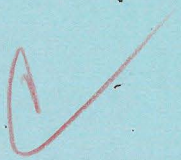


Research Report:

Nixon's China Policy



RNC Research Division

"Let all nations know that during this administration our lines of communication will be open. We seek an open world -- open to ideas, open to the exchange of goods and people -- a world in which no people, great or small, will live in angry isolation."

President Nixon took office at a time when the world was emerging from the postwar period, which had seen the reconstruction of Western Europe and Japan, the birth of a host of new nations, the Sino-Soviet split, the spread of nuclear weapons, and the softening of ideological lines. In charting a new direction for U.S. foreign policy in this transitional period, President Nixon believes that the U.S. should pursue a peace that, as he stated in his first Foreign Policy Report to the Congress, is "far more than the absence of war. Peace must provide a durable structure of international relationships which inhibits or removes the causes of war."

No area of the world has been of greater concern to President Nixon than Asia. He firmly believes that the U.S. is a Pacific power and that our past costly involvements in Asia clearly demonstrate that peace for the United States is much less likely if there is no peace in Asia. A principal tenet of the President's approach to Asian policy has been to undertake a long-term improvement in our relations with the People's Republic of China. The basis for the China policy is clearly stated in the President's Foreign Policy Report of 1971:

It is a truism that an international order cannot be secure if one of the major powers remains largely outside and hostile toward it. In this decade, therefore, there will be no more important challenge than that of drawing the People's Republic of China into a constructive relationship with the world community, and particularly with the rest of Asia.

BACKGROUND

As Vice President of the United States during the 1950's, Richard Nixon clearly recognized the threat that Peking, then closely allied with Moscow, presented to Asia. He was a steady and vigorous critic of China's aggressive foreign policy and actions. At the same time, he pointed out (in 1959) that America should not be inflexible in its

attitude toward China. He said, "Our attitude (toward China) should not be rigid. We cannot and should not say we will never recognize the government that rules over 600 million people."

Changes in the face of Asia proceeded apace during the decade of the sixties. The fissure between Peking and Moscow, barely visible during the late fifties, had opened widely by the early sixties. China independently acquired its own nuclear weapons capability. At the same time other Asian nations, especially Japan, achieved higher degrees of economic stability and development. Mr. Nixon analyzed this rapidly changing situation in Asia, and in a 1967 article in Foreign Affairs, he defined the basis of an approach to the problem of China in Asia:

Taking the long view, we simply cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbors. There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation. But we could go disastrously wrong if, in pursuing this long-range goal, we failed in the short range to read the lessons of history.

ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVES

Soon after Richard Nixon became President, he directed that steps be considered to establish communication between the Chinese and American peoples. Thus, beginning in mid-1969, President Nixon began a series of limited, unilateral initiatives to remove restrictions on trade with and travel to mainland China that had been imposed during the Korean War. These steps were designed to signal the seriousness of the U.S. intent in seeking improved communications. To the extent that the People's Republic of China (PRC) has responded, these moves have provided the beginning of contacts between peoples of the two countries as well. Included among the U.S. restrictions that have been modified are the following:

- Special restrictions on travel to the PRC by U.S. citizens have been removed.
- American tourists, museums, and others are permitted to make non-commercial purchases of Chinese goods without special authorization.
- Foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms are permitted to engage in commerce between the PRC and third countries.
- The selective licensing of goods for export to the PRC is authorized.

- Certain restrictions on U.S. oil companies operating abroad have been lifted, so that most foreign ships can use U.S.-owned bunkering facilities on voyages to and from mainland Chinese ports.

In addition, direct ambassadorial talks between the U.S. and PRC diplomatic officials resumed in Warsaw in January, 1970 after a two-year lapse. A second meeting was held the following month, although a third meeting scheduled for May was cancelled at Chinese initiative. In December, 1970, President Nixon announced that the normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China was one of his principal goals in this effort.

PEKING
RESPONDS

Peking dramatically showed its own interest in improved relations in April of this year when it invited the U.S. Table Tennis Team to tour China. This single gesture carried utmost significance when viewed from the perspective of the history of the Cold War. The Table Tennis Team was, with one exception, the first American group to visit China in almost two decades. Peking also invited a number of American journalists to accompany the team.

Shortly after the ping pong invitation, President Nixon decided to:

- expedite visas for visitors from the PRC.
- permit limited direct trade with the PRC.
- modify currency, shipping, and bunkering controls in order to facilitate trade between the two countries.

Peking subsequently authorized a number of U.S. journalists and others to visit China. To date, more than sixty Americans have travelled to China this year.

THE WAY
IS OPENED

By July, these two years of patient, careful, and realistic initiatives achieved President Nixon's objective -- the creation of a framework for more meaningful communication between the two countries. The President's Assistant for National Security Affairs, Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, journeyed to Peking for two days of discussions with Chinese officials. The result

was shared with the world on July 15 in an announcement that is currently changing the course of world politics:

Knowing of President Nixon's expressed desire to visit the People's Republic of China, Premier Chou En-lai on behalf of the Government of the People's Republic of China has extended an invitation to President Nixon to visit China at an appropriate date before May, 1972. President Nixon has accepted the invitation with pleasure.

The President clearly states, however, that in seeking a new relationship with the People's Republic of China, the actions of the United States would neither be at the expense of old friends nor directed against any other nation. Importantly, the trip is being planned with no pre-conditions on either side. Both countries recognize that the issues between us are highly complex and that major differences still exist. Yet, there is also recognition on both sides that a discussion of these issues can clarify the differences between the countries, and thus, possibly reduce the tensions that result from those differences.

On August 2, the Administration took another major initiative when Secretary of State Rogers announced that the U.S. supports the seating of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations and at the same time, opposes expulsion of the Republic of China from the world body. The following month, America's Ambassador to the United Nations added that, on the basis of the views of a majority of U.N. members, the U.S. takes the position that the Chinese seat in the Security Council should go to the PRC.

PUBLIC
SUPPORT

The President's attempts to establish communication with China and to normalize relations between the two countries have commanded overwhelming support from the American people as well as from heads of state all over the world. The extent to which the President's leadership has inspired the American people is reflected in a recent Harris survey, which shows that Americans favor the Administration's China policy by a margin of better than two to one. In addition, a September Harris poll reveals that close to 70% of the American people approve of the President's plan to visit Peking.

The sentiment of world leaders is well expressed by the Netherlands' Joseph Luns, new Secretary General of NATO, who called the President's trip "one of the great moments in the world's history." Further, the

United States Senate declared its bipartisan support of the President's actions in a resolution which reads:

Resolved by the Senate (The House of Representatives concurring) that the President of the United States be and is hereby commended for his outstanding initiative in furtherance of foreign relations of the United States and World Peace by deciding to undertake a 'journey for peace' to the People's Republic of China. Resolved, further, by the Senate, (The House of Representatives concurring) that the Congress authors and does hereby author its full faith and support to the President in carrying out the purposes of this journey.

LOOKING TO
THE FUTURE

The basic element of international relations is communication. Failure to communicate is an invitation to crisis diplomacy. President Nixon understands that the United States, the most powerful nation on earth, must establish meaningful communications with the People's Republic of China, the most populous nation on earth. The President is succeeding in establishing the framework whereby problems between the United States and China can be discussed rationally and therefore solved intelligently. Unnecessary tensions and potential crises can be averted through open communication and better understanding between the two countries. In his announcement on August 2, Secretary Rogers said:

The world is approaching the midpoint between the end of World War II and the end of the twentieth century. The United Nations, founded in the aftermath of the war, is past its 25th anniversary.

President Nixon has been adapting American foreign policy with these facts in mind - forging policies directed to the future while taking fully into account the legacies of the past.

By erecting a realistic foreign policy for the future, while bearing in mind the lessons of history, President Nixon is steering a new direction for the conduct of America's international relations. As Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant points out, "the President has opened a new chapter in the history of international relations."

Indeed, the Nixon China Policy is a dynamic and creative beginning toward the goal that all Americans share --- a full generation of peace.