National Security and Foreign Policy', May 1978.

area of dispute was over the effectiveness of American attempts to influence Chinese and Soviet behaviour, respectively, and estimations on how policy toward one would affect the behaviour of the other.

Three general schools of thought existed within both the Executive Branch and Congress in relation to the 'China card'. The one with the fewest adherents held that Sino-American relations had little impact on the Soviet Union. The US ability to gain leverage over Moscow through increasingly close relations with Beijing, therefore, was not likely to have any effect, and by the same token closer Sino-American relations would do little to harm US-Soviet détente. The other two schools of thought each believed that Sino-American relations did, indeed, influence Soviet behaviour, yet each came to the opposite conclusion regarding the proper course of action. One side contended that the United States should seek to use its relations with Beijing to gain as much leverage as possible over Moscow, while the other argued that the United States should be aware of the impact that policy toward one of the communist giants had on the other, but should not attempt to manipulate that dynamic in any way.

In policy terms, this clash translated into a debate over whether the United States should be 'evenhanded' in its dealings with the Soviet Union and China. Those on the Hill who shared Vance's perspective opposed tilting toward China and favoured 'evenhandedness' in American treatment of the two communist giants. When discussing possible sale of advanced technology, particularly technology or equipment that might have military application, liberals such as Alan Cranston, Ted Kennedy, Adlai Stevenson, and Abraham Ribicoff, in the Senate, and Lester Wolff, in the House, argued that this would be perceived as movement toward an anti-Soviet military alliance with Beijing and rejected the concept as one that would be likely to elicit a violently negative Soviet

reaction.⁶¹⁹

Although liberals continued to support Vance's positions, as relations with the Soviet Union continued to deteriorate in the winter, Carter himself became increasingly frustrated with the Soviets and more receptive to Brzezinski's appeals to move toward at least limited security cooperation with Beijing.⁶²⁰ Within Congress, although some liberals would remain reticent to move in the direction of leaning toward China in the area of trade policy or security cooperation, others began to increasingly doubt Soviet intentions and to show a greater willingness to use relations with China, albeit cautiously, to effect a positive change in Soviet behaviour. Throughout 1978, many liberals were becoming just as frustrated as were their moderates and conservative colleagues with Soviet behaviour and were asking the Administration to do something 'to clamp down on the Russians'.⁶²¹

Conservatives, although unanimous in their view that the Soviet Union remained a revolutionary power, were split over the issue of security ties with Beijing, dividing the second school of thought described above into two camps. The protective attitude held by conservatives toward Taiwan made many of them reticent to take any steps that might build China's national power and industrial and military capability, fearing that that new power might then be directed toward Taiwan.⁶²² As relations with Moscow worsened and fear of growing Soviet power and lack of constraint on Moscow's part increased, attitudes began to shift. Yet Congressional concerns that the Carter Administration would not ensure Taiwan's security and future survival continued to act as a brake on wholehearted

⁶¹⁹ Interviews with Lester Wolff; Telephone interview with Adlai Stevenson, III; Interview with Arthur Houe.

⁶²⁰ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 11 April 1978, NSA, Staff Material–Far East, Armacost–Chron File, 4/11-18/78 through 6/14-30/78, Box 7, Carter Library.

⁶²¹ *Evans-Novak Political Report*, 28 February 1978.

⁶²² House floor speech by Robert Lagomarsino, 19 April 1977, *Congressional Record*; House floor speech by Robert Sikes, 15 July 1977, *Congressional Record*; Interviews with numerous former conservative Members and staff also attested to this.

conservative support for closer security ties with Beijing until normalisation and passage of the TRA ensured a strong Congressional role in this matter.⁶²³ A belief that China was evolving and leaving its Maoist past behind and becoming, in contrast with the Soviet Union, more supportive of the existing order, resulted from Deng Xiaoping's policy reforms beginning 1978 and also helped to lessen opposition to a closer cooperative relationship with China.

The Congressional role in lending credibility to the idea that Sino-American security ties was a legitimate policy option, which had begun with publication of Pillsbury's *Foreign Policy* article in 1975, continued in 1977. Lester Wolff had chaired a series of hearings from late 1975 through mid 1976 that had examined some of the fundamental issues raised by the Sino-Soviet-American triangle and the possibility of military relations with China. In August 1977 he published a summary of those hearings and wrote an updated introduction that again addressed some of the vital questions that impinged upon whether Washington should seek closer cooperative relations with Beijing. Wolff did not reach any conclusions, as the purpose of the hearings and the report had been to spur debate, not necessarily to reach conclusions. Both the hearing report and communication among Members over these issues made clear, however, that Congress wanted to be involved in formulating policy in such an important area, and Wolff emphasised issues in his introduction that he believed were not getting adequate attention from executive branch officials.⁶²⁴

One of the reasons that Wolff's hearings had been held was out of a belief that there had been no well-thought out policy within the Ford Administration that

⁶²³ Richard McCormack to Cran Montgomery, Undated 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, Howard Baker Papers.

⁶²⁴ 'United States-Soviet Union-China: The Great Power Triangle', Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Future Foreign Policy Research and Development of the Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1976), Introduction.

systematically considered US policy toward China in light of US-Soviet relations.⁶²⁵ One of the characteristics of the various Congressional hearings from 1975 onwards that touched on the security aspect of Sino-American relations was that most of them attempted to deal with these questions in a more holistic way than the pattern of debate within the Executive Branch indicates was the case there. Executive Branch decision-making tended, under Nixon, Ford and Kissinger, to be characterised more by an *ad hoc* pattern – responding to crises with tactical moves, but not with an overarching strategic plan to guide decisions. There is more evidence, however, that in contrast with its predecessors, the Carter Administration did attempt to undertake a somewhat more systematic examination of the implications of the Sino-Soviet-American triangle and of Sino-American security ties. The Administration created an 'East-West Planning Group', made up of academics and area specialists which met to discuss big-picture issues for the Administration under the supervision of Samuel Huntington, the NSC's Soviet specialist. One of the areas the group examined was the complex interrelation between the Soviet Union, China and the United States.⁶²⁶ However, neither the fact that the Administration undertook such a series of discussions nor the results of those discussions were shared with Congressional leaders, once again leaving Congress to guess as to the assumptions that underlay Administration policy in such an important area.

As he had with normalisation, Deng Xiaoping also did more to lobby Congress for stronger defence ties between Washington and Beijing than did the White House. Throughout 1978 Deng signalled to Washington his desire for closer relations and Members began to see signs that China was changing and becoming less radical and more supportive of existing international norms. This changed attitude became increasingly

⁶²⁵ Interviews with Lester Wolff.

⁶²⁶ East-West Planning Group to Zbigniew Brzezinski, et al., 22 March 1978, NSA Material, Office Files, Box 40, Carter Library.

evident in talks with visiting CoDels throughout 1978, as Deng consolidated power. Oksenberg noted Beijing's new attitude and tentative policy changes in the spring of 1978 and remarked to Brzezinski that 'after 20 years in search of a distinctive path to modernity, the Teng-administered regime appears to be joining the rest of the world'.⁶²⁷ The perception by Members of Congress that China was, indeed, 'joining the rest of the world' did much to alter Congressional perceptions of China as a revolutionary power. One of the most noticeable symbols of China's opening and reform, and having a large impact on Congressional attitudes, were the negotiations between Beijing and Coca Cola in late 1978 that culminated in December in the signing of a contract that marked the return of this symbol of American culture and capitalism to China after a thirty year absence.⁶²⁸ In short, it appeared that, unlike the Soviet Union, China 'was becoming like us'.⁶²⁹

The Chinese had always emphasised with visiting Members of Congress their desire that Washington be a stronger bulwark against Soviet expansionism, but now in such meetings Deng placed particular emphasis on the common Sino-American interest in opposing Moscow, even broaching the topic of Sino-American cooperation to that end. Beijing's perceptions of a deteriorating security environment mirrored American perceptions, and Members, both liberal and conservative, were increasingly sympathetic to the Chinese suggestion that Washington and Beijing develop a closer consultative relationship.⁶³⁰

Surprised to see such signs from Beijing prior to the completion of normalisation,

⁶²⁷ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 6 April 1978, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 10, Carter Library.

⁶²⁸ Telephone interview with Eugene Theroux, a trade attorney heavily involved in Congressional consideration of trade with China during the 1970's, 7 August 2009.

⁶²⁹ *ibid.*; Also, interview with Scott Cohen, AA to Senator Charles Percy, SFRC member, 9 November 2009, Arlington, Virginia.

⁶³⁰ Memcon between Deng and Lester Wolff Congressional delegation, 9 July 1978, Vertical Files, Box 40, Carter Library.

Brzezinski and Carter, who was by now becoming increasingly frustrated with Moscow, responded positively. Brzezinski began to argue with increasing energy from the spring of 1978 onward that one of the most effective means the Administration had of gaining leverage over Moscow was to initiate some form of security cooperation with China, initially by agreeing to the sale of advanced technology to China that was denied to the Soviet Union.⁶³¹ Carter's decision to send Brzezinski to Beijing that May to attempt to start normalisation talks signified his frustration with the Soviets as much as his desire to normalise with the Chinese.⁶³² This frustration led to a major shift in policy, in which the Administration began to veer away from a policy of strict evenhandedness.

Just as Nixon and Kissinger early in the decade, however, Carter and Brzezinski actively misled Congress regarding this policy shift. Carter continued to pay official homage to the policy of evenhandedness and to deny any intention of entering into any type of military alliance with China or favouring China in any way in his press conferences and speeches, and Brzezinski misled Members in his communications with them.⁶³³ Regarding both the centrality that the strategic dimension held for Brzezinski and his intention to mislead regarding his plans, Brzezinski records in his memoir that: 'I . . . thought of it [the Soviet dimension] a great deal, even though I knew that publicly one had to make pious noises to the effect that US-Chinese normalization had nothing to do with US-Soviet rivalry'.⁶³⁴ When he travelled to Beijing in May, he had initiated what became an extensive security relationship with the Chinese. Vance, of course, was not informed that Brzezinski planned to offer Beijing an informal security alliance, despite

⁶³¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 11 April 1978, NSA, Staff Material–Far East, Armacost–Chron File, 4/11-18/78 through 6/14-30/78, Box 7, *ibid.*

⁶³² Interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski.

⁶³³ The President's News Conference, 26 June 1978, and 30 November 1978, *Public Papers of the Presidents, Jimmy Carter, 1977-1981*; Memcon between Zbigniew Brzezinski and Abraham Ribicoff, et al., 9 October 1978, Box 572, Abraham Ribicoff Papers.

⁶³⁴ Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p.196.

the fact that it marked a crucial departure from the policy of evenhandedness to which the Administration was officially still committed.

Brzezinski offered the Chinese an informal alliance aimed at strengthening China's ability to resist Soviet pressure and at the long-term strengthening of China's military-industrial capacity. Samuel Huntington and Morton Abramowitz, now the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia and the Pacific, had travelled with Brzezinski to Beijing and briefed Chinese military leaders on the findings of PRM-10, the military posture and force review that provided the Administration's policy framework for its global strategic posture.⁶³⁵ Brzezinski also gave the Chinese classified information related to Soviet military deployments on the Sino-Soviet border and classified American analysis of Soviet strategic strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, he had brought with him science and technology and military affairs specialists who briefed the Chinese on such areas as methods of gathering intelligence on Soviet military forces, and ways that the United States might be able to assist China to build its military-industrial capacity.⁶³⁶ Finally, China was offered Landsat infrared scanning gear, equipment which would have been denied Moscow, that could assist the Chinese military in monitoring the movement of Soviet military forces near China.⁶³⁷ White House Science Advisor Frank Press led a delegation to China in July which was a follow-on to the talks on science and technology cooperation during Brzezinski's trip, and further such talks followed in the autumn.

Upon Brzezinski's return the media reported, accurately, that he had initiated a security relationship with China, disclosing some of the areas in which intelligence had been shared and cooperative planning begun. John Glenn, having read these reports,

⁶³⁵ Samuel Huntington to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 23 May 1978, Vertical Files, Chambers, Anne Cox through China, Mr-Nlc-98-2(5)(2), Box 40, Carter Library.

⁶³⁶ Memcon between Ken Huberman and Chiang Nanxiang, 21 May 1978, *ibid.*

⁶³⁷ Ali, *US-China Cold War collaboration*, p.129.

wrote Brzezinski asking for a detailed accounting of what had taken place. Congress itself had been unable to gain information from the Administration on PRM-10, and Glenn, a believer in the policy of evenhandedness, was concerned both that that policy was being abandoned and that the White House was hiding this fact from the Senate. Brzezinski wrote back assuring Glenn that the media accounts 'were way out of proportion to what actually happened'. Trying to placate Glenn, Brzezinski told him that he would send Samuel Huntington to the Hill to brief Glenn on the contents of PRM-10.⁶³⁸ Repeated attempts by Glenn and his SFRC colleagues to gain information on what type of collaboration was taking place were met with artful dodges.⁶³⁹

Although the White House was hiding from Congress its decision to pursue security cooperation with Beijing, Deng Xiaoping attempted to build support for security cooperation with each Congressional delegation with which he met, speaking openly with Members of the need to cooperate to constrain Soviet power. In his meeting with Lester Wolff's delegation, Deng explained his motivation for seeking normalisation by referring to the greater opportunities that would then be possible for joint action against Moscow.⁶⁴⁰ In this case, Wolff was interested in cooperation on certain issues, but was not in favour of any type of military alliance, believing that it would be counterproductive.⁶⁴¹

For their part, the Soviets spared no effort to attempt to dissuade Congress from supporting any type of a tilt toward China. Each time Brezhnev met with Members of Congress visiting the Soviet Union, he addressed the issue of China and threatened unnamed repercussions should Washington pursue even a limited alliance with China against the Soviet Union. During the summer and autumn of 1978 Brezhnev saw signs, as

⁶³⁸ Zbigniew Brzezinski to John Glenn, 27 June 1978, Box 41, John Glenn Papers, Ohio State University Archives, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

⁶³⁹ Interview with Carl Ford.

⁶⁴⁰ Memcon between Deng Xiaoping and Lester Wolff, et al., 9 July 1978, Vertical Files, Box 40, Carter Library.

⁶⁴¹ *ibid.*; Interviews with Lester Wolff.

did Congress, that something was afoot with Sino-American relations and took advantage of the visit of a pro-détente Ted Kennedy in early September to tell Kennedy that he was 'deeply disturbed by China's new initiatives and improving Chinese-US relations'. As the CIA reported the conversation to the White House, 'In his strongest language, Brezhnev characterises US China policy . . . as a "myopic and dangerous line". . . . He states flatly that making common cause with China on an anti-Soviet basis would 'inflict irreparable harm to Soviet-American relations'.⁶⁴² The Soviets also made known their sensitivity about a tilt toward China in the area of trade policy. When a Senate delegation met with Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin in late 1978, Kosygin warned Congress not to authorise a grant of MFN to China in the absence of such a grant to the Soviet Union.⁶⁴³

Trade policy was another important focal point around in which the debate over evenhandedness revolved. The business interests which had supported the initial rapprochement had pushed for the lowering of trade barriers with China, yet legislation to grant MFN trade status to China had languished in Congress since the early 1970's. The most important reason for this was that debate over trade with China became caught up in the larger debate over relations with the Soviet Union, reflecting the dominance of the Soviet Union as the primary focus of American foreign policy during the 1970's. The debate over trade policy had become increasingly contentious from mid-decade onward as US-Soviet détente came under growing attack from the right, and as the national conversation over the interrelation of policy toward the Soviet Union and China became increasingly heated. The Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Act had blocked MFN trade status for Moscow due to the fact that the Soviets had rejected the

⁶⁴² Memorandum for the President, from Stansfield Turner, 'Brezhnev's 9 September Remarks to Senator Kennedy', 29 September 1978, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Name File, Box 2, Carter Library.

⁶⁴³ William Odom to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 29 March 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, General Odom File, Box 59, Carter Library;
Interview with Arthur House, AA to Abraham Ribicoff, 10 September 2010, McLean, Virginia.

amendment's demand that Moscow agree to emigration quotas. By the late 1970's, therefore, Moscow still did not enjoy MFN trade status, and Congress was reticent to grant such status to Beijing without also granting it to Moscow. Vance sought to reinforce this Congressional sentiment.⁶⁴⁴

While Vance was encouraging Senate liberals to continue to support an evenhanded approach to Moscow and Beijing, Brzezinski was actively misleading Senators regarding the White House intention to play China off against the Soviet Union and to develop security ties with Beijing. When a Senate delegation to Moscow met with Brzezinski for a briefing on US policy toward the Soviet Union, discussion turned to the issue of 'the China Card' and the interrelation of the United States, China and the Soviet Union. Brzezinski denied that he and the President were trying to use China to gain leverage over the Moscow. He explained away the 'regular consultations on international developments' with Beijing by saying that 'we would do this regardless of Soviet-US relations – this activity is not anti-Soviet'.⁶⁴⁵ In an attempt to keep them from being swayed by Soviet complaints, Brzezinski told the Senators to expect Soviet charges that the Administration was allowing the sale of arms to China from its Western European allies. Without admitting that the White House was doing so, Brzezinski obfuscated on this issue, implying that it was unreasonable for Moscow to expect Washington to 'organize an international boycott of such arms sales', and that Washington couldn't really control Western Europe.⁶⁴⁶

Throughout that autumn Congressional liberals continued to advocate a policy of evenhandedness, unaware that the White House was shifting away from such a position.

⁶⁴⁴ Memcon between Cyrus Vance and Abraham Ribicoff, et al., 8 November 1978, Box 572, Abraham Ribicoff Papers.

⁶⁴⁵ Memcon between Zbigniew Brzezinski and Abraham Ribicoff, et al., 9 October 1978, *ibid.*

⁶⁴⁶ *ibid.*

Although the NSC had used Kennedy and Cranston to attempt to advance its goal of normalisation, it had told neither of the security relationship it was developing with China, knowing that they would have opposed such a relationship. In a late October 1978 speech before the Council on Foreign Relations in Chicago, Kennedy warned that 'We should not try to manipulate our relationships, one against the other, for short-term advantage'.⁶⁴⁷ The Administration continued to pay formal homage to the policy of evenhandedness, leading Congress to believe that nothing had changed, and in meetings Oksenberg held with Senators he studiously avoided any mention that a major policy shift had taken place.

Although a number of Congressional liberals did to object to a departure from the policy of evenhandedness, the rise of Cold War tensions in 1978 accelerated the trend within Congress toward distrust of Soviet intentions and a willingness to take more forceful action that would help restrain Soviet power.⁶⁴⁸ Members from across the political spectrum were becoming interested in security ties with China, as Congressional talks with Chinese leaders in early 1979 would highlight. Although conservatives were prone to support a policy designed to place greater pressure on Moscow, and some did support the development of security ties, as shown in the previous chapter, concern for Taiwan's security limited conservative support for the development of China's military strength through 1978.

Through hearing reports and communications with the White House, Members had communicated their desire to have a role in a policy debate that had such import for the Cold War. As with normalisation, however, Brzezinski sought to thwart Congressional

⁶⁴⁷ Speech by Senator Ted Kennedy before the Council on Foreign Relations, Chicago, 23 October 1978, Box 594, Averell Harriman Papers.

⁶⁴⁸ See Press release by office of Senator Edward Brooke calling for suspension of SALT talks due to 'the continuing Soviet military build-up and the growing imperialism of the Soviet Union in Africa and elsewhere', ca. September 1978, Box 487, Edward Brooke Papers.

involvement and successfully kept the Congress in the dark over White House activities and intentions in this area through 1978. The result was a major shift of Cold War policy from which Congress was excluded.

Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, widespread Congressional opposition to normalisation on Beijing's terms, the aim of which Congress accurately understood to be the isolation of Taiwan followed by its forced reunification with China, should not be confused with blanket opposition to normalisation. Over the years since the initial opening, Congress had become aware that this was Beijing's goal, and it was to this that Congress objected, not to the idea of normalisation. Even Senators such as Jesse Helms and staunch friends of Taipei such as Lester Wolff supported the goal of normalisation.⁶⁴⁹ Space had therefore existed in which Carter could have pursued normalisation in a less divisive manner. Members needed to be assured that Taiwan's future security would be ensured, that close US-Taiwan relations would continue, and that they were being included in the normalisation process. The fact that Carter and Brzezinski approached normalisation in such a way that they appeared indifferent, at best, to Taiwan's security, and contemptuous of Congressional expectations to be consulted, needlessly added to the conflict over an already sensitive issue. The decision to pursue normalisation in this way also denied the new Sino-American relationship the strong basis of domestic political support that it required, and deepened the already large amount of distrust between the branches. Further, although the White House had sought to minimise the Congressional role in China policy, the manner in which it pursued normalisation ensured an enlarged and ongoing oversight role with regard to policy toward Taiwan.

⁶⁴⁹ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 31 May 1978, RAC, NLC-10-12-1-19-6, Carter Library; Interviews with Lester Wolff.

The White House use of secrecy to hide the policy shift away from evenhandedness and toward a security relationship with China succeeded in thwarting Congressional interference in an area that the White House considered its prerogative.⁶⁵⁰ The existential threat posed by the Soviet Union made the high-stakes debate over this issue highly contentious, yet that same growing threat had contributed to a process by which Congressional attitudes had become more favourable to the idea of a tilt toward China. More fundamentally, the growing appeal of the idea of Sino-American security ties highlighted the extent to which the continuing Congressional role in making such a policy option a matter of public debate since 1975 had succeeded in normalising a previously radical concept and broadening its level of support in Washington.

⁶⁵⁰ 'Executive-Legislative Consultations on China Policy, 1978-1979', Report Prepared for the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, US House of Representatives by the Congressional Research Service (Washington, D.C., 1980)

**CHAPTER 5: 1979–1980 -
DEEPENING DISTRUST, CONSTITUTIONAL STRUGGLE AND THE
FLOWERING OF SINO-AMERICAN SECURITY TIES**

The same two factors which had most shaped interaction between Congress and the Carter Administration over China policy in 1977 and 1978, continued to do so in 1979 and 1980: the widely differing attitudes toward Taiwan between the White House and Congress, and deep distrust on the part of Congress. President Carter's leadership 'was under attack on a broad front' in foreign policy in 1979.⁶⁵¹ This was partially due to policy disagreements, particularly over the issues of whether a stronger American defence posture was needed in the face of the growing Soviet threat, and the belief that the Administration had taken too soft a negotiating stance with Moscow in arms limitation talks.⁶⁵² A large part of the problem, however, continued to be Carter's aloof and distant (and at times hostile) attitude toward Congress. This attitude, and his unwillingness to lobby Congress and involve himself in the process of political compromise, made it difficult for him to build the political consensus necessary to adequately support his policy initiatives.⁶⁵³

This obduracy on Carter's part shaped Administration interaction with Congress during Congressional consideration of the Taiwan Relations Act. After passage of the Act, Executive-Legislative relations over policy toward China and Taiwan continued to be characterised by deep distrust. As had occurred with normalisation, Congress was also left out of the discussion regarding another major policy shift when the Administration abandoned its policy of evenhandedness toward Moscow and Beijing and quickly developed a *de facto* anti-Soviet coalition with Beijing from late 1979 onward.

⁶⁵¹ 'Deep Differences Mixed With Air of Tolerance', *Washington Post*, 19 June 1979.

⁶⁵² Commencement address by Senator Henry Jackson at Seattle University, 3 June 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 9, Howard Baker Papers. Jackson's position was widely shared.

⁶⁵³ *Evans-Novak Political Report*, 18 September 1979; 'What amazes us', Evans and Novak reported, 'is the Administration's disinclination', to address Senatorial concerns over the SALT II treaty 'even a little bit'.

Congressional support for a tilt toward China grew during 1979 and 1980 due to the rapid downturn of relations with the Soviets. However, many Members believed the Administration to be rushing too quickly into a military relationship with little reflection, and that more reflection and a more measured pace was necessary for the development of sound policy. The Administration's dismissive attitude and misleading communications on this issue, too, guaranteed dissension and continuing conflict in an area in which a growing proportion of Congress agreed with the basic thrust of Administration policy.

The TRA and Executive-Legislative Conflict Over Normalisation and Taiwan's Status

As even the State Department noted following the normalisation announcement, a survey of press coverage of the decision emphasised the fact that Taiwan was left very vulnerable and, aside from the American statement that retained the right to sell arms to Taiwan, without security guarantees.⁶⁵⁴ The insecure position in which Taiwan was left was one of the major emphases of Congress as it significantly reshaped the legislation submitted to it by the Carter Administration that would govern unofficial relations with Taiwan. The other two emphases were to ensure that the United States would have as close relations with Taiwan as possible given their now unofficial nature, and that Congress would be guaranteed an oversight role over US relations with Taiwan and that the future Congressional role would not be left to the goodwill of the Executive Branch.

Barry Goldwater, who had threatened legal action should Carter unilaterally abrogate the Mutual Defense Treaty and bypass the Senate in the process, made good on his promise. Together with Senator Harry Byrd, Jr. and a bipartisan group of twenty three other Senators, he filed a lawsuit in the US District Court in the District of Columbia declaring the President's action unconstitutional, and asking the court to halt action on

⁶⁵⁴ Hodding Carter, III, to the Deputy Secretary of State, 9 January 1979, Brzezinski Collection, Geographic Files, Box 9, Carter Library; Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.114.

abrogating the treaty with Taiwan. Actual court consideration of the case was months away, and, aside from the filing of legal briefs, Congress and the Administration each turned their attention to the Taiwan enabling legislation.

Shortly after Carter's normalisation announcement, former President Richard Nixon wrote Carter admonishing him to take Congress seriously and to not treat Taiwan's supporters in Congress merely as obstacles to be overcome. Nixon counselled:

Unless their opposition is mitigated, you will probably still win the battle: but you may lose the war because the fallout on future foreign and defense policy battles you will have to fight will make the Panama Canal controversy look like a Sunday School picnic in comparison.⁶⁵⁵

Nixon's counsel was that by continuing his present course Carter would undermine his own foreign policy by guaranteeing lack of consensus behind it. Given the fact that Carter had viewed the record of Nixon and Kissinger's China talks and was doubtless aware of their misleading of Congress, he may well have dismissed Nixon's advice as hypocritical. The advice was, however, sound, and Carter dismissed it to his own detriment.

While Carter was not inclined to expend much effort attempting to address Congressional concerns, Deng Xiaoping was inclined to do so. In early January, a Senate delegation including John Glenn, Sam Nunn, William Cohen and Gary Hart travelled to Beijing, where Deng continued his campaign to mitigate Congressional concern for Taiwan, emphasising China's peaceful intent. The vision of reunification he offered was that Taiwan could remain exactly as it now was, retaining its government, its armed forces, its economic and social system, etc.: 'The only thing they have to do is drop the

⁶⁵⁵ Richard Nixon to Jimmy Carter, 20 December 1978, Donated Historical Material, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Geographical File, China, [People's Republic of --], Alpha Channel:[2/72-11/78] through China,[People's Republic of --], President's Meeting with [Vice Premier] Deng [Xiaoping:12/19/78-10/3/79], Box 9, Carter Library.

ROC flag. . . . We extend a welcome to them to enjoy full autonomy'.⁶⁵⁶ Cyrus Vance reported Deng's talk with the Senators and its positive impact on Congressional attitudes. Vance noted that 'The Vice Premier and his colleagues have clearly made a decision to help us with our domestic problems concerning normalization', and surmised that Deng was likely to continue this pattern during his upcoming visit to Washington.⁶⁵⁷ Vance was correct, and Deng seemed willing to expend far more effort to address Congressional concerns than did the White House itself. Deng Xiaoping's visit to the United States in late January and early February 1979 saw the continuation of the Chinese 'charm offensive' aimed at winning over Congressional and American public opinion.

Deng proved much more adept at charming and persuading Members of Congress than was President Carter, using a cherubic face, a charming manner and self-deprecating humour to attempt to win over Members.⁶⁵⁸ Deng's primary goals were to continue his campaign of calming Congressional fears regarding Taiwan, to build sympathy with Congress ahead of his planned invasion of Vietnam, and to build long-term Congressional support for China's development effort. Taipei was watching Deng's trip carefully, particularly his interactions with Congress.⁶⁵⁹ While Deng was given a positive reception from Members, they did not lessen their determination to ensure that Taiwan's security was sure and that Congress had the ability to monitor Executive Branch compliance with principles that Congress laid out, however. In fact, one incident during Deng's meeting on Capitol Hill with members of the SFRC may have strengthened their resolve further. Deng complained about the American determination to continue to sell weapons to

⁶⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁷ Cyrus Vance to Jimmy Carter, 'Scope Paper for the Visit of Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping of the People's Republic of China, January 29–February 5, 1979', 26 January 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, VIP Visit File, Box 3, Carter Library.

⁶⁵⁸ Interviews with numerous former Members and staff who met with Deng on his visit attested to this fact.

⁶⁵⁹ CIA study, January 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, VIP Visit File, Box 2, Carter Library.

Taiwan and attempted to dissuade the Senators from writing strong security language into the legislation they were about to begin considering to regulate post-normalisation relations with Taiwan. The Senators responded by informing Deng that the US Constitution gave Congress the authority to write legislation and they would do as they saw fit.⁶⁶⁰

While Deng's visit went very well, despite the obvious difference of opinion between Deng and Congress over arms sales to Taiwan, relations between the Administration and Congress, and particularly the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, were toxic. Charges that the Administration had deliberately misled Congress contributed to the already poisonous atmosphere that had resulted from the Administration's handling of normalisation. The sharpest of these came from Jesse Helms, an SFRC member, who charged that Michael Oksenberg had assured Helms' foreign policy aide, John Carbaugh, in September 1978 that no change of China policy was in the cards and that the White House would consult with Congress prior to any decision on normalisation. When Carter made his normalisation announcement, Helms took the meeting notes that had been made by Carbaugh and gave them to the *New York Times* in an attempt to prove White House perfidy. Oksenberg's defence, which was that 'the president had made no decision on the timing or modalities for normalization',⁶⁶¹ as of the previous September, when the pledge was made, seemed to be a legalistic and less than forthright explanation that confirmed Helms' story.

This already toxic environment was further worsened by the continuation of a high-handed approach on the part of the Administration as Congress moved to consider legislation to regulate relations with Taipei in the wake of de-recognition. The breaking of

⁶⁶⁰ Correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, a Senate staff member.

⁶⁶¹ See 'Helms Implies He Was Misled on China Plans', *New York Times*, 20 December 1978; and 'A Senator Charges Deceit on China Tie', *New York Times*, 20 December, 1978.

formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan had left a legal void, one having no precedent, as the more than fifty agreements governing every area of Taiwan-US relations from mail delivery to air transport to finance and trade needed replaced. The most glaring deficiency of the Administration-sponsored legislation was the lack of adequate plans for Taiwan's security. When speaking with Deng in Beijing the previous May, Brzezinski made a reference to the need to define US-Taiwan relations after de-recognition, which period he referred to as 'historically transitional' - an apparent reference to an expectation on his part that Taiwan would be absorbed by the Mainland before too much time passed.⁶⁶² An SFRC staff member, upon seeing the legislation submitted by the Administration, remarked that 'The legislation was completely contemptuous of Congress, and in some respects almost completely contemptuous of Taiwan. . . . It almost read . . . as if they expected Taiwan to vanish'.⁶⁶³

The perception that the Administration was 'contemptuous' of Congress was reinforced by the fact that the Administration submitted its bill to Capitol Hill on 29 January, with the demand that Congress just pass the Administration-authored bill with no amendments, and do so by 1 March, the date at which relations with Taiwan would no longer be official. Regarding Taiwan's security, Administration arguments that the Chinese had given private 'assurances' in place of a public renunciation of force, that the PLA did not have the capability of invading, and that geostrategic circumstances and national interest would also constrain China from making such a choice, were not viewed by Congress as satisfactory reasons for neglecting to make certain that Taiwan would retain a future choice regarding reunification.⁶⁶⁴ It appeared that the Administration was

⁶⁶² Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p.214.

⁶⁶³ Quoted in Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.118.

⁶⁶⁴ 'Diplomatic Relations with the People's Republic of China and Future Relations with Taiwan', December 1978, NSA, Staff Material, Box 65, Carter Library.

saying 'trust us', and trust was obviously in short supply.⁶⁶⁵

Communication between the Administration and Congress during the course of debate over the Taiwan legislation was highly contentious. Warren Christopher, testifying before the SFRC in early February as hearings began on the Administration's Taiwan legislation, assured the Senators that 'a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue is a fundamental part of the structure of normalization'. Members believed the Administration's bill did little to ensure Taiwan's future security, however, and, hence, also did not protect American credibility.⁶⁶⁶ The prevailing Congressional attitude toward Taiwan and normalisation was perhaps best expressed by Jacob Javits, ranking Republican on the committee, who would make a large contribution to shaping the security language included in the final form of the bill. In the opening committee hearing on what became known as the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), Javits said:

I believe in the policy which the United States has adopted, but I believe the policy is incomplete, and that the second half of the policy must be respect for our solemn responsibility to Taiwan. . . . We must substantively protect our responsibility to Taiwan, and it is in our highest national interest to do so. . . . This is not just a matter of de-recognizing Taiwan or of normalising relations with the People's Republic. It is a strategic decision on the part of the United States, equivalent, in my judgement, to our relations with the Soviet Union.⁶⁶⁷

The sense that Taiwan's security had not been provided for adequately, and that American credibility was at stake, was shared by Senate liberals. Attempts to give this concern legislative expression elicited differing responses on the part of the State

⁶⁶⁵ Interview with Carl Ford.

⁶⁶⁶ Interviews with Harry Byrd, Jr., and Lester Wolff.

⁶⁶⁷ Opening statement of Senator Jacob Javits, 5 February 1979, Taiwan:Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, on S. 245 (hereafter, Senate TRA hearings), (Washington, D.C., 1979), pp.11, 18.

Department and the White House, respectively, starkly illustrating the differing attitudes on the part of each both toward Taiwan and toward the contribution Congress was attempting to make. Alan Cranston and Ted Kennedy, the Administration's 'spear carrier' on normalisation in 1977 and 1978, significantly authored a resolution together with the staunch Taiwan supporter Lester Wolff because, in Cranston's words, 'Since the People's Republic of China will not give an express pledge not to use force against Taiwan, the United States should refrain from closing its own options to respond, in the unlikely event that force is used'.⁶⁶⁸ The Kennedy-Cranston-Wolff bill enjoyed strong support, being cosponsored by twenty five other Senate Members and more than one hundred House Members. The vast majority of these Members were Democrats, many of them from the now dominant liberal wing of the party – including such well known liberal luminaries as George McGovern, making it difficult for the White House to ignore.⁶⁶⁹

The squabble over the bill between Congress, the White House, and the State Department illustrated, as had the record of the debate within the Administration over normalisation in 1977 and 1978, that the State Department was more in sympathy with Congressional concern regarding Taiwan than was the White House. Kennedy and Cranston's staff, as well as, presumably, Wolff's, collaborated with the State Department in drafting the bill language.⁶⁷⁰ The resolution was introduced on 25 January, four days prior to the introduction of the Administration's Taiwan legislation. The next day, Carter warned that the Kennedy-Cranston-Wolff bill was not acceptable.⁶⁷¹ House Speaker Tip O'Neill, however, stated that Cyrus Vance had assured him that the legislation was acceptable, and a couple of days later the State Department spokesman stated: 'We do not

⁶⁶⁸ Statement of Senator Alan Cranston, Senate TRA hearings, p.377.

⁶⁶⁹ Only three of the twenty-seven Senate cosponsors were Republicans.

⁶⁷⁰ *CQ Weekly Report*, 27 January 1979, p.141.

⁶⁷¹ 'President Warns Hill on Taiwan', *Washington Post*, 27 January 1979.

see in the Kennedy-Cranston resolution anything which is basically inconsistent with our policy statement or with our agreement with China on the establishment of diplomatic relations'.⁶⁷² On 1 February, the White House issued a statement reiterating White House opposition: 'The position of the Administration is that a resolution is not necessary'.⁶⁷³

The staff of Clement Zablocki, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, noted the disconnect between White House and State Department attitudes toward the resolution, calling to Zablocki's attention the fact that Vance had testified before the committee that he did not believe the resolution to be incompatible with the normalisation agreement.⁶⁷⁴ The Kennedy-Cranston-Wolff bill was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees, respectively, and did not emerge from either in order to be voted on by the respective chambers. The attitudes embodied in the bill, however, and much of the language, were incorporated into the final version of the TRA.

Congressional consideration of the TRA was marked by regular White House statements that it saw no need for legislation beyond what the Administration had itself submitted to Congress, and threats to veto any legislation that contained language that the Administration considered to be too strong. In early February, as Congressional debate began, Carter communicated a veto threat to SFRC chairman Frank Church, and throughout February publicly opposed Congress doing much other than simply endorsing the legislation that his Administration had submitted to the Hill. A few days after his talk with Frank Church, Carter made a statement at a press conference that was indicative of his attitude throughout:

I don't think a resolution is necessary, because the legislation we proposed to

⁶⁷² 'Resolution of Taiwan Stirs Struggle', *Washington Post*, 2 February 1979.

⁶⁷³ *ibid.*

⁶⁷⁴ Lew Gulik to Clement Zablocki, 6 February 1979, Series FA-3.1, Box 2, Clement Zablocki Papers.

Congress, in my opinion, is adequate. . . . And I think that any resolution or amendment that would go as far or further with the defense commitments to Taiwan would be unacceptable.⁶⁷⁵

The NSC and the State Department shared lobbying responsibilities – attempting to convince the SFRC and the House Foreign Affairs Committee to soften some of the stronger amendments offered. Although the working relationship between these Congressional panels and their Administration interlocutors was not particularly good, the Administration had some success. After the first week of March, the State Department reported that several amendments that it had opposed had been defeated 'after intense lobbying by the Administration'.⁶⁷⁶ One amendment by Senator Charles Percy would have characterised an attack on Taiwan as a threat to US 'security interests', and another introduced in the House by Representative Ken Kramer (R-CO) that used similar language was likewise defeated. Also in the House, an amendment by Dan Quayle (R-IN) proposing that the American presence on Taiwan be characterised as a 'liaison office', which would have upgraded the representation beyond unofficial status, was defeated, as was an amendment by Robert Lagomarsino (R-CA) which called for the de-recognition of Beijing if China attacked Taiwan. Illustrating how strong was sentiment in Congress in favour of close relations with Taiwan, the Quayle amendment was only defeated by a vote of 181-172.⁶⁷⁷

In early March, as further attempts to strengthen the security language of the bill were being made, the Administration issued a statement that argued that 'Any change in security language is harmful. We're against any amendments'.⁶⁷⁸ Simultaneously, Carter

⁶⁷⁵ The President's News Conference of 12 February 1979, *Public Papers of the Presidents*.

⁶⁷⁶ State Department Legislative Report, 12 March 1979, Donated Historical Material, Mary King, Box 16, Carter Library.

⁶⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁷⁸ China Task Force meeting notes, 2 March 1979, WHOCL, Box 95, Carter Library.

repeated his veto threat, pointedly reminding Congress that by using the veto he would be 'leaving it illegal to deal with Taiwan in any effective way'.⁶⁷⁹ Some have posited that the NSC may have pushed Carter to take a rather recalcitrant position vis-a-vis Congress so as to assuage Chinese anger at Congressional action.⁶⁸⁰ Carter's attitude toward and record of dealing with Congress in general, however, indicates that, although the NSC may have made this suggestion, Carter was predisposed to taking this type of position and likely would have done so anyway.

Despite its apparent successes in defeating the amendments it most opposed, the State Department knew that, given the strength of Congressional passions on this issue and the Administration's lack of credibility, the Administration's ability to shape the legislation was limited. The final bill contained strong language asserting that not just a military attack, but also any attempt on the part of China to coerce Taiwan through 'boycotts or embargoes' or 'any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means' was 'of grave concern to the United States'.⁶⁸¹ It further stated that the United States was establishing diplomatic relations with China based 'upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means'.⁶⁸² Ensuring that a determination of what constituted a serious threat to Taiwan would be a joint decision of the Executive Branch and Congress, the bill included the requirement that Congress be informed by the Executive Branch in the event of a threat to Taiwan.

Even more expansively, in order to ensure that policy toward Taiwan would be jointly managed by the Executive Branch and Congress, Congress legislated reporting procedures which ensured close Congressional oversight. One example included the

⁶⁷⁹ Jimmy Carter, *White House Diary* (New York, 2010), 7 March 1979 diary entry, p.299.

⁶⁸⁰ Tucker, *Strait Talk*, p.121.

⁶⁸¹ Public Law 96-8 [H.R.2479], 93 Stat. 14, Section 2.

⁶⁸² *ibid.*

requirement that agreements reached with Taiwan by the American Institute on Taiwan (AIT), the unofficial instrumentality that now represented American interests on the island, needed to be submitted to Congress for review and approval. The Act also required the Secretary of State to report to Congress semi-annually on the status of US-Taiwan relations, and required the President to report to the Hill any regulations which he might formulate in relation to carrying out TRA provisions for three years following passage of the Act. Also, the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees were given responsibility to monitor relations with Taiwan independently of the Executive Branch, as well as to monitor Executive Branch implementation of the Act, and to report the findings to their respective chambers.⁶⁸³ Congress, therefore, made it clear that the future relationship with Taiwan would no longer be entrusted to the Executive Branch alone, but would be jointly managed with Congress. Lastly, the SFRC and its East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee concluded an understanding with Richard Holbrooke and the State Department that they would be involved in the future decision-making process for arms sales to Taiwan.⁶⁸⁴

The Chinese, as expected, complained vigorously that the TRA came very close to violating their agreement with the Carter Administration. Two weeks after passage, a Senate delegation led by Frank Church visited China, and Deng claimed that the Act 'interfered in the basic understanding reached during the normalization of relations', and 'has negated the political basis for the normalization of Sino-US relations'. Deng warned that any further Congressional actions along these lines 'will affect our unity' to the benefit of Moscow.⁶⁸⁵ Deng's attempt to appeal to the Senators' known appreciation for the

⁶⁸³ *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁴ Interview with Carl Ford.

⁶⁸⁵ Memcon between Deng Xiaoping and Senators Frank Church, Jacob Javits, Joe Biden and Paul Sarbanes, 19 April 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, Howard Baker Papers.

strategic value of normalisation, fell on deaf ears. Church firmly defended Congressional action:

We know about the disagreement with the US Congress regarding the TRA, but the first sentence in that Act is that the US recognizes the PRC as the government of China, and the US is withdrawing recognition from Taiwan. The purpose of this Act is to establish non-governmental relations with the people on Taiwan. So Congress is being consistent, and President Carter would not have signed the Act if it was not.⁶⁸⁶

In keeping with its commitment to monitor Executive Branch treatment of Taiwan, Congress was sensitive to signs that the Administration was attempting to further diminish Taiwan's status due to possible pressure from Beijing, and reacted swiftly to such indications. During the TRA hearings, Members, with a view to strengthen the level of Administration commitment toward the relationship with Taiwan, specifically asked whether the Administration planned to end or alter any other of the more than fifty agreements which governed various aspects of relations with Taiwan. The Administration pledged that, with the obvious exception of the Mutual Defense Treaty, no other treaties would be changed.⁶⁸⁷ Specifically listed was the Air Transport Agreement, an agreement that regulated civil air traffic between the United States and Taiwan.

News came from China in early September, however, that again brought charges of Administration dishonesty. Vice President Mondale had travelled to China in late August and early September 1979, and had had a very successful visit, pledging that the Administration would submit to Congress legislation granting China MFN trade status and growing the security relationship with Beijing. As Mondale was ending his very

⁶⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁸⁷ Senate TRA hearings, p.77.

successful visit, however, he also announced that the Administration would replace the Air Transport Agreement, which was a formal agreement, with an informal one. The announcement itself was unwelcome, and the fact that he had made it while in China gave the appearance that he was responding to Chinese pressure to continue to lower the status of Taiwan and to further distance Washington from Taipei. Congress immediately reacted. Barry Goldwater's office saw the announcement as evidence that 'The State Department has begun a new campaign to belittle Taiwan'.⁶⁸⁸ Similarly, Howard Baker's office believed the announcement indicating the beginning of a campaign on the part of the Administration to reduce Taiwan's status, as well as yet another indication of dishonesty. An aide wrote to Baker that: 'This action is contrary to repeated Administration assurances to both Taipei and Congress that with the exception of the Defense Treaty, all existing treaties and agreements would remain in force'.⁶⁸⁹

Richard Holbrooke was the first to face fierce Congressional questioning on this point. Jacob Javits, from the Republican Party's shrinking liberal wing, questioned Holbrooke at a late September hearing on the Indochinese refugee situation. As Javits explained in a letter to Goldwater:

I made it clear that I was dissatisfied with the lack of consultation on this matter. Secretary Holbrooke assured me that the Department would definitely consult in advance of future plans to renegotiate or terminate any existing agreements. I also made it clear that while certain agreements might require renegotiations at some point for legitimate substantive reasons, I oppose any general policy of renegotiating our agreements with Taiwan to downgrade their status. Mr.

Holbrooke assured me there was no such policy and that each agreement would be

⁶⁸⁸ Terry Emerson (of Goldwater's staff) to Cran Montgomery (of Baker's staff), 28 September 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, Howard Baker Papers.

⁶⁸⁹ Cran Montgomery to Howard Baker, 1 October 1979, *ibid.*

handled *sui generis*. . . . I think he is now fully aware of the concern of the Senate on this score, and of the close scrutiny that such proposals will receive.⁶⁹⁰

The same day, a group of six conservative Senators, including Goldwater, wrote Vance, complaining that:

At the time of Congressional debate on the legislation implementing our new relations with Taiwan, the Administration gave no indication of intent to terminate either in form or substance any agreement with that nation other than the Mutual Defense Treaty. . . . The Administration's action . . . is consequently surprising, and makes us wonder if this step is only a component of an overall strategy being revealed to Congress piecemeal.⁶⁹¹

The State Department responded in writing in late October to Javits' request for clarification and confirmation of Holbrooke's denial in Congressional testimony, assuring Javits that 'we do not have a policy to convert or terminate all of the agreements we maintain with Taiwan. Each agreement, as the circumstances require, will be treated on its own merits on a case-by-case basis'.⁶⁹² Just to ensure that the Administration received the message that Congress would not allow Taiwan's status to be further diminished, Howard Baker pointedly met with the new head of Taiwan's unofficial representative office in Washington in his Senate leadership office.⁶⁹³ China's official news agency responded by complaining that 'Two Chinas, Again, Stalks the Hill'.⁶⁹⁴ China's statement likely only confirmed Congressional suspicions that it was Beijing which had instigated the Administration's action.

The intense Congressional attention paid to this issue continued for weeks,

⁶⁹⁰ Jacob Javits to Barry Goldwater, 28 September 1979, *ibid*.

⁶⁹¹ Senators Goldwater, Hayakawa, Thurmond, Helms, Lugar and Warner to Cyrus Vance, 28 September 1979, *ibid*.

⁶⁹² State Department to Jacob Javits, 'Re: Taiwan Air Transport agreement', 30 October 1979, *ibid*.

⁶⁹³ Cran Montgomery to Howard Baker, 4 October 1979, *ibid*.

⁶⁹⁴ *Xinhua News*, 25 October 1979.

illustrating how deep-seated was the distrust. In early November Warren Christopher was called to the Hill to testify before both Lester Wolff's and John Glenn's subcommittees regarding Administration intentions. As Vance reported to Carter after Christopher's appearances, Christopher also denied any intent to systematically downgrade agreements with Taiwan in a manner calculated to lower Taiwan's status. Unsurprisingly, Christopher's denials were not entirely believed. Vance reported that, 'Zablocki and other Members said they intend to keep a close watch on our treatment of Taiwan, particularly in the arms sales area, and expected the Administration to consult more closely with them'.⁶⁹⁵

Adding to the already considerable contention over China policy that autumn was fact that the Federal District Court in Washington was scheduled to rule on the Senate lawsuit against the Administration over termination of the US-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty. Although Herbert Brownell had counselled that a Senate legal challenge to Carter's ability to unilaterally terminate the treaty would fail, the suit spearheaded by Senators Goldwater and Harry Byrd, Jr. (of Virginia - no relation to Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd of West Virginia) threatened to severely disrupt Carter's plans. On 17 October 1979, Judge Oliver Gasch of the US District Court for the District of Columbia ruled in favour of the plaintiffs, ruling that 'Treaty termination generally is shared power', and that the President 'is clearly not the sole maker of foreign policy'. He thus declared that Carter's notice of treaty termination must receive the approval of two thirds of the Senate or the majority of both houses of Congress in order to be valid, and ordered the Administration to refrain from taking any steps to implement Carter's notice until Congress had so acted. The next day, a spokesman for the Chinese embassy said that Gasch's ruling poses 'serious problems' for the future of Sino-American relations, and

⁶⁹⁵ Cyrus Vance to Jimmy Carter, 8 November 1979, Plains File, Box 14, Carter Library.

called on the Administration 'to take necessary measures'.⁶⁹⁶ The Administration immediately appealed to the Circuit Court of Appeals, urging the court to reverse Gasch's ruling 'without delay'. Warren Christopher submitted an affidavit to the court warning that, 'If this situation is not finally resolved in advance of December 31, the consequences could be serious indeed—and of long-lasting disadvantage to the United States'.⁶⁹⁷

In the wake of Gasch's ruling, Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd declared that 'The Senate ought to vote expeditiously to end the mutual defense treaty with Taiwan, and at the same time should outline its role in the termination of future treaties'.⁶⁹⁸ The Majority Leader disagreed with the ruling and believed that Carter's action had been constitutional, but Gasch's ruling threatened to 'leave a very important foreign policy decision up in the air'.⁶⁹⁹ He believed that a majority vote was all that was required, that a strong majority existed in the Senate in support of abrogation due to the security offered by the TRA, and that Senate action would remove the danger to the unravelling of Sino-American normalisation that the Administration threatened would result if the treaty remained in force.

In a meeting of Republican Senators three days after the Majority Leader's public statement, Goldwater reported that he and Harry Byrd, Jr., had met with the Majority Leader the previous Friday, 19 October, and had asked him to communicate an offer to the President. Goldwater said that if 'the President should submit the treaty termination to a vote in the Senate, . . . he would support the President's position, and believed the matter would be passed'.⁷⁰⁰ Howard Baker endorsed Goldwater's proposal. Goldwater's offer indicated that his primary concerns were the institutional prerogatives of the Senate.

⁶⁹⁶ 'China May Cut Ties Over Pact, State Department Says', *UPI*, 20 October 1979.

⁶⁹⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁹⁸ 'Byrd Urges Senate to Vote an End to Taiwan Treaty', *Washington Post*, 21 October 1979.

⁶⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰⁰ Minutes of Ranking Members Meeting, 23 October 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 1, Howard Baker Papers.

Four days after the discussion with the Majority Leader, there had been no response from either Robert Byrd or the White House on Goldwater's compromise offer.⁷⁰¹ Republicans asked Baker to inform Carter that the Republican members of the Senate wished to endorse Goldwater's proposal and proceed with such a vote, with the expectation that Carter's abrogation would be confirmed.⁷⁰²

The silence that emanated from the White House communicated Carter's response. Although agreeing to Goldwater's offer would have likely resulted in the abrogation of the security treaty, it would also have established the principle that the Senate should have been allowed to vote on treaty abrogation and, implicitly, been an admission that the President was wrong to abrogate in the manner in which he did. Carter was unwilling to establish such a precedent and to concede that the presidency did not have the power to unilaterally abrogate treaties. Nixon, in his letter to Carter after the normalisation announcement, had agreed that Carter should set no precedent undermining Presidential prerogatives, but nevertheless argued that for the sake of good working relations with the Senate, Carter should 'voluntarily' offer to submit any future similar decisions to the Senate.⁷⁰³ Carter had rejected the advice.

In mid November Robert Byrd made a floor statement to the effect that he had met with Goldwater, Harry Byrd, Frank Church and Jacob Javits in an attempt to reach an agreement on legislative language regarding treaty termination, blaming Goldwater and Harry Byrd for the impasse.⁷⁰⁴ With no movement taking place in negotiations for a Senate vote on the matter, in late November, the Circuit Court of Appeals intervened to

⁷⁰¹ *ibid.*

⁷⁰² *ibid.*

⁷⁰³ Richard Nixon to Jimmy Carter, 20 December 1978, Donated Historical Material, Zbigniew Brzezinski Collection, Geographical File, China, [People's Republic of --], Alpha Channel:[2/72-11/78] through China,[People's Republic of --], President's Meeting with [Vice Premier] Deng [Xiaoping: 12/19/78-10/3/79], Box 9, Carter Library.

⁷⁰⁴ Senate floor statement by Robert Byrd, 15 November 1979, *Congressional Record*.

overturn the District Court's ruling. The attorneys for Goldwater, et al., immediately appealed to the Supreme Court. Finally, on 13 December 1979, less than three weeks before the deadline, the Supreme Court made a 6-3 decision that had the effect of confirming the Court of Appeals' decision, with four of the majority ruling that this was a political dispute in which the judicial branch should not involve itself and the other two that the plaintiffs 'lacked standing' to bring a suit. The Administration breathed a sigh of relief.⁷⁰⁵

On 1 January 1980, not only had the US-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty expired, but so had the one year moratorium on US arms sales to Taiwan, to which Carter had committed as part of the normalisation agreement, eliciting, once again, Congressional charges of a lack of consultations and dishonesty on the part of the Administration. On 3 January, the Administration released a list of items that it was prepared to sell Taiwan, which included some sophisticated defensive weapons. Members felt that the list did not go far enough in providing Taiwan's needs, largely because it neglected Taiwan's need for a new fighter aircraft – an exclusion that Congress suspected was due to an Administration fear of offending Beijing. More important than the difference of opinion over the type and amount of weapons provided to Taiwan, however, was the fact that the Administration had simply informed Congress of its decision, with no attempt being made to consult.

SFRC members asked the Administration to show them the list of military items Taiwan had requested, but were refused. The committee then asked Holbrooke to meet with them to explain the Administration refusal. Holbrooke did so, contending that arms sales to Taiwan were governed the same way as were arms sales to other countries – that

⁷⁰⁵ Warren Christopher to Jimmy Carter, 13 December 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Brzezinski Office Files, Box 74, Carter Library.

Congress had the right to reject a completed sales package, but did not have the authority to involve itself in the creation of that package. Committee members asserted that the TRA had given Congress that authority, placing arms sales to Taiwan in a very different category than arms sales to other countries. The Senators further believed that they had also received an oral commitment from Holbrooke that arms sales to Taiwan were to be jointly managed between the committee and the Administration.⁷⁰⁶ Once again, charges of dishonesty on the part of the Administration poisoned the atmosphere.

Holbrooke's assertion that arms sales to Taiwan were to be handled no differently than were arms sales to any other nation was based upon the fact that State Department attorneys had requested, the previous year, that language be inserted into the TRA just prior to final passage that stated that US arms sales to Taiwan would be conducted in a manner 'consistent with US law and common practice'. No Members had been aware of the apparently innocuous language addition. State Department attorneys had cleared the language addition with committee staff who had had no objection, not realising that it had given the State Department a pretext for excluding consultations with the committee on arms sales to Taiwan. Now realising that State Department attorneys had deliberately misled the committee the previous year, Frank Church, John Glenn, Jacob Javits and other committee members accused Holbrooke of being less than forthright. They strenuously asserted that their intent in the TRA was that relations with Taiwan, particularly the arms sales, be managed jointly between the Hill and the Administration – and that he had understood that. Faced with a rebellion and charges of dishonesty once again, the State Department was forced to show the committee the list of weapons that had been requested by Taipei.⁷⁰⁷ Pressure from the Senate continued throughout 1980. In

⁷⁰⁶ Interview with Carl Ford.

⁷⁰⁷ *ibid.*

January the Administration had denied Taiwan's request for a new jet fighter, but in June the Administration announced that it would allow the sale to Taiwan of the FX jet fighter, partially due to pressure from SFRC member Richard Stone and others on the Hill.⁷⁰⁸

The TRA had given the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees responsibility to report to their respective chambers how well the Executive Branch was doing implementing the requirements of the Act. Accordingly, the SFRC held a workshop in March 1980 to examine that issue. In the introduction to the workshop report, John Glenn illustrated well the starkly different attitudes toward Taiwan and its impact on the Sino-American relationship held by Congress, on the one hand, and by the White House, on the other, when he wrote:

I do not believe that we can over-estimate the importance of Taiwan in our China policy. Although the new official relationship with the PRC must be given close attention, failure to cultivate to the fullest our unofficial relationship with Taiwan could prove to be a complication, both internationally and domestically, to our China policy. As an official of the American Institute on Taiwan recently commented, 'unless the Taiwan part of the equation works, the overall US policy toward China cannot work',⁷⁰⁹

The Administration ignored the workshop and the Congressional statements that came out of it. Underneath the surface agreement between the Administration and Congress regarding the need to have normalised relations with Beijing, deep disagreement continued to fester between the two branches over the nature of continuing relations with Taiwan and a sense that the Administration was less than forthcoming with Congress, continued to undermine China policy.

⁷⁰⁸ Robert Ross, *Negotiating Cooperation*, p.176.

⁷⁰⁹ 'Taiwan: One Year After US-China Normalisation', A workshop sponsored by the Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate, and Congressional Research Service (Washington, D.C., 1980).

The Abandonment of 'Evenhandedness', and the Politics of the Tilt Toward China

Carter's pursuit of normalisation with China had largely been an expression of his growing frustration with the Soviet Union, yet in early 1979 he remained formally committed to a policy of evenhandedness toward Beijing and Moscow. Although opposition to a tilt toward China remained strong on the part of Vance and many Congressional liberals, trends in the international environment as well as domestically resulted in a shift in favour of more forceful action vis-a-vis the Soviets. Internationally, the continued deterioration of relations with Moscow and a series of American setbacks globally created a feeling of national impotence, which was reinforced by economic stagnation at home. The rising influence of conservatism also contributed to the trend in favour of a harsher line toward Moscow. In the Senate the elections of 1976, 1978 and 1980 each increased the number of conservatives in that body, and since the beginning of the decade the SFRC saw the loss of names like William Fulbright, Stuart Symington and a series of liberal Republicans, and the addition of names like Richard Stone, Jesse Helms, S.I. Hayakawa, and Richard Lugar.

As has been shown, moderates and liberals were also concerned about the increasingly threatening international environment and coming to believe more forceful action to be necessary. Throughout 1979 and 1980 sentiment within Congress became increasingly favourable to a tilt toward China. In the area of trade preferences, a grant of MFN trade status to China was delayed throughout 1979 by a continued adherence to a policy of evenhandedness both among liberals in Congress and by the State Department, an adherence reflecting the continued hope that Soviet-American relations could be repaired. By late 1979 reticence among liberals to depart from strict evenhandedness was lessening, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that December removed what liberal

reticence had remained to a grant of MFN to China without such grant to Moscow.

In the area of security cooperation, both liberals and conservatives became increasingly prone to support a security relationship with China through 1979 and 1980. Congress expected, however, to be involved in a policy shift that had such import for relations with the Soviet Union, and believed that such a relationship should be pursued at a measured pace with adequate reflection to how it fit into Washington's larger foreign policy framework. In each of these areas, Congress found the Administration's pursuit of such a relationship lacking, which added to Congress's frustration with the lack of consultation on China policy and deprived the Administration of the benefit to policy formulation that could have been provided by Congressional examination of big-picture questions, such as where this new relationship was going.

When Deng travelled to Washington in late January 1979, in addition to calming Congressional concerns about Taiwan and building support for normalisation, he also attempted to develop Congressional sympathy and support for China's development efforts and confrontation with the Soviet Union. Deng's reform efforts, which had been begun in late 1978, depended upon the importation of capital equipment and advanced technology from the West, the United States being the best source for much of what was needed. Deng therefore needed to cultivate Congressional willingness to export advanced technology to China, and to grant MFN trade status and extend Export-Import (ExIm) Bank credits, both of which would greatly increase China's ability to purchase the equipment and technology that was needed. Both the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Act, which demanded commitments from all non-market (communist) economies to allow free emigration, and the advocacy of a policy of evenhandedness by Vance and many Congressional liberals, however, were obstacles to a grant of MFN for

China since Moscow did not yet have such trade status.⁷¹⁰

The Jackson-Vanik amendment had contained a provision that allowed the extension of MFN trade status to a communist country if the President signed a waiver that such a grant was in the national interest. The Administration was interested in pursuing a presidential waiver, but only if Congress would support a waiver for both Moscow and Beijing.⁷¹¹ Vanik, who chaired the trade subcommittee of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, supported such an approach, while Scoop Jackson strongly opposed it, believing that MFN for China and the Soviet Union should be separate issues.⁷¹² Vance argued just prior to Deng's visit that, 'to extend MFN and to extend export credits and not to do so for the Soviet Union, would involve us in a China tilt, a development which would have the utmost gravity for the conduct of US foreign policy'.⁷¹³ Vanik agreed, as did key Senators such as John Glenn, Abraham Ribicoff, who chaired the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on International Trade, and Adlai Stevenson, who chaired the Senate Banking Committee's International Finance Subcommittee.⁷¹⁴ During Deng's visit to Washington, he addressed, both with the Administration and in meetings with Members of Congress, China's willingness to meet the requirements of the Jackson-Vanik amendment.⁷¹⁵ He continued to do so in Seattle, where he was hosted by Scoop Jackson, repeatedly giving assurances 'that China intends to pursue liberal emigration policies'.⁷¹⁶

Meanwhile, Members who supported the policy of evenhandedness attempted to

⁷¹⁰ Michael Blumenthal to Jimmy Carter, 23 January 1979, RAC, NLC-12-23-1-7-5, Carter Library.

⁷¹¹ *ibid.*

⁷¹² *ibid.* Interview with Mark Talisman, 19 May 2009, Chevy Chase, Maryland.

⁷¹³ Minutes of SCC meeting, 8 January 1979, RAC, NLC-132-72-6-3-6, Carter Library.

⁷¹⁴ Interview with Mark Talisman, Chevy Chase, Maryland, May 2009; Telephone interview with Adlai Stevenson, III, 13 October 2009.

⁷¹⁵ Interview with Walter Mondale, 17 November 2010, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Interview with Scott Cohen, AA to Senator Charles Percy, 4 November 2009, Arlington, Virginia.

⁷¹⁶ Cyrus Vance to Jimmy Carter, 5 February 1979, Plains File, Box 14, Carter Library.

halt the slide that they perceived to be occurring within the Administration in the direction of an overt tilt toward China. In addition to speaking on the House and Senate floor advocating their position, some sought to use Congressional hearings to get Administration witnesses to publicly commit themselves to evenhandedness. Vance's allies on the Senate Banking Committee, for example, including Adlai Stevenson, used this tactic, using committee hearings to question witnesses from the Departments of State, Defense, Commerce and Energy on their varying approaches to the sale of technology to the Soviet Union and China.⁷¹⁷

While liberals such as Stevenson, Ribicoff and Glenn were attempting to stem the tide in favour of an overt tilt toward China, others were growing increasingly open to the idea that such a tilt would help balance Soviet power. The visit of an SFRC delegation to Beijing in April 1979 provided public evidence both that China was very interested in such things as intelligence cooperation and the purchase of military hardware from the United States, and that support for such cooperation and sales existed even among some Senate liberals. Following passage of the TRA, perhaps the most important issue discussed in the Senate was that of the verifiability (through electronic surveillance) of Soviet compliance with the SALT II agreement, which was not yet complete, but which would require Senate confirmation. The American ELINT (electronic intelligence) stations which had monitored Soviet missile tests and military communications from northern Iran had just been lost due to the Islamic revolution, leaving a gap in Washington's verification capabilities. The long Chinese border with the Soviet Union provided a perfect location with which to replace that monitoring capability if the Chinese were willing.

⁷¹⁷ 'The Morning After the China Thaw', *Business Week*, 12 February 1979, p.137; Telephone interview with Adlai Stevenson, III.

In a meeting with Deng Xiaoping, Joe Biden, a committee member, asked Deng whether China would be amenable to placing electronic monitoring stations in Xinjiang, in China's northwest, where they could detect Soviet missile tests and monitor Soviet communications. Deng immediately responded in the affirmative.⁷¹⁸ Jacob Javits then followed up with a related question. A Chinese official had suggested to the delegation the previous day the creation of an informal alliance between China, Japan, the United States and Western Europe. Javits was intrigued and sought to discover whether this idea had Deng's approval. Deng signalled that it did.⁷¹⁹ Proving once again that he was adept at framing an appeal in a manner most likely to elicit support for his goals, Deng drew a link between Washington's support for his modernisation programme (which he had labelled 'The Four Modernisations') and China's ability to contribute to a balancing of Soviet power: 'The strengthening of China's economy and the realisation of the Four Modernisations is very beneficial to the global strategic balance. . . . If China is stronger, the Soviet Union will become more cautious'.⁷²⁰ Deng then used that argument to appeal for a grant of MFN trade status to China.⁷²¹

Deng also used the situation to openly discuss China's desire to purchase advanced weapons systems from the United States. The question of security cooperation having been raised by Biden and Javits, Deng used the opportunity to tell the group that, should Washington be willing to sell advanced US military aircraft, China would buy them.⁷²² To the Senators and staff involved in the trip, Deng's affirmative response to their question about possible intelligence sharing, as well as his clear desire to purchase advanced

⁷¹⁸ 19 April 1979 memcon between Deng Xiaoping and Senators Joseph Biden, Frank Church, Paul Sarbanes and Jacob Javits. SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, Howard Baker Papers.

⁷¹⁹ *ibid.*

⁷²⁰ *ibid.*

⁷²¹ *ibid.*

⁷²² *ibid.*

American weaponry, was eye-opening.⁷²³ Deng's desire for security cooperation had been communicated to various delegations since early 1978, but this conversation provided the clearest and most detailed exposition of how far Deng wished to go in that direction. Those within the Administration and Congress who had been opposed to a tilt toward China, either in relation to trade or in relation to potential security ties, had argued, with a growing body of evidence to the contrary, that China did not wish to develop a security relationship with Washington. Deng's acknowledgement that China did, indeed, wish to pursue such a relationship, however, was given wide press in the United States after being leaked by Biden, undermining their argument.⁷²⁴ Consistent with the bureaucratic divisions that had characterised the debate over such ties to China to this point, the Vance, who continued to oppose such ties, tried to minimise Deng's conversation with the Senators so as to downplay the issue.⁷²⁵

More evidence appeared in the coming months for the growth of support for security ties with China. The powerful chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Al Ullman, visiting China three months after the SFRC trip, told the Chinese that Congress might agree to arms sales to China due to a growing belief among the Members 'that it is important for this country [China] to be strong' - i.e. as a counterweight to growing Soviet power.⁷²⁶ In implying the need for Congressional acquiescence to any arms sales to China, Ullman was referring to the legislative prohibition on military assistance to communist states (embodied in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961), as well as the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, which had given Congress a legislative veto over the arms sales decisions of the Executive Branch.

⁷²³ Interview with Joyce Lasky Shub, the committee staff member who was part of the delegation, Friendship Heights, Maryland, June 2009.

⁷²⁴ *AP*, April 20, 1979; *Washington Post*, 20 April 1979; Correspondence with Michael Pillsbury, September 2009; Interview with Joyce Lasky Shub.

⁷²⁵ Garrett, *The 'China Card' and Its Origins*, p.176.

⁷²⁶ *Baltimore Sun*, 11 July 1979.

As the Carter Administration pursued an ever deepening security relationship with China, an increasingly supportive Congress nevertheless remained jealous of its institutional prerogatives and closely monitored whether Administration decisions triggered the oversight responsibilities expressed in the above legislation (the Administration ensured that they did not, so as to avoid Congressional oversight).

Support for a security relationship with China was also growing among conservatives who had previously rejected such ties out of concern for Taiwan's security. In an important memo, Howard Baker's staff described the incredible growth of Soviet military power and simultaneous weakening of the American deterrent, concluding that 'We are going to have to get some major help from the East, from Japan and from China'. The author elaborated:

All of us who strongly support the security of Taiwan have instinctively opposed the idea of any form of military ties to Communist China. However, in recent years, the military power of the US in relation to that of the Soviet Union has deteriorated seriously. . . . The only way I see to guarantee peace and stability during these next crucial years is to cultivate our relationship with the Communist Chinese. I would not propose a formal military alliance, but I certainly would advocate the kind of steps that the British are already taking. This includes consultations between their most senior military brass, and some degree of weapons sales. In and of themselves, the Chinese will not be able to do more than bloody the Soviets in the event of an attack. . . . But . . . China can become part of a coalition which, if united and determined, could successfully face down any Soviet conventional threat. And I would hope that we would now not prevent the preliminary steps which are necessary for us to have the option of closer military

ties should the need for them suddenly arise.⁷²⁷

It is likely that this shift in conservative attitude, which was motivated primarily by the Soviet Union, was also helped by the passage of the TRA, which gave Congress an important oversight role in ensuring Taiwan's future security, which therefore meant that Taiwan's security was not dependent upon the good graces of Beijing or of the Carter Administration.

Fully aware of the depth of Chinese interest in a collaborative relationship, and believing that the goals and assumptions of such a relationship required scrutiny, in the spring of 1979 Lester Wolff and Clement Zablocki jointly commissioned a study by the Congressional Research Service examining the issues surrounding the Sino-Soviet-American triangle and their implications for American policy.⁷²⁸ The study gave committee members a detailed overview of the policy implications in each of these areas that was helpful as they educated themselves on the issues involved. It was completed in October and examined, at Zablocki's request, such fundamental issues as the effect of Sino-Soviet relations on US interests, the question of whether US policy toward China had significantly influenced Sino-Soviet relations since Nixon's opening to China, the current state of the debate over US relations with China and its impact on the Soviet Union, the affect of the Sino-Soviet-American triangle on the SALT I and SALT II talks, and how the American force posture in Asia impacted the situation.⁷²⁹ Zablocki and Wolff had, throughout the 1970's, sought to question Executive Branch policy assumptions in this area and to add reflection to a policy process which they believed was characterised

⁷²⁷ Richard McCormack to Cran Montgomery, Undated 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, *ibid.*

⁷²⁸ Interview with Robert Sutter, the study's author, 7 October 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁷²⁹ 'Playing the China Card: Implications for United States-Soviet-Chinese Relations', Report Prepared for the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, US House of Representatives, by the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, Congressional Research Service, October 1979.

by too little reflection on the part of the Executive Branch.⁷³⁰

Brezinski, whose opinion regarding the effect of Sino-American ties on US relations with the Soviets accorded with the growing body of sentiment on Capitol Hill, nevertheless ignored completely the deliberations and studies undertaken by Congress, seeing it as irrelevant to a foreign policy process in which he saw himself as the centre.⁷³¹ Whether Brzezinski believed that Congress was helping to shape policy or not, it clearly was, in terms of the educative impact on Members and the informed public of various committee hearings and studies, and also in terms of the interaction that various Members were having with the Chinese leadership on their visits. In fact, had Brzezinski paid more attention to Congressional thinking and activities regarding China policy, he could have made better use of those Members who shared his perspective on the Sino-Soviet-American triangle, who could have been leveraged to bring political pressure to bear on the position of his bureaucratic opponents, particularly Cyrus Vance and those liberals on Capitol Hill who shared Vance's views. Vance made use of his Congressional allies in order to bolster his preferred policy position in support of what ended up being a losing cause.⁷³² Had Brzezinski done so, particularly given the fact that Congressional opinion was trending in the direction of his policy preferences, he could have been even more effective than he already had proved to be at the task of creating bureaucratic pressure in favour of his preferred policy outcome, and seen a stronger consensus develop behind his policy preferences.

The tilt toward China continued to develop in the latter half of 1979. Scoop

⁷³⁰ Interview with Lester Wolff.

⁷³¹ See Tucker, *Strait Talk*, the whole of chapter 6, but particularly p.108. Also, interview with Zbigniew Brzezinski, in which Brzezinski stated that Congress played virtually no role in the development of policy toward China, with the exception of passage of the TRA, during his tenure. Brzezinski's thinking in this regard later featured heavily in yet another study done by Robert Sutter at the CRS, that detailed Congressional complaints regarding what it saw as Executive Branch 'arrogance' in the policy-making process that ignored any contributions that might be made by Congress.

⁷³² 'The Morning After the China Thaw', *Business Week*, 12 February 1979, p.137.

Jackson travelled to China in August, just prior to a visit by Vice President Mondale. The Chinese, realising that they had a sympathetic listener, lobbied for Jackson's help in strengthening China against the Soviet threat, both through the sale of military equipment and weapons, and through a grant of MFN trade status and the extension of ExIm Bank credits. A trade agreement had been signed by the Administration in July in Beijing, and the Chinese had repeated to the Administration assurances on emigration which it could use to justify a presidential waiver as per the terms of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, and had received a commitment that the Administration would quickly submit the agreement to Congress for approval. The Administration, however, had still not done so when Jackson visited the next month. The NSC had been pushing for quick submission to Congress, but was being opposed by the State Department, which was worried that it would anger the Soviets.⁷³³ The Chinese, aware that they had a sympathetic audience in Jackson, complained that they 'had done everything the US side had asked and recalled that they had been assured that there would be quick action in Congress on the trade agreement and the extension of MFN'.⁷³⁴ The Chinese, as Jackson, were frustrated, and believed it to be unfair that the Administration was withholding MFN status from Beijing because it was unable to provide such status to Moscow.

The Chinese knew Jackson to be influential, and their complaints to him succeeded in placing pressure on the Administration. Jackson told Leonard Woodcock, the American ambassador to China, that during Mondale's visit he should give the Chinese assurances that the Administration would submit the bill to Congress quickly since the Chinese 'would look upon continued delay as breaking of the US word',⁷³⁵ The

⁷³³ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 5 July 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Brzezinski Office Files, Box 80, Carter Library.

⁷³⁴ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 8 August 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 22, Carter Library.

⁷³⁵ *ibid.*

Administration's continued commitment to evenhandedness was harming the relationship with China, Jackson charged. The Chinese also gave Jackson a tour of a portion of the Sino-Soviet border, showing him the location in which they alleged that the Soviets had engaged in live-fire exercises as an act of intimidation when China had invaded Vietnam the previous February. China's attempt to increase Jackson's sympathy for their positions, and, through him, to pressure Washington for a deeper American security relationship with Beijing was effective. Jackson returned from his trip advocating for the Chinese purchase of 'anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons' to strengthen its defence capabilities vis-a-vis the Soviets.⁷³⁶

Chinese complaints and Jackson's advocacy for quick movement on the trade agreement received attention at the White House, where Mondale was advocating with Carter on behalf of prompt submission of the China Trade Act to Congress.⁷³⁷ During Mondale's visit, Deng repeated the complaint that had been made to Jackson that a grant of MFN status to China should not be delayed out of an Administration desire to grant such status to Moscow simultaneously.⁷³⁸ Illustrating the fact that Deng was following the debate over evenhandedness in Congress, Deng pointed out a recent statement made by Lester Wolff to the effect that MFN should not be granted to Beijing in the absence of such a grant to Moscow, condemning that position. Seeking to mollify Chinese frustration, Mondale promised that the Administration would submit the trade agreement to Congress by the beginning of November. Mondale's talks with Chinese leaders, and a public speech at Beijing University, also included discussions of the beginnings of a security relationship and public indication that Washington was tilting further away from

⁷³⁶ China and the United States: Report of Henry M. Jackson to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, US Senate (Washington, D.C., 1979)

⁷³⁷ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 8 August 1979; Walter Mondale to Jimmy Carter, 3 August 1979 WHOCL, Box 223, Carter Library.

⁷³⁸ Interview with Walter Mondale.

Moscow and toward Beijing.⁷³⁹ While Vance and some Members of Congress continued to fight for evenhandedness back in Washington, Mondale's trip signalled that they were losing the policy battle.

As the NSC planned to further the cooperative relationship with China in the wake of Mondale's visit, consistent with the manner in which the White House had approached normalisation, it saw secrecy as being of paramount importance. Communicating this policy shift to Congress, Oksenberg and David Aaron implied in a memo to Brzezinski, ran the risk of running into opposition among some Members. Therefore, Congress was not to be informed until 'our ducks [are] lined up'.⁷⁴⁰ Oksenberg and Aaron then laid out rules that they hoped would minimise a paper trail and keep the relationship secret. As with normalisation, Congress was portrayed as an obstacle to Administration policy goals. Although some amount of secrecy was understandable given the sensitivity of the topic and the need to avoid leaks, and some Members later expressed an appreciation for this fact, the decision to share almost nothing with Congressional leaders and the chairman of the relevant committees added to the existing distrust between the branches that had been created by the normalisation process. The result, as with normalisation, was that while much of Congress was in sympathy with the growth of a security relationship, they also expected to be part of that discussion from the beginning, and were frustrated at the Administration's refusal to consult.⁷⁴¹

While evenhandedness continued to have adherents, such as Lester Wolff and some Senate liberals, a greater proportion of Congress was coming to believe China to

⁷³⁹ *ibid.*; Speech by Vice President Walter Mondale at Peking University, 27 August 1979, Box 154.K.2.5B (Box 11), Walter Mondale Vice Presidential Papers, Minnesota State Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota; *Department of State Bulletin* (October 1979), pp.10-3; *New York Times*, 28 August 1979.

⁷⁴⁰ Michael Oksenberg and David Aaron to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 4 September 1979, NSA, Staff Material, Far East, Box 34, Carter Library.

⁷⁴¹ 'Executive-Legislative Consultations on China Policy: 1978-1979', Report Prepared by Congressional Research Service for the US House Foreign Affairs Committee (Washington, D.C., 1980); Interview with Carl Ford.

merit different treatment than the Soviets, and one of the most articulate proponents of this view, Scoop Jackson, used his trip report in September to continue to forcefully argue this point. Referring to the Administration's delay in submission of the China trade agreement to Congress after promising the Chinese that it would do so quickly, he wrote, 'This is a classic example of how not to treat the Chinese'.⁷⁴² He went on to argue:

The doctrine of evenhandedness has been at the heart of the Administration's delay in submitting the trade agreement to Congress, and at the root of the Administration's explanation for the delay. . . . China and the Soviet Union are two very different countries at different stages of development, with different ambitions, different associates and allies, and different relations with this country. They should be treated on separate tracks, and, in our own national interests, they should not be treated alike. . . . Since the Chinese had met the conditions for the waiver on MFN and credits, there has been no justification for the delay in submitting the trade agreement to Congress.⁷⁴³

Jackson ended by noting that Mondale had, as Jackson had urged, assured the Chinese that the trade bill would be submitted to Congress by November. Jackson couldn't help but end his report with one last criticism of the Administration's dedication to evenhandedness:

Vice President Mondale's reassurance came just in time to prevent a serious deterioration in Chinese-American relations. Whether the Administration – and notably the State Department - has finally shaken itself free of the misguided doctrine of evenhandedness, remains to be seen.⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴² China and the United States: Report of Henry M. Jackson to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate (Washington, D.C., 1979).

⁷⁴³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴⁴ *ibid.*

Soviet actions during the autumn of 1979 continued to undermine the position of those who continued to advocate on behalf of evenhandedness. The discovery that the Soviets had placed a brigade of combat troops in Cuba angered Senators who would be deciding the fate of the recently-signed SALT II treaty, further lessening concern about Soviet sensitivity to an American tilt toward China.⁷⁴⁵ The evolution of views would be evident as Congress considered MFN for China, as well as the issue of the sale of advanced technology to China.

The White House finally decided to time the submission of the China Trade Act to Congress for 23 October to coincide with the visit to Washington of the Chinese Trade Minister, whom the White House hoped to use to lobby Congress on behalf of the agreement.⁷⁴⁶ It almost appeared that, given poor White House relations with Congress, the White House deemed Chinese officials to be far better at lobbying Capitol Hill than Administration officials. Abraham Ribicoff, chairman of the International Trade Subcommittee, who had previously advocated evenhandedness, hosted the Chinese Trade Minister for a breakfast on Capitol Hill in which he promised 'priority attention' to the agreement, and assured the minister that 'both Republicans and Democrats are eager to extend' MFN.⁷⁴⁷ The agreement received a positive response, overall, in subcommittee hearings in both chambers, but after having been passed out of the relevant subcommittees and committees, was not moved forward on the legislative calendars of each chamber for a floor vote, partially out of some continuing opposition on the part of some liberals who still believed that a tilt toward China posed unacceptable dangers.

Charles Vanik, in the House, and Senate liberals, notably Adlai Stevenson, continued to

⁷⁴⁵ Press release from the office of Senator Abraham Ribicoff, 6 September 1979, Box 153, Abraham Ribicoff Papers.

⁷⁴⁶ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 2 October 1979, NSA, Staff Material, Far East, Box 40, Carter Library.

⁷⁴⁷ Remarks by Senator Abraham Ribicoff in honour of Li Qiang, Trade Minister, People's Republic of China, Wednesday, 24 October 1979, Box 153, Abraham Ribicoff Papers.

slow passage of the Act for this reason.⁷⁴⁸

Despite this lingering opposition, Members were far more open in late 1979 than they had been early in the year to significantly increasing trade with China even while trade with Moscow remained limited. This growing willingness to approach the two countries differently was also evident in the area of technology transfers. Many Members criticised and opposed technology transfers to the Soviet Union out of concern that the technology would then be put to use by Moscow to strengthen its military potential, something which the Soviets had done repeatedly earlier in the decade. Those same concerns were diminishing in relation to China, however, as illustrated by the invitation extended to a Chinese embassy official to testify before the joint hearings of two subcommittees of the House Committee on Science and Technology that met to consider technology transfers to China simultaneous with House consideration of the China Trade Act.⁷⁴⁹ Never before had the official of any communist nation testified on the record before Congress, which was received with quite a bit of surprise by the Commerce Department and the NSC.⁷⁵⁰

After having been voted out of committee in both chambers, Congressional leadership did not immediately move the bill up the legislative calendar for a vote by the full House and Senate, respectively. Frustrated by the lack of movement, Brzezinski wrote Vice President Mondale on 30 November, hoping to use Mondale's history as a member of the Senate to press Majority Leader Robert Byrd to move more quickly on the

⁷⁴⁸ Telephone interview with Adlai Stevenson. See also Stevenson's statement in 'Agreement on Trade Relations Between the United States and the People's Republic of China', Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Trade of the Committee on Finance, US Senate, on S.Con.Res.47, 15 November 1979 (Washington, D.C., 1980).

⁷⁴⁹ Testimony of Li Wei, First Secretary, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 13 November 1979, as part of Technology Transfer to China:, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Science, Research and Technology and the Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight of the Committee on Science and Technology, US House of Representatives (Washington, D.C., 1980).

⁷⁵⁰ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 20 November 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 25, Carter Library.

legislation.⁷⁵¹ Part of the issue slowing Congressional consideration remained the requirements of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, with several Members wanting to see evidence that China would allow free emigration.⁷⁵² Additionally, the Senate was to begin debating the SALT II agreement which Carter and Brezhnev had signed the previous June and that, too, provided a conflict between those who remained committed to Vance's foreign policy approach and those who viewed the issue as did Brzezinski. Brzezinski's memo to Mondale implied that he believed the delay to be due to Vance's allies on the Hill slowing consideration of the measure by their full chambers out of an unwillingness to allow US policy to shift further in Brzezinski's direction.

Although Mondale had come to support the development of a security relationship with China, he had also been assigned by Carter, due to the twelve years he had spent in the Senate, to spearhead the Administration's efforts at lobbying that body for support for the SALT II agreement, thus creating something of a conflict for him.⁷⁵³ Not wishing to become publicly involved in this struggle on the Hill over the direction of policy, Mondale refused to contact Byrd on the matter, telling Brzezinski 'it would be better if you were to call the Majority Leader'.⁷⁵⁴

In the House, a little over a week after Mondale's memo, the Ways and Means Committee passed the Act on to the full chamber with strong support. Surprisingly, Charles Vanik had also come to support a grant of MFN to China, despite several weeks earlier warning that he suspected such a grant was an unwise attempt to 'play the so-called

⁷⁵¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Walter Mondale, 30 November 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Country File, China: 12/78 through China: 3/80, Box 9, Carter Library.

⁷⁵² 'China Pact Hits Snag on Emigration', *Washington Post*, 2 November 1979.

⁷⁵³ Gerstenzang, James, 'Mondale Picks Up A Fulltime Job: He's Carter's Chief Lobbyist on the SALT II Treaty', *AP*, 24 June 1979.

⁷⁵⁴ Denis Clift, national security advisor to Walter Mondale, to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 4 December 1979, *ibid.*

China card'.⁷⁵⁵ ⁷⁵⁶ Two days after the Ways and Means Committee vote, Abraham Ribicoff requested that Warren Christopher meet with several members of the Senate Finance Committee to go over the assurances the Administration had received from the Chinese on emigration. Christopher immediately did so, and Vance reported to the President that the Senators 'now seem satisfied' and would support a presidential waiver.⁷⁵⁷ Still, however, the legislation had not been brought to a vote by the full chambers by the Christmas recess, causing much frustration within the NSC.

In the end, it wasn't White House prodding, but the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late December 1979 that ultimately cleared the remaining opposition, illustrating the role that considerations of evenhandedness had played in the delay even late in the year, despite the growth of anti-Soviet sentiment in Congress. The China Trade Act was passed by both chambers in January by wide margins in a vote that the liberal Democratic Study Group saw as a reaction to the invasion.⁷⁵⁸ The invasion also acted as an accelerant to nascent Sino-American security cooperation, completing the shift within Washington away from evenhandedness. Despite the decisive shift both within the Administration and Congress away from evenhandedness, the stage was now set for conflict between the Administration and Congress over lack of consultations regarding the accelerated development of Sino-American security ties.

Defense Secretary Harold Brown had been scheduled to visit China in early January 1980. The visit would mark the first time that an American defence chief would

⁷⁵⁵ United-States-China Trade Agreement: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, on agreement on trade relations between the United States and the People's Republic of China, and H.Con.Res. 204.

⁷⁵⁶ Warren Christopher to Jimmy Carter, 13 December 1979, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Brzezinski Office Files, Box 74, Carter Papers.

⁷⁵⁷ Cyrus Vance to Jimmy Carter, 15 December 1979, Plains File, Box 14, Carter Library.

⁷⁵⁸ Democratic Study Group Legislative Report, China Trade, 24 January 1980, MS 324, Morris Udall Papers, Special Collections, University of Arizona Library Manuscript Collection, University of Arizona, Tucson.

visit China, and the SFRC wanted to know what Brown intended to discuss with the Chinese. In mid December, the SFRC asked to meet with Brown and prepared a series of questions regarding the purpose of his visit.⁷⁵⁹ Brown met the committee in executive session, sharing with them in rough outline his instructions for the trip. The committee was told that the Administration's purposes for Brown's trip were to be 'limited' and 'mostly of a symbolic nature' - to sound out the Chinese on their strategic views and to send a signal to Moscow.⁷⁶⁰ After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, ten days later this changed significantly as the Administration sought quick development of the security relationship.

At the beginning of January, a week after the Soviet invasion, an NSC meeting was held to discuss Brown's instructions for his upcoming trip. Brown's trip instructions had been strengthened in the previous week, and Brzezinski now argued to strengthen them further to include an offer of over-the-horizon radar. Realising that he was losing control of the direction of policy, Vance argued that the Administration needed to get Congressional approval prior to moving ahead with a deeper military relationship or Congress would have 'a very bad reaction'.⁷⁶¹ Brzezinski, argued strongly in favour of the strategic wisdom of a deepening security relationship with China, ignoring Vance's appeal to Congress. Vance then appealed directly to Carter, repeating his assertion that the Administration should consult with Congress before heading any further in this direction. Carter, clearly angered by the Soviet move and never sympathetic to the idea that Congress needed to be involved in an Executive Branch policy initiative, responded brusquely that he 'did not have to consult Bob Byrd', and asserted that 'We should sell

⁷⁵⁹ Carl Ford and Diana Smith to all PRM's, 11 December 1979, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 12, Howard Baker Papers.

⁷⁶⁰ Carl Ford to Senators Church, Javits and Glenn, 22 January 1980, Box 58, John Glenn Papers.

⁷⁶¹ NSC Meeting notes, 2 January 1980, NSA, Staff Material, Middle East, Box 98, Carter Library.

weapons to China, including F-16's'.⁷⁶² Carter's reference to F-16's indicated that he was aware that Deng Xiaoping had expressed interest in F-16's to the SFRC delegation the previous year. It was clear that Vance had lost the policy debate within the Administration, and that Carter, backed by Brzezinski, had no intention of consulting with Congressional leaders.

Although Vance's consistent record of urging consultation with Congress over China policy argues for its genuineness, it is also probable that his urging that the Administration do so in this instance was motivated to some extent by his knowledge that certain Congressional liberals in key positions would support his argument that evenhandedness should not be abandoned. He was isolated within the Administration, and liberal Congressional leaders appeared to be the only supporters he had left. The next day, Brzezinski followed up with a memo to Carter in which he again urged a stronger tilt toward China, including a willingness to sell defensive weapons to China, and addressed Vance's warning about Congress by telling Carter, 'I believe Congress will support you'.⁷⁶³ Brzezinski's assertion that Congress would support such a relationship was correct, but ignored the fact that Congress expected to be made part of the discussion regarding such an important policy shift. Just as with normalisation, however, Brzezinski and Carter had no desire to include Congress in the discussion, which would again have negative repercussions.

Brown went to China with an expanded set of instructions that now included an offer of over-the-horizon radar, other defensive arms to be made available on a case-by-case basis, and a broad range of other initiatives meant to dramatically deepen the embryonic security relationship.⁷⁶⁴ While still in China, Brown made a public

⁷⁶² *ibid.*

⁷⁶³ Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 3 January 1980, Plains File, Box 1, Carter Library.

⁷⁶⁴ NSC Meeting notes, 2 January 1980, NSA, Staff Material, Middle East, Box 98, Carter Library.

announcement that made clear that he had entered into a deeper consultative relationship with China and that the Administration had discussed much stronger cooperative efforts with the Chinese than had been indicated to the committee. Although aware that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan changed the strategic environment within which Brown travelled to China, the committee nevertheless did not expect the Administration to attempt to develop security ties so dramatically and so quickly – particularly in the absence of any communication to that effect from the Administration.⁷⁶⁵

More details were released publicly, adding to the committee's frustration, in a *Washington Post* article.⁷⁶⁶ The public announcement that a serious security relationship had been initiated without the knowledge of the appropriate Congressional leaders reinforced the Congressional sense that the Administration still did not respect their role. One of the major reasons put forward by Administration officials to explain why they did not wish to consult with Congress over this issue was the fact that the Administration itself had still not come to a unified view on these issues, with the consequence that it would not have been helpful to expose its internal divisions to Congress.⁷⁶⁷ However, this argument is undermined by the fact that the Administration's internal divisions were well known. Vance's appeal to consult Congressional leaders was likely an attempt to gain some support for his position from Senate liberals. When Brzezinski advised Carter that 'Congress will support you', but continued to argue against consultations on the issue, he showed that he had no desire to allow Congress to weigh in on a policy battle within the Administration that he was winning. His estimation that Congress would generally support such a relationship was correct, but, as with normalisation, he ignored the cost

⁷⁶⁵ Carl Ford to Senators Church, Javits and Glenn, 22 January 1980, Box 58, John Glenn Papers; Interview with Carl Ford.

⁷⁶⁶ 'Slowly, Cautiously, China Builds a Relationship with US', *Washington Post*, 21 January 1980; Interview with Don Oberdorfer, 8 July 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁶⁷ 'Executive-Legislative Consultations on China Policy: 1978-1979'.

that the Administration would pay in deepened resentment and distrust.

Despite understanding the strategic rationale for the attempt to increase the level of security cooperation, and supporting a deepening of the relationship in principle, the SFRC was frustrated with the lack of consultations, and concerned that the Administration might be rushing things without adequate reflection as to where this new relationship might be headed and what policy goals it allowed the United States to reach.

John Glenn took Brown to task, saying that he was:

Somewhat surprised by a number of the announcements that you made while in China. Why wasn't it possible for you to mention to us before you left that the Administration was considering a Washington-Peking 'hot line', had approved LANDSAT, and were near a decision on launching a communications satellite for the Chinese? These are important steps with obvious foreign policy implications that I believe the committee should have been informed about before a public announcement.⁷⁶⁸

Brown used carefully prepared talking points for his meeting with the committee⁷⁶⁹, and while admitting to what had already been made public and taking a somewhat apologetic tone for the lack of consultations, nevertheless did not promise future consultations. The Administration only gave the committee the barest of outlines of the type of cooperation it sought with China, and no discussion took place examining the long-term repercussions of the new policy departure or the underlying assumptions guiding the new policy.⁷⁷⁰

The Administration followed the same pattern with the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Although Richard

⁷⁶⁸ Carl Ford to Senators Church, Javits and Glenn, 22 January 1980, Box 58, John Glenn Papers.

⁷⁶⁹ Evening Report from Far East to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 23 January 1980, NSA, Brzezinski Materials, Staff Evening Reports File, Box 26, Carter Library.

⁷⁷⁰ Interview with Carl Ford.

Holbrooke attempted to make Clement Zablocki and Lester Wolff feel as if they were part of the process of policy formulation, it was clear that they were not. In hearings before Wolff's subcommittee, Holbrooke repeatedly dodged questions meant to elicit a commitment to enter meaningful consultations on the development of security relations with China.⁷⁷¹ Zablocki and Wolff each believed, as did their Senate counterparts, that the Administration was pursuing the relationship for short-term tactical advantage without adequately thinking through the long-term policy repercussions.⁷⁷² Although they understood and appreciated the strategic logic behind a tilt toward China, they believed that such a policy decision should be examined more carefully rather than rushed. Like their Senate counterparts, Zablocki and Wolff could get virtually no information shared by the Administration regarding the dramatic tilt toward China being undertaken.

Hopes had been held by some in Congress that after the discord following the normalisation announcement and the debate and passage of the TRA, passions would subside, some trust between the branches could be rebuilt, and China policy could again become a cooperative effort.⁷⁷³ The continuing pattern of Administration misleading and refusing to meaningfully consult ensured that an atmosphere of mistrust continued to dominate the dialogue between the branches over China policy. The conflict over weapons sales to Taiwan recounted earlier occurred simultaneously with the conflict over the lack of consultations over Brown's visit and the deepening of the security relationship.

After the invasion of Afghanistan and the Brown visit, Vance continued to fight a rearguard action to halt the slide of American policy away from a dedication to reinvigorate détente and towards an informal alliance with China.⁷⁷⁴ By this time,

⁷⁷¹ Interviews with Chris Nelson; Jim Przystup (a defence specialist on the subcommittee staff), 1 September 2010, Washington, D.C.; and Lester Wolff.

⁷⁷² *ibid.*

⁷⁷³ 'Executive-Legislative Consultations on China Policy:1978-1979'.

⁷⁷⁴ *Department of State Bulletin* (March 1980), p.39.

however, it was obvious that his position no longer enjoyed the President's support. Vance resigned as Secretary of State in April, ostensibly over the failed American military mission to rescue the diplomatic hostages held in Tehran, but also due to the sharp downturn in Soviet-American relations and his loss of influence on the President's thinking.⁷⁷⁵ His departure removed Brzezinski's chief bureaucratic rival, and the pace of the tilt toward China quickened. Despite broad Congressional support for some type of cooperative relationship with China, the quickening pace with which the White House approached the new security relationship continued to elicit Congressional statements of concern that the pace was overly-hasty and that little long-term reflection was guiding the policy decisions.

Sino-American consultations that began with Brown's trip included the May 1980 visit to Washington of Geng Biao, China's Vice Premier and a powerful defence official. Continuing the pattern begun by Deng Xiaoping of Chinese leaders building relations with Congress during visits to Washington and attempting to lobby their cause, Geng held a series of three highly symbolic meetings on Capitol Hill: one with Scoop Jackson and Armed Services Committee chairman John Stennis, the second with the House Armed Services Committee, and the third with the Senate Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs.⁷⁷⁶ As with Deng's efforts to lobby Congressional support for Sino-American cooperation, Geng, too, seemed to make a greater effort to build that support than did the Administration itself. Illustrating the support for cooperation that existed when Members felt themselves to be consulted, Senator Charles Percy, who would the next year succeed Frank Church as chairman of the SFRC, asked Geng what the United

⁷⁷⁵ Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, p.981.

⁷⁷⁶ Memorandum for the Record by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, 'Geng Biao Meetings with Congressional Leaders', 6 June 1980, NSA, Staff Material – Far East, Sullivan – Subject File, Chron: 9-12/80 through Geng Biao Visit: 6/80, Box 70, Carter Library.

States and China could do cooperatively to hinder the Soviets in Afghanistan. Percy also attempted to discover the content of Geng's talks in that regard with Administration officials. The fact that a Congressional leader needed to ask a Chinese leader what was being discussed with the Administration illustrated the paucity of information flowing in this regard from the Executive to Congress. Geng, likely aware of the lack of communication between the branches and not wanting to get involved, sidestepped the question.⁷⁷⁷

The Carter Administration's speedy development of its security relationship with China was abruptly halted by Carter's loss to Ronald Reagan in the presidential election that November, a campaign in which the deteriorating international environment, and Carter's response to it, played a significant role. Even the matter of Sino-American security cooperation briefly became an issue in the campaign. One of the most significant examples of security cooperation had come out of the April 1979 conversations between Deng Xiaoping and SFRC members – the establishment in early 1980 of joint ELINT stations in northwest China that would monitor Soviet missile tests, military communications and satellite transmissions.⁷⁷⁸ A media story in September 1980, based upon a leak from the NSC, blamed pro-Taiwan statements on the part of Ronald Reagan for endangering the intelligence sharing arrangement with China. Howard Baker, believing that the White House had leaked this classified information in order to boost Carter's image as taking a tough stand on the Soviets and to denigrate Reagan as irresponsible, angrily responded, demanding that Brzezinski provide a reckoning of NSC actions.⁷⁷⁹ In what was perhaps a fitting note on which to end Congressional interaction

⁷⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁷⁸ Ali, *US-China Cold War collaboration*, p.134.

⁷⁷⁹ Craig Unger, 'China-US Spy Pact Perilled?' *New York Magazine*, 15 September 1980; Howard Baker to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 11 September 1980, SENATE LEADERSHIP FILE, Box 9, Howard Baker Papers.

with the Carter White House over China policy, no response was ever sent.

Conclusion

Jimmy Carter's attitude toward Capitol Hill guaranteed conflict with Congress, not just because the attitude itself was dismissive, but also due to the fact that his Administration fell within a decade in which Congress was re-asserting itself in an unprecedented manner. By the late 1970's Congress had grown accustomed to challenging presidential authority and expected its new role in foreign policy formulation to be respected. This was particularly the case with China policy, which had been the subject of intense Congressional attention since the late 1940's and on which Congressional expectations of consultation had been made clear.

The conflict between the Carter Administration and Congress over China policy evidenced some continuities with Carter's predecessors, the most significant being that at the root of the conflict was the widely differing attitudes on the part of the White House and Congress toward Taiwan and the nature of US commitments to Taiwan. However, the poisonous atmosphere between the branches over China policy during the Carter Administration was primarily one of Carter's own making. The patterns by which the Administration related to Congress over China policy in 1977-1978 continued in 1979-1980, ensuring that interaction between the two branches remained marked by distrust and resentment, and weakening the political base of support for Administration policy. Finally, dialogue with Congressional leaders over the development of the security relationship with China would likely have strengthened policy through a consideration of Congressional concerns related to the goals for such a relationship and how if fit into the Administration's larger foreign policy framework. Refusal to dialogue in even a limited manner on these issues denied the new policy the advantages that such reflection might

have brought to its development.

CONCLUSION

Without an understanding of Congressional attitudes and actions in relation to China policy, only a truncated understanding of Executive Branch actions in pursuit of rapprochement and normalisation is possible. One of the aims of this thesis, therefore, has been to trace the development of Congressional attitudes towards China, and to examine the various factors that influenced these attitudes. Numerous international, domestic and institutional factors combined to shape Congressional attitudes. The foundational international factor, without which rapprochement would not have been possible, was the Sino-Soviet split, which dramatically altered the strategic environment within which policy was made and convinced Members of Congress that a unique strategic opportunity was available to the United States, and thereby contributed to Congressional willingness to re-evaluate the existing American policy of containment and isolation of Beijing.

American involvement in the Vietnam war became the cause for the sustained challenge to the existing policy of containment and isolation. It spurred the ideological transformation within the Democratic party and also among liberal Republicans, and helped to increase support for an opening to China out of the hope that such an opening could possibly help to bring an end to that conflict. Considerations related to the Soviet Union heavily shaped Congressional debate over China policy. The belief on the part of many conservatives that an opening to China would give Washington leverage over the Soviet Union was one of the major reasons for conservative support for rapprochement with China. As US-Soviet détente foundered, the value of China in relation to the Soviet Union was again brought to the fore, and Congress began to consider the wisdom of possible military cooperation with Beijing aimed at containing Soviet power.

The concept of 'evenhandedness', the belief that the triangular relationship

between Washington, Moscow and Beijing functioned best, and that relations between Washington and the two communist giants were strongest, when the United States treated each evenhandedly was very influential among Members of Congress for most of the decade. It was one of the major reasons Congress remained reticent for so long to grant China MFN trade status in the absence of such status for the Soviet Union, constrained Congressional willingness to see advanced technology that would not be sold to the Soviet Union licensed for export to China, and was one of the factors suppressing Congressional willingness to support the development of security ties with China. This was another area in which worsening relations with Moscow impacted Congressional attitudes, causing Members to become less committed to an evenhanded approach as evidence of Soviet aggressive intentions multiplied.

Taiwan, and the history of close relations between Taipei and Washington, was the single most important factor that shaped Congressional attitudes toward China policy, and the one issue that remains a central factor in Sino-American relations today. Congress's protectiveness of Taiwan and belief that breaking American commitments to Taiwan and leaving it vulnerable to coercion from Beijing had both negative normative and practical implications for the United States, including an undermining of American credibility, remained the most important domestic constraint on Sino-American normalisation. Given the vast gulf between Executive Branch and Legislative Branch attitudes toward Taiwan, it also provided the biggest point of conflict between the two branches over China policy.

Changing perceptions of China on the part of many Members of Congress also played an important role in determining Congressional responses to China during the 1970's. At the beginning of the decade, although continuing to see China as hostile to the United States, China was no longer viewed by many Members as having the strength to

actually harm American interests, and many noted the distinction between China's hostile rhetoric and its cautious behaviour. Another important shift in perceptions came in 1978, when Deng Xiaoping initiated his reforms and appealed to Congress for help in implementing those reforms and modernising China. As Members saw China leave its radical, Maoist past behind and undertake reforms that put it in the mainstream of a Western understanding of modernity, they became more sympathetic to China. The sense that China was evolving in a positive direction and becoming more supportive of the existing international order contributed to Congress's willingness to assist in China's development efforts, and in conjunction with the breakdown of relations with the Soviet Union also contributed to Congressional support for the development of a military relationship with Beijing.

Institutionally, the decade of the 1970's was a period of dramatic change within Congress, both ideologically and structurally, that helped to shape Congressional actions, as well as the nature of Congressional interaction with the Executive Branch. The 1970's began with the New Left dominating the Senate, saw a revolution by young, assertive liberals in the House determined to shape foreign and national security policy in early 1975, and ended with conservatives in the ascendancy in the Senate and the breakdown of relations with the Soviet Union having completely reshaped the domestic political landscape. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, the challenge to the Nixon Administration's foreign policy was based as much on ideological as on institutional concerns, and arose most strongly from the Senate, while the House remained more supportive of Nixon due to the fact that the House leadership was composed of the more traditional, Cold War Democrats whose perspectives on foreign and national security policy tended to have more in common with the views of Richard Nixon than those of William Fulbright.

Over the course of the decade, this dynamic was reversed. The House became increasingly liberal in its orientation, while the Senate became increasingly conservative. The changes in the membership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee between early in the decade and late in the decade were a microcosm of the larger political changes taking place in Washington. Early in the decade, the SFRC was chaired by William Fulbright, whose criticism of existing foreign policy was in harmony with that of the New Left, and the Republican members of the committee mostly came from the sizeable liberal wing of the GOP. By mid-decade Fulbright had been forceably retired by the voters in his home state of Arkansas, and by 1979 the Republican ranks of the committee were dominated by new conservatives such as Jesse Helms, Richard Lugar and S.I. Hayakawa.

In addition to tracing the evolution of Congressional attitudes toward China, this thesis has examined the means that Congress used in its attempts to influence policy development, and, crucially, analysed how Congress and the Executive Branch interacted in the making of China policy. Nixon and Kissinger, in their memoirs, paint an image of a White House courageously advocating fundamental change of China policy in the face of almost overwhelming opposition from the Executive Branch bureaucracy as well as from Congress. The historical record, however, illustrates that by the time Richard Nixon took office two major changes had taken place within Congress that opened the door to a fundamental change of China policy:

One was the ideological transformation within the Democratic party beginning in the mid 1960's, in which liberals within that party began to question the anti-communist assumptions that had undergirded US Cold War policy to that point. This challenge to existing foreign policy orthodoxy was shared by liberal members of the Republican Party (at a time when the liberal wing of the Republican Part represented a sizeable minority of

the GOP), creating a liberal coalition that contested US foreign policy generally, and in particular policy toward Asia, in which Washington was then embroiled in yet another massive land war, the aim of which was to contain Chinese communism. The second domestic change that was taking place by the time Richard Nixon took office was the weakening of the China Lobby, which significantly reduced the political risks to the President of pursuit of policy change. Without these important shifts in the Congressional dynamic, it is difficult to imagine any President, even one with as tough an anti-communist reputation as Richard Nixon, being willing to pursue and capable of successfully bringing to fruition such fundamental policy reform.

Together, these changes indicated a major transformation of the domestic environment that opened the door to China policy reform. Fatigue with the militarised and seemingly endless confrontation with the communist world, and the extreme domestic stresses of the late 1960's, had created ready constituencies for policies of conciliation with the nation's opponents. This was particularly true in the case of China, the containment of which was one of the primary rationales which had been used by the Johnson Administration to justify the escalating American military, political and financial commitment to the war in Vietnam. As the American intervention in Vietnam bogged down in stalemate, so a major new initiative towards China became politically possible.

The transition in the Congressional attitude toward China from the early 1950's through the late 1960's illustrates one of the most effective means Congress used throughout the Cold War to shape policy toward China - the power of its known attitudes to define the space within which the Executive Branch was able to operate. During the 1950's and early 1960's, Congressional determination to contain and isolate China, and Congress's vigilant opposition to attempts on the part of the Executive Branch to revisit,

even marginally, any portion of this policy framework reinforced the existing policy and strictly defined the bounds within which the Executive Branch was able to act. The Republican accusation that the Democrats, through the Truman Administration, had 'lost China' to communism, added a large element of partisan tension to the issue, and was a consideration during the Johnson Administration's debate over even incremental policy reform.⁷⁸⁰ From 1965 onwards, however, vehement opposition to a critical rethinking of China policy within Congress lessened considerably due to growing frustration with the conflict in Vietnam and the national stresses that accompanied it, and the related, and dramatic, ideological shift among Congressional liberals that altered thinking regarding America's role in the world and approach to communism.

Simultaneous to this lessening of opposition to China policy reform, through speeches and public hearings, Congress significantly contributed to reshaping the way that policy-makers and the public thought about China policy, both by emphasising the withering of militant opposition to a rethinking of China policy, and by making positive, constructive policy suggestions. This Congressional challenge dovetailed with the growing willingness of American society to challenge existing ways of doing things. The revolutionary fervor of the period multiplied the effect that a robust Congressional challenge to presidential policy would normally have had on political debate.

By the time Richard Nixon took office, the dramatic, and very vocal, change in Congressional and public attitudes toward China had set a new direction for policy and redefined and enlarged the space within which the Executive Branch could operate with respect to China policy. Without this expanded political space and altered attitudes, no opening to China would have been possible. With it, the Executive Branch not only had a much greater range of options at its disposal with which to attempt to address the major

⁷⁸⁰ James Thomson to Jack Valenti, 1 March 1966, Document 129, *FRUS, 1964-1968, vol. XXX, China*.

international issues facing the United States, but new departures in policy that had as their goal conciliation with the nation's opponents.

The ability of Congress to define the political space within which the Executive Branch had the freedom to operate also helped to define the course of US policy toward China throughout the 1970's, shaping both the process of diplomatic normalisation and consideration of a potential Sino-American security relationship aimed at containing the Soviet Union. The most obvious example was the vast gulf between Congressional and Executive Branch attitudes toward Taiwan and the constraining influence this had on the Nixon, Ford and Carter Administrations' ability to complete the process of normalisation on Beijing's terms. Likewise, knowledge of a lack of Congressional support for defence spending and Pentagon programmes of any kind in 1974 slowed more extensive consideration within the Executive Branch of the possibility of an informal security alliance with China in the Asia-Pacific region.

Although the existence of a permissive environment can be sufficient grounds for a given foreign policy initiative on the part of the Executive Branch, active support provides much greater legitimacy for policy. The opening to China pursued by Richard Nixon grew out of a political environment that was not only permissive to change, but actively supportive of that change. Of the three men who served as President during the 1970's, Nixon seemed to best understand the importance of support for the success of a policy initiative. From 1969-1972, Nixon proactively lobbied to increase conservative support for an opening to China by emphasising the strategic benefits to the United States of rapprochement. He also sought to minimise opposition and to build support by addressing, albeit disingenuously, bipartisan Congressional concerns that continuing American commitments to and longstanding ties with Taiwan not be harmed by the

opening to Beijing. Had Nixon not lost his office, and contributed in dramatic fashion to the weakening of the Executive Branch through the self-wounding of Watergate, the course of the Sino-American normalisation process would likely have looked very different, and would quite possibly have been resolved in a much more positive fashion, despite the fact that Nixon had made his task more difficult by conceding much to the Chinese and then hiding those concessions from Congress.

Presidents Ford and Carter did not have Nixon's ability to mould Congressional opinion to their own ends, with negative consequences for their China policy, as well as for their foreign policy as a whole. Gerald Ford, despite having been well respected by both parties as a Republican Congressional leader, showed no ability as President to shape Congressional attitudes. It is true that Ford faced an extremely assertive Congress, had inherited a weakened Executive Branch, and did not hold a strong position within the his own party. However, Ford had long experience building coalitions on Capitol Hill. Yet rather than trying to change the weak position within which he found himself and to attempt to positively shape Congressional attitudes, he seemed content to accept a passive role. Jimmy Carter took a more assertive stance vis-a-vis Congress, but alienated Congress through a distant and disdainful attitude rather than attempting to lead through consultations and through proactively but cooperatively shaping attitudes, as Nixon had done. The result was that diplomatic normalisation finally occurred, but at the cost of a deepened distrust between the branches of government which weakened support for Carter's China policy.

The manner in which Carter pursued both normalisation and the development of a Sino-American security relationship illustrates the pitfalls of pursuing a policy course with little reference to Congress. Although Congress objected to aspects of Carter's China

policy, particularly its apparent lack of concern for Taiwan's security and the closeness of future US-Taiwan relations, the broad thrust of Carter's policy, which sought closer relations and full diplomatic normalisation with Beijing, was widely supported. As shown in Chapters 4 and 5, broad support existed for normalisation of relations with China, even among the most conservative Senators, such as Jesse Helms, and among House Members, such as Lester Wolff, who were known to have closer relations with Taipei than anyone else in Congress.⁷⁸¹ Although Carter was correct to note that Congressional reticence to meet Beijing's demands for normalisation had slowed the process, space existed within which he could have worked with Congress to assure it both that the Administration would ensure that Taiwan's future security would never be in doubt, and that its views were being considered and that it was a partner in the process of policy formulation.

Carter's most significant error in pursuit of normalisation was one of process, not policy. Treating Congress as if it was irrelevant was widely seen as an affront to the institution, and angered even Administration supporters, such as Alan Cranston and Ted Kennedy. Carter compounded the problem by demanding that Congress quickly pass the Administration's 'enabling legislation' to regulate unofficial relations with Taiwan with no amendments and little debate. One result was greatly increased friction between the branches and lessened support for Carter's foreign policy. Another was that the very thing that Carter had sought to prevent, a strong Congressional role in shaping policy toward Taiwan and China, was ensured as Congress took an aggressive stance in defence of its prerogatives and reshaped in some important ways the nature of the normalisation agreement which Carter had reached with Deng Xiaoping.

The refusal on the part of the Executive Branch to communicate with Congress at times successfully gained space within which a given Administration could pursue its

⁷⁸¹ Interviews with Joyce Lasky Shub, Chris Nelson, Jim Przystup, and Jim Lucier.

goals unhindered by Congressional interference. Nixon and Kissinger's ability to play China off against the Soviet Union in the early 1970's without the knowledge of Congress was a case in point. However, one of the dangers of this approach is that Members of Congress usually have vast experience in how Washington works, and therefore develop over time skills that enable them to gain information (which has been called 'the currency of power' in Washington) regarding whatever is being hidden from them. As one example, Senator Richard Stone, who was concerned that the Carter Administration was not treating Taiwan with due respect, gained a copy of the talking points the White House had given to a State Department official who was scheduled to meet with Taiwan's Vice Foreign Minister and called the State Department to complain.⁷⁸²

The most significant example of this, however, and the example that had the greatest impact on the process of normalisation, was the gradual learning process on the part of Members of Congress regarding Beijing's expectations with regard to Taiwan and the terms of normalisation that took place due to the initiation of a programme of Congressional trips to China. The disconnect between what Members had been told by Nixon and Kissinger, that no concessions regarding Taiwan had been made, and the expectations they discovered on the part of the Chinese leadership in Beijing, highlighted the disingenuous nature of Nixon's assurances, and began a process by which Congress began to wrestle with the implications for US policy – that the process of normalisation was likely to require greater sacrifice on the part of Washington than they had been led to believe. The historical record indicates, therefore, that Congress usually discovers what has been hidden from it, which results in a deepened distrust of the Executive Branch and undermines support for policy.

As pointed out in the Introduction, Congress's contribution in the area of foreign

⁷⁸² Interview with Chas Freeman.

and national security policy is often one of raising the 'big picture issues' that those in the Executive Branch, who have become wedded to a given approach, and/or are so at the mercy of constant crises that they do not have sufficient time to reflect on many of the larger issues underpinning their preferred policies, many times don't address. The Zablocki and Fulbright hearings of 1965 and 1966 provided a clear example of this ability of Congress to contribute to the making of sound policy in this way. During the 1970's, this contribution was most evident in the debate over the impact of Sino-American rapprochement and normalisation on the international security structure. From 1972 onward, through such means as making speeches, holding hearings, and authoring articles for publication, Congress played a similar constructive role in public debate over the meaning of the new relationship with China in the context of the Cold War. In 1972 and 1973, although largely supportive of Nixon's attempt to restructure the international security environment and to give the opening to China a large place in that endeavour, hearings, such as those held by Clement Zablocki in 1972, aimed to strengthen a policy with which it agreed through a critical examination of assumptions that Zablocki did not believe was taking place within the Administration. Similarly, when the Carter Administration moved to quickly develop a security relationship with China in light of the dramatic breakdown in US-Soviet relations at the end of the decade, although largely supportive, Congress nevertheless believed the relationship to be moving too quickly and that a more measured pace and reflective approach would yield stronger policy.

This contribution on the part of Congress is diminished when the Executive Branch withholds information or misleads the Congress and attempts to deny it a role in the policy-making process. The Nixon, Ford and Carter Administrations all saw Congressional involvement in this policy debate as unwanted and ignored Congress's

contribution in this area. However, in the case of the debate over Sino-American security ties, the attempt on the part of Ford and Carter to shut Congress out of the policy process was only partially successful. Perhaps the most important contribution that Congress made on this issue was the very fact that it undertook to examine the issue publicly, despite the existence, at least initially, of deep disagreements on Capitol Hill regarding its wisdom, as well as the scepticism with which many in the national security bureaucracy held the idea earlier in the decade. The large amount of very public attention which Congress paid to this issue helped to 'normalise' what had been a very 'radical' concept – that of a potential security relationship with Communist China aimed at the containment of the Soviet Union. This 'normalising' process contributed to the idea gradually becoming more acceptable to an inherently cautious national security bureaucracy. The power that Congressional attention had to spread the appeal of this idea was also seen in the fact that Michael Oksenberg and Zbigniew Brzezinski referenced these ideas as potential policy goals in their first week in office in January 1977.⁷⁸³ Congressional consideration of this idea sheds light on how ideas are evaluated in Washington, and the path they take from being a topic of mere abstract discussion, to active consideration, to policy implementation. The case of Congressional debate of potential Sino-American security cooperation supports Lee Hamilton's assertion that 'public debate gives legitimacy to policy'.⁷⁸⁴

In the case of Sino-American normalisation and US relations with Taiwan, the Executive Branch's consistent unwillingness through the 1970's to open its China policy to public debate, or to consult with Congress, denied its policy the benefit of domestic

⁷⁸³ Michael Oksenberg to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 19 January 1977, NSA, Staff Material – Far East – Armacost, Evening and Weekly Reports, File/Chron File, 1-2/78 through 2/7-10/77, Box 1, Carter Library.

⁷⁸⁴ Address by Lee Hamilton, 'Congress and Foreign Policy', 13 March 1982, p.135.

political consensus. Although this pattern on the part of the Executive Branch is understandable in some instances, one example being Nixon's over-estimation of the ability of conservatives to block rapprochement in the period 1969-1971, this behaviour is less defensible in others. The most obvious example of this during the 1970's was the Carter Administration's complete lack of willingness to allow Congress any role in the decision-making or to even keep Congress minimally informed regarding the decisions that led to the severing of security and diplomatic ties with Taiwan and the establishment of full diplomatic ties with China on Beijing's terms. The example of policy formulation with regard to China in the 1970's, therefore, illustrates the necessity of building domestic political consensus in support of a given foreign policy.

The various Congressional mechanisms for influencing policy, and the points of conflict between the two branches that have been highlighted in this study of policy toward China, have long characterised the struggle between the Executive and Legislative branches for control over the direction of policy. In another sense, however, the struggle between the branches over China policy during the 1970's was characterised by a unique set of circumstances and dynamics. Interaction between the branches during the 1970's took place within the environment that resulted from Congressional determination, in the wake of the experience of Vietnam, to delimit Executive power and to take greater responsibility over foreign and national security policy. Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter each faced an assertive Congress that required that it be treated as a partner in policy formulation, a trend Nixon assisted in dramatic fashion through the weakening of the Executive Branch due to Watergate.

Although the Congressional challenge to Executive Branch authority had grown from Nixon's first year in office, the high tide of Congressional assertiveness took place

from 1973 through 1976. Prior to 1973, Congressional attempts to significantly limit Executive Branch prerogatives had met with only very limited success. The weakening of the Nixon Administration due to Watergate, however, provided an opening that Congress took advantage of, passing, over a presidential veto, the War Powers Resolution in 1973, which sought to limit the President's ability to commit US armed forces to conflict in the absence of Congressional authorisation. Congressional liberals also finally succeeded in the summer of 1973 in cutting off funding for American military operations in Southeast Asia, an action that played a role in Zhou Fenland's discussions with the Warren Magnuson CoDel in August 1973.

The mid-term 1974 Congressional elections, which took place shortly after Nixon's resignation, saw a decimation of Republican ranks in Congress and the election of a large, liberal, and very assertive freshman class determined to shape policy by first reducing the authority of the House leadership and committee chairmen, and secondly by then challenging the Executive Branch. Their attempt to cause power in the House to devolve downward to subcommittee chairmen and rank and file Members such as themselves was successful, which served to exacerbate the conflictual relationship between the Ford Administration and the House. Their actual ability to influence policy, however, was limited both due to the fact that the success of their 'democratic revolution' had caused power in the House to become too diffuse, thus limiting the chamber's ability to exert influence, and due to the fact that the growth of conflict with the Soviet Union weakened the appeal of their arguments (and heightened the appeal of conservative arguments).

One of the reasons Jimmy Carter's attempt to circumvent Congress met with such a vehement reaction was that it took place in a decade in which Congress had become

increasingly assertive of its role as a partner in policy formulation. Additionally, Congress had made its expectation to be consulted on China policy in particular very clear.

Throughout the 1970's, the Executive Branch sought to exclude Congress as much as possible from having a direct influence over development of China policy, and Congress sought to ensure that it had as great an influence as possible. Neither branch was entirely successful in their endeavour.

Although this study has shown that there were limits on Congress's ability to directly influence China policy throughout the 1970's, it has also demonstrated that Congress had a much greater impact on the development of China policy during that decade than has previously been acknowledged. Foreign policy has always had a close connection with domestic politics, a fact which the example of China policy during the 1970's bears out. The previous attempts to understand the development of the Sino-American relationship during the period of rapprochement and normalisation with little reference to the role of Congress and of domestic politics had created a truncated understanding of the process. Placing Executive Branch actions, as this thesis has aimed to do, in the context of domestic political trends and Congressional attitudes and actions, has added an essential element enabling a more complete understanding of Washington's behaviour during what was both a critical period of the Cold War and a foundational period in the development of the Sino-American relationship.

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