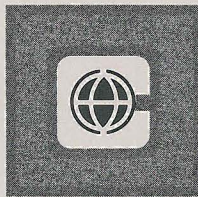


SPECIAL



CSIS ALERT

To the Advisory Board:

To keep you alerted to key issues under study & analysis by CSIS staff in Washington, in Europe, and in Asia.

The Honorable Robert J. Dole
United States Senate
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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China and The World Zbigniew Brzezinski

PRC Trip Report Gerrit Gong

China and The World

China Opens Up

My most important conclusion from my recent trip to China is that China is now truly entering the world on a significant scale and in an enduring way.

This, if it is a correct judgment, is a historic development for a country that saw itself as the Middle Kingdom, the center of the universe, a civilization unto itself.

I have the feeling from talking with Chinese officials, from consulting on their plans for modernization, from looking at their schemes for opening China up to greater contact with the external world, particularly through business and technology, that a change of truly fundamental nature is taking place -- links are now being created that bind China to the world in a way that is without historical precedent in Chinese experience.

U.S.-Chinese Relations

In the talks we had with Chinese leaders, I was struck that the U.S.-Chinese relationship is now genuinely comprehensive, quite strong, and expanding. It is no longer confined to one central dimension -- the strategic-political -- but has clearly become multifaceted.

There are, of course, differences, some of which reflect divergences in our respective strategic views. Chairman Deng pointed to several areas in which the Chinese perspective differs from ours, such as the Middle East, Korea, and the Third World in general. Nonetheless, distinguishing the central from the peripheral, the strategic perspectives of the United States and China, in my judgment, remain complementary.

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From the U.S. point of view, a strong and secure China is very much in America's interest, and, thus, the U.S.-Chinese relationship has central strategic significance. From the Chinese point of view, a strong United States that does not permit the Soviet Union to gain strategic superiority remains in China's interest. This is absolutely central to the relationship on a strategic plane.

Taiwan and Trade

In bilateral relations, there are some troubling differences, Taiwan foremost among them. Chairman Deng made an important statement regarding the Chinese position on the future of Taiwan and was very concerned about the U.S. attitude. The Chinese also expressed disappointment at the rate of technology transfer to China and the feeling that unfair obstacles are inhibiting progress.

On our side, I indicated to the Chinese that there ought to be greater respect for contractual obligations and that the issue of adherence to such obligations should not be used as leverage in negotiating other issues. I also expressed some concern about the status of academic exchanges and the difficulties that have attended them. I stressed to our Chinese friends that the issue of Taiwan has to be viewed in a historical perspective, that the question is in a historical transitional phase, and that it would be counterproductive to elevate some of the differences that have surfaced into a major focus of the U.S.-Chinese relationship. Clearly, the issue is susceptible to constructive resolution by the Chinese people themselves. On the U.S. side there is no inclination either to complicate the matter or to make an issue of it.

A New Stage in U.S.-Chinese Relations

I believe it is very important that the forthcoming Reagan visit to China be infused with deliberate political content and deliberate political will. It should not simply be a symbolic visit. It should also be a visit that ushers in a third phase of the U.S.-Chinese relationship.

On the Chinese side, this requires more of an effort to break through some of the bureaucratic difficulties involved

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in the unfolding of the relationship, and it means very careful respect for contractual obligations. From our side, I feel that the United States should take the initiative to review the desirability of continuing to apply Coordinating Committee (COCOM) procedures (which control the transfer of sensitive technologies to Communist countries) to China.

The first phase of U.S.-Chinese relations was initiated by the historic breakthrough between President Nixon and Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The second phase began with the normalization of relations accomplished by President Carter and Deng Xiaoping. We should now move deliberately on to the third phase, which would make the more comprehensive relationship that now exists truly enduring and increasingly constructive.

Zbigniew Brzezinski
Senior Adviser to CSIS

This was Zbigniew Brzezinski's third trip to China.

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PRC Trip Report

The eight-person CSIS delegation chaired by CSIS Senior Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and CSIS President Amos Jordan that visited the People's Republic of China (PRC) from February 19-23, 1984 included Eric Hotung, special adviser to the CSIS delegation; Melvin Laird, former U.S. secretary of defense; Senator Frank H. Murkowski (R-Alaska); Representative Matthew McHugh (D-N.Y.); John Marous, president of the Industries and International Group, Westinghouse Electric Corporation; and Dr. Gerrit W. Gong, CSIS fellow in Sino-Soviet Studies.

In the delegation's sessions with Chairman Deng Xiaoping and Premier Zhao Ziyang, a wide range of topics was discussed with a frankness reserved for old acquaintances and nongovernmental settings, though U.S. Ambassador Arthur Hummel was present on both occasions. We also had a delightful visit with Zhou Enlai's widow, Madame Deng Yingchao, in the Great Hall of the People. Previously, the CSIS delegation had discussed a wide range of subjects with leading Chinese experts and scholars from five major Chinese research institutes.

Chairman Deng, spry of step and alert despite his 79 years, and Premier Zhao, confident in his well-tailored Western-style suit, gave authoritative views of Sino-Soviet-U.S. relations, U.S.-PRC-Taiwan relations, and circumstances on the Korean peninsula.

U.S.-PRC Relations

Both Chairman Deng and Premier Zhao emphasized the importance they attach to continued development of U.S.-Chinese relations. "I earnestly hope to develop Sino-U.S. relations," Chairman Deng said (a message later quoted on the front page of The People's Daily), "and hope to see a continuous enhancement of the friendship between our two peoples."

Premier Zhao Ziyang told us, "There are broad areas of cooperation for our two countries ... The United States is the world's strongest developed country and China is the world's largest developing country ... China, through its modernization drive, will not constitute a threat to the United States."

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But, Zhao continued, "The United States, as a developed country, should take concrete actions to support China's four modernization programs [by adopting] a more forthcoming policy on economic and technical relations." He pointed out that old laws still on the books hinder U.S.-Chinese trade and technology transfer. Zhao suggested that the United States make greater efforts to remove them. "We attach importance to this kind of policy," he said. "I personally attach importance to this kind of policy."

At the same time, Premier Zhao underscored the range of factors influencing U.S.-Chinese relations. At one point he made a long and impassioned statement in which he stressed that the question of Taiwan touches Chinese sensibilities and sentiments in a very deep way; that the United States should not consider itself the center of the U.S.-Chinese relationship; and that just as China could not be the smaller partner of the Soviet Union, it would not be the smaller partner of the United States. Similarly, Chairman Deng had indicated the umbrage that China took to the Taiwan Relations Act. At the same time, however, he quickly added, "Of course Taiwan is not the only problem."

The themes of technology transfer and the Taiwan question will continue to be played as part of a delicate U.S.-Chinese minuet in counterpoint time.

Sino-Soviet Relations

Regarding Sino-Soviet relations, Chairman Deng commented, "I do not know Chernenko. I knew Andropov. It seems to me that there will not be changes in the policy of the Soviet Union, because it will be impossible for Chernenko to make policy decisions alone. ...In that sense, Chernenko is a transitional figure."

Deng did not anticipate any "dramatic changes" in Sino-Soviet relations. He reiterated the Chinese position that the prerequisite to normalizing Sino-Soviet relations is the removal of the three major obstacles, that is, the removal of Soviet troops massed along the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongolian borders, cessation of Soviet support for Vietnamese aggression in Kampuchea, and the removal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

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Although little movement seems likely on these issues, both Deng and Zhao did point out that lack of progress in these areas would "not prevent our two neighboring countries from improving or developing ties in certain other fields."

Premier Zhao concurred that major changes in Sino-Soviet relations were not likely. He noted, however, that China is sincere in seeking better relations with both the United States and the USSR. "We are not playing cards," he said.

China makes no secret of its desire to take a more independent policy line between the superpowers. (Paradoxically, this may partially be a result of the latitude it gained from closer relations with the United States.) In any case, the PRC's claim that the United States and the Soviet Union are equally responsible for the arms race permits China some freedom of maneuver between the two -- all the while trying to improve relations with both.

The Korean Peninsula

The amount of real influence that Beijing has in North Korea is unclear. The Chinese leaders emphasized their interest in promoting stability on the peninsula, while maintaining that "South Korea is not as good nor North Korea as bad as the United States maintains."

Even in the face of CSIS's assessments concerning the forward and offensive deployment of North Korean forces and of the inordinately large number of North Korean commando units, the Chinese leaders still maintained that the threat from the South was at least as large as the threat from the North. We received no response to our strong assertions that forcible attempts, such as the Rangoon bombing, to destroy hostile governments were simply unacceptable international behavior.

Chairman Deng suggested that new solutions should be found for old problems in Korea. He thought that armed conflict or war would inevitably occur if such efforts failed. China is interested in a long-term, not a short-term, solution to the question of peaceful change on the Korean peninsula, he said. He urged Americans to "look seriously"

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at North Korea's federation proposals, for "surely, two different societies--one socialist and one capitalist--can live together in one state."

Taiwan and Hong Kong

Deng's formula for resolving the Taiwan and Hong Kong issues paralleled his ideas on Korea. "Our policy toward Taiwan is that Taiwan can continue to practice capitalism," he said, "while the mainland will practice socialism: One China, two systems."

"We have the same policy toward Hong Kong," Deng continued. "I should say, 'One China, three systems' because Hong Kong and Taiwan are different, Hong Kong being a free port."

Deng said he was eager to find fresh approaches that would strengthen peace. He mentioned the possibility that China and neighboring countries could jointly develop disputed islands. Such an effort could conceivably side step intractable disputes over sovereignty while recognizing the reality of the status quo.

Looking to the Future

Although some of the specific points that the Chinese leaders made to us were critical of U.S. policy, their overall message was clear: current Chinese policy places high value, high hope, and high emphasis on developing U.S.-PRC ties. "We have to know more about the United States and our American friends have to know more about China," Deng said. "It is quite understandable that the two sides cannot reach full agreement of views on a number of issues, but the presentation of views in a calm way helps increase understanding."

Both Chairman Deng and Premier Zhao noted how much they are looking forward to President Reagan's visit to China in April 1984. In particular, Premier Zhao was obviously impressed by his U.S. visit and expressed the hope that President Reagan's return visit be equally successful. Still, despite strong Chinese interest in improving U.S.-PRC relations in substantive ways, it remains clear -- as

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is true for U.S. policy -- that a combination of Chinese foreign policy perceptions, Chinese national feelings, and domestic Chinese politics channels the choices that the leaders in Beijing can make at the present time.

Gerrit W. Gong
Fellow in Sino-Soviet Affairs

Dr. Gong is conducting ongoing research on U.S.-PRC relations and is working with Dr. Jordan on the Center's invitation for a Chinese delegation to visit the United States next year.

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