

Foreign Relations, 1969-1976, Vol. XVII, China, 1969-1972

Summary

(This is not an official statement of policy by the Department of State, but is intended only as a guide to the contents of this volume. The numbers in parentheses correspond to document numbers in the printed and electronic versions of the text.)

Re-examining Sino-American Relations

President Richard Nixon came into office determined to improve relations with Communist China. Within days of his inauguration, Nixon ordered that “every encouragement” be given to speculation that the United States sought rapprochement with the PRC. Through Kissinger, Nixon issued National Security Study Memorandum (NSSM) 14, U.S. China Policy, on February 5, 1969. (3, 4,) Although these documents indicate that the original impetus for re-examining policy toward the PRC came from Nixon, Kissinger’s enthusiasm for a major initiative toward China grew rapidly. The written responses to NSSM 14 (12, 23) as well as meetings of the NSC’s Senior Review Group (SRG) outlined the general approach of U.S. policy. (13) Although the written response to NSSM 14, prepared primarily by the Department of State, included three options—“Present Strategy, Intensified Deterrence and Isolation, or Reduction of PRC’s Isolation and Points of US-CPR Conflict”—discussions tended to focus on how the United States could reduce tensions, and whether the PRC would be receptive to any initiative.

China policy was closely held and the full NSC only met once to discuss this topic. No decisions were reached at the August 14, 1969, NSC meeting in San Clemente, California, but Nixon’s handwritten notes of a briefing by Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms provide insight into the President’s understanding of the PRC. (25) Complicating these multi-

agency discussions was the fact that no one outside of the White House knew of Nixon's strong desire to communicate directly with the Chinese leadership through secret channels. While the NSC meetings and reports were of limited importance, the NSC staff itself was vital. This *Foreign Relations* volume highlights the role of NSC staff members, particularly John H. Holdridge and Winston Lord, who assisted Kissinger in his attempt to shape and implement U.S. policy toward China. (38)

Another broad study of China policy was undertaken in November 1970 as NSSM 106 (97). Agency responses and ensuing debate did little to shape the direction of policy toward the PRC, but did signal to the bureaucracy that major changes were under consideration. (105, 108) One of the most contentious issues was whether to reduce the U.S. military presence on Taiwan. While the Department of State and the NSC advocated removing some of these forces as the war in Southeast Asia came to an end, the Department of Defense submitted a paper to the NSC stating a variety of concerns over any modification to U.S. presence on the island. (110) In April 1971, Nixon requested NSSM 124, "Next Steps toward the PRC," the response to which laid out further steps to be taken to spur rapprochement. (117, 129) These studies, primarily prepared in the Department of State, raised few new ideas, but did serve as "laundry lists" of measures from which Nixon selected over the next few months. Until July 1971, the Departments of State, Defense, and Commerce, along with the CIA, participated in these discussions, without knowledge of the Nixon and Kissinger initiative to seek direct contact with PRC leaders.

Signaling a Thaw

NSSMs 14, 106, and 124 included recommendations on trade and travel policies, which became one way for Nixon to signal his desire to improve relations with the PRC. This effort began with National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) 17 of June 26, 1969, "Relaxation

of Economic Controls against China.” (14) Nixon, through Kissinger, requested that the Under Secretaries Committee, headed by Under Secretary of State Elliot Richardson, devise plans to implement these changes. (17) Richardson, the Department of State official most trusted by the White House, suggested other small steps to relax trade and travel regulations. (19) During the first year of the Nixon presidency, the Department of State, often through Richardson, had its greatest influence over China policy, primarily by resurrecting a variety of measures related to trade and travel with the PRC rejected during the final year of the Lyndon B. Johnson administration. Marshall Green, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, was also influential in shaping the Department’s policy toward the ROC and the PRC. The Department’s knowledge of and influence over China policy, however, declined during the 1969 to 1972 period.

In September 1969, Nixon agreed with a memorandum signed by Secretary of State William P. Rogers that passport restrictions on travel with the PRC be extended for six months, then eliminated. (35) Rogers also sent a memorandum to Nixon, December 2, in which he laid out the “Next Moves in China Policy.” He recommended that NSDM 17 be implemented completely and suggested further measures related to travel and trade. (49) Nixon approved these measures, but wanted them implemented in a “low key” manner. In December 1970, Kissinger requested further steps that could be taken in this area, and in January 1971, Nixon approved another series of trade liberalization measures. (101, 111) Immediately after the announcement of “ping-pong diplomacy” in April 1971, Nixon requested another set of trade and travel modifications in NSDM 105. (116) By early June 1971, the Under Secretaries Committee had provided Nixon with a full range of restrictions that could be modified.

Sino-American meetings in Warsaw, scheduled for February 1969, represented the second avenue to improve relations. Nixon and Kissinger approved the Department of State's draft instructions to Walter Stoessel, the Ambassador to Poland, indicating that the United States was eager for "serious negotiations." (6) The PRC, however, cancelled the meeting, ostensibly due to the defection of one of their diplomats. In his meeting with Kissinger and the Ambassador to Poland, Walter Stoessel, on September 9, 1969, Nixon stated his eagerness to resume the Warsaw Talks. (31) Stoessel arranged two meetings with PRC representatives in Warsaw, on January 20 and February 20, 1970. (61, 62, 67, 68) Prior to the January meeting, Kissinger noted optimistically that the PRC had assumed a "more pragmatic style of diplomacy." (59) The February 20 meeting marked a major turning point, as the PRC issued an invitation for the United States to dispatch an envoy to Beijing for talks. (69) Rogers and the Department of State advocated a slow and cautious approach, while Kissinger and Nixon sought a more aggressive policy of high-level meetings with no preconditions. Nixon's rejection of the Department of State's plan marked the end of the Department's substantive role in formulating China policy during the first Nixon administration. PRC anger over the U.S. invasion of Cambodia led to the cancellation of the Warsaw meetings scheduled for the late spring of 1970. (80) Nixon and Kissinger did not wish to revive the Warsaw Talks, and instead sought to open communication through Pakistan.

Nixon and Kissinger also removed military irritants to U.S.-PRC relations. In early 1969, they limited aerial reconnaissance of the mainland, particularly U-2 overflights. (10) Following a small raid by ROC forces on the mainland, the Department of State also worked to gain assurances from Chiang Kai-shek and his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, to provide the United States prior notice and veto power for any future military action on the mainland. (16) Nixon

also ordered the end of the Taiwan Strait patrol in September 1969, despite vigorous protests from the ROC. (34, 50) In late November 1969, Kissinger approved a Department of State plan to impress upon PRC officials the significance of the patrol's cancellation. (48)

Sino-Soviet-American Relations

Nixon perceived Sino-Soviet tensions and the possibility of a military conflict between the two Communist giants as both a danger and an opportunity. In NSSM 63, "U.S. Policy on Current Sino-Soviet Differences," the administration began to study the conflict in a comprehensive fashion. (15, 40, 41, 46) The NSC's Washington Special Actions Group (WSAG) and the Senior Review Group (SRG) met in the summer and early autumn of 1969 to discuss NSSM 63 and a separate report devoted to "Immediate U.S. Policy Problems in Event of Major Sino-Soviet Hostilities." (29, 32, 36, 43, 47) This report, prepared for the WSAG, stated that the United States would "publicly emphasize its impartiality and noninvolvement, urge both sides not to use nuclear weapons, call for negotiations and the restoration of peace, and take steps to avoid any provocative actions or accidental contact by US forces with belligerent forces." (43)

Taken as a whole, the documents suggest that this was less a crisis than some may have believed, as there were few in the U.S. Government who expected a major Sino-Soviet conflict despite heated rhetoric by each side. Nixon and Kissinger agreed, however, that the United States needed to make clear that it would not support any Soviet attack on China. Kissinger was concerned that a weak U.S. response to Soviet probes could increase the risk of war, and that "the Soviets may be using us to generate an impression in China and the world that we are being consulted in secret." (37) By early 1971, the United States was actually attempting to exaggerate the Soviet threat to the PRC in order to encourage rapprochement with Washington.

Even prior to Kissinger's July 1971 trip, the United States began to inform the PRC secretly of developments in Soviet-U.S. relations, particularly issues related to arms control talks. (126) The PRC and the United States frequently exchanged information on their policies toward the Soviet Union. As Kissinger wrote to Nixon after an August 1971 meeting with PRC representatives in New York: "We are building a solid record of keeping the Chinese informed on all significant subjects of concern to them, which gives them an additional stake in nurturing our new relationship." (155) Throughout 1971 and 1972, Kissinger relayed messages through Paris or New York to the Chinese, detailing Soviet-American discussions. For example, both sides exchanged information on their responses to the Soviet's proposal for five-power nuclear talks. (155) On October 2, Walters informed PRC diplomats in Paris that Kissinger would provide Chou "a full rundown" of discussions with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. (158, fn. 1)

Memoranda of conversation for the July and October 1971 and February and June 1972 meetings in Beijing contain detailed information on Soviet-U.S. relations. In late July 1972 Kissinger discussed with Huang Hua a Soviet proposal for a nuclear non-aggression pact, stating "You are the only government with which we have discussed it and in our government only the President and I and my close associates know about it." (233) Kissinger also provided Huang Hua with a detailed overview of his talks with Gromyko, including strategic arms talks. (243)

Continuing Relations with the Republic of China

While relations with the ROC experienced no fundamental change from early 1969 through mid-1971, there appeared a series of irritants between two countries, and concern on the part of Chiang's government over lessening hostility between the United States the PRC. The Departments of State and Defense continued their long-term efforts to reform and reduce the size

of the ROC's military. ROC leaders, including President Chiang and his son, Defense Minister Chiang Ching-kuo, attempted to connect military reorganization to the transfer of sophisticated military equipment, such as F-4 fighters. (1, 8, 86) During the summer of 1969, word of possible modifications to trade and travel restrictions to the PRC leaked out, and Rogers and Kissinger attempted to reassure ROC leaders that "there had been no change in basic US policy toward Communist China." (21, 22) Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific, Marshall Green, Ambassador to the ROC, Walter McConaughy, and Rogers met separately with ROC leaders to explain the lessening of U.S.-PRC tensions and the end of the Taiwan Strait patrol. Kissinger also met with the ROC Ambassador to the United States, Chow Shu-kai. (44, 45, 52) Chiang expressed concerns about the Warsaw Talks in early 1970, but was assured by Nixon that of the meetings with PRC officials would not affect the U.S. defense commitment to Taiwan and the Pescadores. (71, 74) In early 1970, a new problem arose, as the U.S. Government grudgingly accepted the admission of Taiwanese dissident Peng Ming-min to the United States. Kissinger agreed with the Department of State that there existed no legal reason to exclude Peng, despite angry accusations from ROC officials that the United States was supporting the Taiwanese independence movement. (65, 91, 92)

The most important visitor from the ROC to the United States during the 1969-1972 period was Chiang Kai-shek's son, Minister of Defense (then Vice Premier) Chiang Ching-kuo. In his meeting with Nixon on April 21, 1970, Chiang raised concerns over the Warsaw Talks, and worried that U.S. attention was diverted to Southeast Asia to the detriment of ROC security. (76) Chiang spoke with Kissinger and Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird about the need for advanced weapons and an explicit commitment of U.S. support. (77, 78)

By early 1971, general ROC concerns over the possibility of U.S. rapprochement with the PRC and specific conflicts in bilateral relations increased tensions. One issue was the reversion of Okinawa to Japan and the final disposition of the Senkaku (Taioyutai in Chinese) Islands, which are located roughly between Okinawa and Taiwan. Ambassador Chow Shu-kai urged Nixon and Kissinger to state publicly that any Japanese-American treaty would not prejudice ROC claims to these small islands. (113, 114, 115) In June, the United States and the ROC engaged in heated negotiations over textiles exports to the United States. Ambassador David Kennedy and others from the Department of State and Commerce carried out the talks, which were a small side-show to the larger problem of Japanese-American economic relations. The ROC connected the textile issue, the Senkaku Islands, and the need for advanced military equipment, with little result. Chiang Ching-kuo did obtain a promise that the Department of State would declare that the final status of the islands was undetermined and would urge the Japanese to negotiate the issue with the ROC. Although the Department of State did make a public statement, the Japanese showed scant interest in discussing this issue with the ROC. (121, 133, 134)

Secret Contacts Through Pakistan

This volume provides the most complete record available of U.S.-PRC communication through a variety of third parties, including Norway, France, Romania, Poland, and Pakistan. These signals were transmitted through ambassadors in Beijing or private individuals, some of whom were personal acquaintances of Kissinger. During his August 1969 around-the-world trip, Nixon informed the leaders of Romania and Pakistan of his interest in improved relations with the PRC. (20) In the late summer and fall of that year, Pakistani President Yahya Khan offered to play an active role in rapprochement. In the Pakistani channel Nixon and Kissinger had found

a secret avenue for communication that by-passed the Department of State. (26, 28, 39). In December, the Pakistani Ambassador to the United States, Agha Hilaly, transmitted the first direct message from the PRC. Hilaly reported that the PRC leaders had released two detained Americans and were willing to resume the Warsaw Talks without preconditions, and Kissinger replied that the United States was interested in improving relations. (54, 55) In concert with the invitation to the United States relayed in the February 20, 1970, Warsaw Talks meeting, direct contact appeared likely when Hilaly reported that the PRC leaders “no longer see the Vietnam War as a problem between us” and that they did not fear a Soviet-U.S. condominium against them. The Chinese suggested that they were interested in “meaningful dialogue.” Kissinger asked Hilaly to relay a message to Yahya, who could then inform the PRC diplomats in Rawalpindi that the United States was “prepared to open a direct White House channel” to Beijing. (70) The U.S. invasion of Cambodia, however, put talks in hold until late 1970.

Nixon moved to rejuvenate contacts at his October 1970 meeting with Yahya in Washington, where he offered to send a secret envoy to Beijing. (94) Hilaly relayed Premier Chou En-lai’s response to Kissinger on December 9, which concluded that “a special envoy of President Nixon’s would be most welcome in Peking.” Seven days later, Kissinger informed Hilaly that the United States sought talks on a wide range of topics. (99) During the first four months of 1971, the PRC signaled a willingness to improve relations through Chou’s interview with Edgar Snow (103), Norwegian diplomats in Beijing (104), and the famous invitation to the American ping-pong team. (112) On April 27, 1971, Hilaly relayed a message from Chou, inviting Kissinger, Rogers, or Nixon for a public visit to the PRC. The note also stated that arrangements could be made through Yahya Khan. (118) A transcript of a telephone conversation between Nixon and Kissinger on that same day reveals these men considered a

wide variety of possible envoys. Nixon eventually agreed that Kissinger should go to Beijing as a secret envoy. (120). Over the next month, the United States and the PRC made arrangements for Kissinger's visit through Pakistani officials and the U.S. Ambassador in Rawalpindi, Joseph S. Farland. (124, 125, 130, 132)

Pakistan's role in Sino-American rapprochement could not be divorced from its conflict with India. The stability of Pakistan was a key area of cooperation between the United States and the PRC after mid-1971 prompting a remarkable measure of diplomatic coordination. In Kissinger's meetings with PRC diplomats in New York during November and December 1971, both sides exchanged positions and messages concerning the UN and the antagonists on the subcontinent, India and Pakistan. (173, 175, 176) South Asia was also one of the important substantive issues discussed by Kissinger's deputy, Alexander M. Haig, during his January 1972 trip to Beijing. (183, 184)

Kissinger's July and October 1971 Visit

This volume provides the first complete collection of memoranda of conversation from Kissinger's July 9-11 trip to the PRC, including discussions of the history of Sino-U.S. relations, personalities and policies of world leaders, planning for Nixon's visit to the PRC, U.S. military forces on Taiwan, the prospects for conflict on the Korean Peninsula, U.S. relations with Japan, arms talks with the Soviet Union, the war in Southeast Asia, and arrangements for further contacts through Paris. In an important meeting, July 1, Nixon laid out the general approach he wished Kissinger to take during these talks, emphasizing that the United States should not "indicate a willingness to abandon much of our support for Taiwan until it was necessary to do so." (137) Nixon also wanted Kissinger to highlight three areas of concern to the PRC: 1) the U.S. reaction to a stalemate in Vietnam, 2) the danger of a resurgent Japan, and 3) the threat

posed by the Soviet military. Markings on the original texts indicate that Nixon himself reviewed these memoranda, some of which are over 40 pages long. Several key themes emerged from the talks. The PRC urged the United States to remove its forces from Southeast Asia, but stated that it had no intention of becoming involved, militarily or diplomatically, in the conflict. Chou was also forceful on the issue of Taiwan, and Kissinger tied the U.S. presence on the island to the war in Southeast Asia. (139, 140, 141, 142, 143) One can see the outlines of the Shanghai Communiqué beginning to take shape over six months prior to Nixon's visit.

Scholars will find the memorandum prepared after each visit as interesting as the records of the meetings themselves. Kissinger provided Nixon an overview of his talks with Chou, calling them "the most searching, sweeping and significant discussions I have ever had in government." (144) Other documents reveal much about Nixon's personality and his concerns over how the China initiative was perceived in the United States. The President requested that Kissinger tell the press "how RN is uniquely prepared for this meeting and how ironically in many ways he has similar character characteristics and background to Chou." Nixon then listed nine similarities between himself and the Premier. (147) This volume also highlights the secrecy that surrounded Nixon's foreign policy. For example, in August 1971, Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, wrote to Kissinger to request more information on China policy, as well as an opportunity to participate in deliberations. He was politely rebuffed by Kissinger. (154)

In Paris, Defense Attaché Vernon Walters began a series of clandestine meetings with PRC ambassador to France, Huang Chen. Walters served as an important conduit for messages between the two countries for organizing visits to the PRC and larger issues in Sino-American relations. (149, 150) By the end of July, 1971, Kissinger and Huang Chen had met secretly in Paris to plan the October visit. (151) The volume contains one lengthy segment of the

memoranda of conversation from Kissinger's talks with Chou, and includes three memoranda reporting to Nixon the content and atmosphere of the October meetings in Beijing. (162, 163, 164, 165) Printed as an attachment to one of Kissinger's memoranda is an early draft of what would become the Shanghai Communiqué. (165) This *Foreign Relations* volume also reveals much about the relationship among Nixon, Rogers, and Kissinger. In a series of messages sent to Kissinger while he was in Beijing, Nixon requested private meetings with Chou and Mao Tse-tung, something that Kissinger showed little enthusiasm for. Kissinger also found himself caught up in disputes over the UN vote on the expulsion of the ROC and seating of the PRC, which occurred as he was returning from China. He blamed Rogers and the Department of State for mishandling the vote. (161) The U.S. eagerness to prove its credibility to the PRC can be seen in the NSC paper, "Concrete Commitments to the PRC Made During HAK October 1971 Visit." (166) Many of these commitments involved the United States relations with the Soviet Union, Japan, and the ROC, as well as a promise to investigate protests in support of Taiwan independence and report the results to the PRC. The record indicates that Kissinger told the PRC relatively little, stating that nothing could be done about these demonstrations. (173) The electronic supplement contains materials documenting Walters' activities, all memorandum of conversation from Kissinger's October trip (including counter-part talks to prepare for Nixon's February trip), complete versions of Kissinger's summaries for Nixon, and the drafts of the communiqué.

Forging the Communiqué: Nixon's February 1972 Visit

One of the most interesting transcripts prepared for this volume from the White House tapes covers a long conversation between Nixon and Kissinger on the eve of the February trip to the PRC. (192) Kissinger remarked that the Chinese are "just as dangerous [as the Russians]. In

fact they're more dangerous over an historical period." This fascinating discussion touched upon almost all aspects of Sino-American relations and the U.S. role in East Asia. Nixon made clear his concerns over appearing to abandon the ROC or reduce its presence in East Asia. He also bluntly elucidated his view of the limited role played by Rogers and the Department of State in forging U.S. foreign policy. Kissinger also prepared a memorandum for Nixon entitled "Mao, Chou and the Chinese Litmus Test," where he urged Nixon to show "seriousness and reliability" in talks with the PRC leaders. (193) The record of Nixon's talks in the PRC begins with his famous meeting with Mao and Chou on February 21, 1972, and includes seven other meetings with Chou between February 21 and 28. (194-204) Also printed here is one of the memoranda of conversation from Rogers' meeting with Chou (198), and one of the final discussions between Kissinger and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ch'iao Kuan-hua Chou concerning the Shanghai communiqué. (202) Nixon continued the effort begun during Kissinger's earlier visits to tie the war in Southeast Asia to the U.S. presence on Taiwan, reiterated the promise made by Kissinger that two-thirds of the U.S. forces on the island were related to the war, and could be removed after "as the situation in Southeast Asia is resolved." At the same time, Nixon was concerned over the domestic political impact of the communiqué. He told Chou that "What we say here may make it impossible for me to deliver on what I can do." Nixon claimed that three groups wanted his trip to China to fail: those on the left because they wanted better relations with the Soviets; those on the right for "deeply principled ideological reasons" wanted to support the ROC; and supporters of India who feared Sino-American détente. (196) During these talks, Chou covered much of the same ground with Nixon as he did with Kissinger in October and July of 1971.

Nixon, Kissinger, and Chou touched upon almost every conceivable issue in international affairs, including most importantly the Soviet Union and its strategic weapons program. (196) They also discussed the history of Sino-American relations, each providing their own interpretation of U.S. policy under President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles. (196) Kissinger, with Nixon's approval, provided the PRC with detailed information on Soviet military deployments. (202) On several occasions he emphasized that the PRC should not have signed the 1954 Geneva Agreements, characterizing this as a "mistake." Taiwan appeared to be the most controversial issue. However, as Chou stated on the final day of Nixon's trip, "That is, we being so big, have already let the Taiwan issue remain for 22 years, and can still afford to let it wait there for a time. Although the issue of Taiwan is an obstacle to the normalization of our relations, yet we are not rushing to make use of the opponents of your present visit and attempt to solve all the questions and place you in an embarrassing position." (204) One of the most interesting documents is a rare memorandum from Nixon to Rogers, Laird, and Kissinger emphasizing the need to avoid public speculation over the impact of the trip to the PRC, and "there should be no further elaboration" on the communiqué, particularly those sections related to Taiwan. (206) Shortly after, Nixon wrote a memorandum for Kissinger, comparing statements after the February trip to Nixon's visits to the Soviet Union as Vice President. Nixon wanted to emphasize that he had been "whenever possible conciliatory" without compromising principle. (210) The electronic supplement will contain the memorandum of conversation between Kissinger and top PRC officials, as well as Rogers' meetings while in Beijing.

Re-Assuring the Republic of China

Immediately after Nixon's July 16, 1971, announcement of Kissinger's trip to the PRC, efforts began to calm the ROC and to reduce the domestic political fall-out from supporters of the Nationalist government. The Department of State bore the brunt of Chiang's wrath, both in Washington and Taipei. (145, 146) In fact, Nixon had met with the Ambassador to the ROC Walter McConaughy in late June, and had hinted at further improvements in relations between the United States and PRC. Nixon told McConaughy to inform Chiang that the United States could continue its "close, friendly" relations with the ROC. On July 27, Kissinger met with ROC Ambassador to the United States James Shen to offer assurances of continued support. Kissinger stated that "nothing in his tenure in the White House had been more painful to him than what had occurred (the secrecy over Dr. Kissinger's trip to Peking and the announcement of the President's visit)." (152) In his meetings with Kissinger, Shen had little success at obtaining information on U.S.-PRC talks. (159)

Nixon ordered Marshall Green and NSC staff member John H. Holdridge to travel to most non-Communist capitals in East and Southeast Asia immediately after the February 1972 trip to the PRC. Meeting with Nixon on March 23, Green reviewed reactions to the China trip. Nixon emphasized that "Green should also play down the Taiwan aspect as much as possible." (215) After their return from Beijing, Kissinger met with Shen to assure the ROC of continued support. (205) On March 6, Shen and Nixon met briefly, a conversation for which the only record located is a White House tape, which is transcribed here. (207)

In meetings with Kissinger during the summer of 1972, ROC diplomats urged Kissinger to pressure the Japanese to delay any improvement in relations with the PRC. Kissinger said little more than that he hoped Japan would not "become separated from the United States on this question." (241) In talks with Shen in September, Kissinger remarked that "What the Japanese

wanted was for the U.S. to defend Taiwan, which we were happy enough to do, so that they themselves would be left alone with Peking.” Kissinger stated that he told the Japanese that they were moving too quickly toward normalization with the PRC. (251) On the same day, Kissinger told Huang Hua that “Our position—on which you can rely—is that we will place no obstacle in the way of normalization of relations between Japan and the People’s Republic. We have not asked them [the Japanese] to delay their visit or the conclusions they want to draw from their visit.” (252)

Ironically, in 1972 the ROC acquired some advanced U.S. weapons, including submarines. (255) These weapons were offered even as the United States began to reduce joint intelligence operations on Taiwan. (257) As the prospects for a cease-fire improved, a secret program entitled Enhance Plus was undertaken to resupply the South Vietnamese military with weapons and ammunition from U.S. allies. (256) This gave the ROC bargaining leverage to demand the temporary basing of F-4 fighter aircraft on the island, sale of F-5 aircraft to the ROC, and a co-production program for the F-5 fighter on Taiwan. (264, 268) The year 1972 ended with a Special National Intelligence Estimate 43-1-72 concluding that the ROC might be able to fabricate a nuclear device as early as 1976. (266)

Regularizing Contacts with the People’s Republic

Immediately after the February 1972 trip to the PRC, Kissinger (with Nixon’s approval) moved to regularize contacts with the PRC. This began with NSSM 148, which requested information on how to expand exchanges between the United States and PRC, and NSSM 149 on bilateral trade. (209, 211) Summaries of these reports and discussions in the SRG produced a list of steps to be taken under Nixon’s direction. These documents also illustrate how the debate had shifted after July 1971—there was no longer dissent over *whether* to increase communication,

but rather *how* to achieve a wider range of contacts. (217, 218) These discussions bore fruit in NSDM 170, June 8, 1972, which outlined further steps to be taken to expand trade, and NSDM 188, August 30, which addressed PRC blocked assets in the United States (228, 249) While the Soviet purchases of U.S. wheat have received a great deal of attention from scholars, a memorandum from Holdridge to Kissinger, September 1972, outlines the PRC's attempt to buy American grain through a French company. (250)

In March 1972, U.S. Ambassador to France, Arthur K. Watson, began to meet on a regular basis with PRC diplomats in Paris. This channel was reserved for less sensitive topics, such as educational exchanges and trade issues. (242) Watson appeared to send Kissinger slightly fuller records of his conversations than he forwarded to the Department of State. (214)

Playing the China Card with North Vietnam

Nixon and Kissinger made ending the war in Southeast Asia on favorable terms a key goal of Sino-American rapprochement. As detailed elsewhere in this summary, the war was a frequent topic in Kissinger's discussions with Chou and other Chinese leaders. Kissinger summed up his perception in October 1971, when he informed Nixon that "Peking will be helpful, within limits." (164) In January and February of 1972, Walters was the conduit for a series of messages designed to obtain PRC assistance with negotiations, including a request that the Chinese arrange a meeting between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. (188-191) Vietnam was an important topic at the February 1972 meetings in Beijing. Yet, the war in Southeast Asia became a major problem in Sino-American relations, as U.S. bombing near the Chinese border led to strong protests during the spring and summer of 1972. (213) This volume presents several of the notes or statements from Kissinger to PRC diplomats in New York, apologizing for some

of these incidents. (233) The electronic supplement provides further documentation on these exchanges.

Kissinger sought to obtain PRC support for his proposals to the North Vietnamese for a cease-fire. He often referenced the danger of U.S. “embarrassment” or that “any attempt to impose a military solution upon the United States can only lead to unfortunate consequences.”

(219) Kissinger repeatedly informed Huang Hua in New York that the United States would not accept military defeat, but did not seek military victory either. Kissinger updated PRC diplomats on progress in the Paris Peace Talks, including the specific negotiating positions of each side.

(220)

The volume contains Nixon’s personal letter to Chou En-lai, May 8, explaining the logic behind the May 8 decision to mine North Vietnam’s harbors. The President stressed that this action was not directed against other nations and was designed to bring the conflict to an end.

(226) Kissinger’s reported that PRC Ambassador Huang Hua’s reaction was “restrained” and that this suggested a “moderate Chinese response” to U.S. bombing and mining operations. (227)

The PRC was careful to avoid any commitment to assist the United States in communication, much less lobbying, the North Vietnamese. In one chilling exchange, the United States requested that the PRC intervene to prevent the possible execution of U.S. prisoners held by the North Vietnamese. The PRC response was that the “Chinese position in such affairs is total non-interference.” (238, fn. 2)

The June 1972 visit by Kissinger to the PRC was marked by further discussions of issues such as South Asia, Japan, and the Soviet Union, with growing attention paid to U.S. efforts to obtain PRC support for its plan to end the war in Southeast Asia. In their final meeting on June 22, Chou states that “there have been not too many constructive exchanges” in the June talks.

(231, 232, 233) Kissinger's summary of the talks prepared for Nixon was decidedly optimistic. (234) Through the latter half of 1972, Kissinger provided the PRC diplomats with U.S. position statements and proposals for the Paris Talks with the North Vietnamese. (253) In a meeting with Huang Hua, October 24 Kissinger asked "whether the Prime Minister [Chou En-lai] might be willing to use his good offices in the rather complicated state that our negotiations have reached with the Vietnamese." He continued to ask that the PRC "convince Hanoi that this [U.S. cease-fire proposal] is not a trick." Kissinger admitted that obtaining South Vietnamese agreement had become the sticking point. (258) The next day, the PRC forwarded a message through New York, focusing blame on South Vietnam and the United States for the continuing conflict. (259) The United States responded by providing a copy of the offer made to the DRV and requesting that the PRC "use its considerable influence in a positive direction so as to help bring about the peace that now is so near." (260) Both sides traded messages, the PRC pointing out that the United States had backtracked in its talks after failing to obtain South Vietnamese agreement, the United States asking for PRC support for its revised peace proposals. (261, 272) The year concluded with another flurry of messages, as Kissinger or NSC staff traveled to New York to warn of military action if the North Vietnamese did not accept a cease fire, then to explain the Christmas bombing, and finally to inform the PRC of U.S. willingness to resume talks. (269, 270) Kissinger's effort to have the Chinese influence the North Vietnamese had little effect.

Mongolia: Continued Discussion of Recognition

U.S. policy toward the Mongolian People's Republic experienced no significant change during these four years. In 1969, the Department of State suggested, and Kissinger agreed, that the United States should move toward establishing diplomatic relations with Mongolia. Strong objections by Chiang Kai-shek, however, caused Nixon to reject any initiatives toward

Mongolia. Although the Department State continued to raise the issue, no action was taken during the Nixon administration. (271, 272)

Questions Pertaining to Tibet

Sino-American rapprochement determined U.S. policy toward Tibet. Support of the exiled Dalai Lama, and support for anti-PRC Tibetan guerillas formed the twin pillars of U.S. policy, which had little knowledge of, much less influence in, Tibet itself. Although the Department of State was generally supportive of limited visits by the Dalai Lama to the United States, Nixon vetoed such a trip throughout the 1969-1972 period. (275, 276, 277, 279) Covert support for the Dalai Lama and his followers continued, although the CIA and other government agencies reduced this assistance by the early 1970s. (278) The Central Intelligence Agency provided financial and logistical support for a large number of Tibetan refugees in Nepal and India. These guerillas were primarily to provide intelligence on PRC activities in Tibet. Over the course of the first Nixon administration, the CIA proposed, and the White House accepted, a plan to phase out for these largely ineffectual paramilitary operations. (278, 280)