

Questionable Means to Problematic

Ends: Nixon's Historic Trip to China

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Paper: 2,500 words

Process Paper:

500 words

## Process Paper

When considering this year's theme, one of the most striking subjects that came to mind was America's current position in Asia. Exploring the US's response to alleged genocide in China, its policy towards with Taiwan, and its complicated relationship with India and Pakistan, I was shocked to realize that they all had roots in one decision: the US's attempt to normalize relations with China in 1972. The diplomatic decisions made by President Nixon and NSA Henry Kissinger during that time continue to shape the modern diplomatic landscape. Yet most of them were conducted in an almost complete absence of debate, as Nixon purposefully kept the American public and much of his own administration in the dark about his intentions with relation to China.

In conducting my research, I began with secondary sources, including journals, articles, and books, that offered a variety of perspectives regarding American views of Nixon's decisions but also how they played out for China and other involved parties. To reach my own conclusions, I then examined primary sources on subtopics like US-Taiwan and the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. US and other states' archives provided memos, briefings, and the transcripts of almost every conversation had between Nixon, Kissinger, PM Chou, and/or Mao Zedong before and during the American visits to China. TV broadcasts, print articles, and opinion pieces from the '70s allowed me to analyze the events through the eyes of the public; it was particularly revealing to compare American and international media outlets.

I decided to create a paper for my project after realizing the number of players involved and affected by America's establishment of relations with China. After having done the bulk of my research, I formalized my analysis into a thesis, created an outline to develop a structure that would facilitate proving that claim, and identified key pieces of evidence that supported it.

Finally, I began writing and revising the paper, soliciting feedback and continuing to research as the need arose.

The historical argument I develop is that Nixon deemed the normalization of US-China relations to be a political and national necessity, to the extent that he was willing to forgo typical debate, diplomatic precedent, and ideological principles in order to achieve it. Not desiring extensive outcry to jeopardize his chances, Nixon purposefully acted to minimize the possibility of debate within government and public by ensuring as much secrecy as possible. That same conviction guided his diplomacy, prompting him to single-handedly authorize major foreign policy shifts with little consultation from typical stakeholders in order to accomplish normalization. The event's historical significance extends far beyond a symbolic rapprochement, still reverberating around the world 50 years later. Nixon's secrecy affected America's moral standing and relationship with allies from Japan to South Asia. American concessions on Taiwan continue to shape its relationship with China today. And, perhaps one of the most unforeseen aspects: US backing of the PRC's full entry onto the world stage has allowed it to become an economic and diplomatic superpower to rival the US.

## **Introduction**

Post-WWII restructuring of the international order left China isolated from most of the Western world. Years of deep-seated anti-communism in the US meant that American antagonism toward China persisted even after other states began to recognize the new People's Republic. Despite having established his career on the basis of these sentiments, Nixon deemed the normalization of US-China relations to be such a political and national necessity that he was willing to defy established principles of debate, diplomatic precedent, and ideological standing in order to achieve it. Aware of potential backlash to this approach and not desiring the resulting outcry to jeopardize his chances, Nixon acted to minimize the possibility of debate by purposefully keeping the American public and much of his own administration in the dark about his intentions. That conviction also guided his diplomacy, prompting him to authorize major foreign policy shifts with little consultation from typical stakeholders. His efforts culminated in a week-long visit ushering in a new era of US-China relations, but the terms and manner in which it was achieved had consequences that extend far beyond symbolic rapprochement and, half a century later, continue to reverberate on the world stage.

## **Context**

After the Xinhai Revolution of 1912 ended over two millennia of imperial rule, two warring parties, Chinese Communist (CC) and Nationalist (KMT), sought control of the newly established Republic. By 1949, the CC had established a new People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland and the KMT was running its Republic of China (ROC) out of Taiwan, both governments claiming to be the only legitimate representative of the Chinese people. The US

ceased all communication with the Communist government, and ambassadors from the ROC were the only Chinese delegates to international organizations like the UN.<sup>1</sup>

The advent of the Korean War and ensuing Red Scare entrenched Sino-American animosity, solidifying US support of Taiwan and Japan as Asian bulwarks against the Communist influence of the “Eastern bloc,” led by China and the Soviet Union. A new era of American politicians rode to power on the tide of anti-Communist propaganda, including Congressman Richard Nixon. By the time he was voted President in 1969, however, the global landscape had shifted. Continued American involvement in the Vietnam War had shaken faith in American leadership at home and abroad; by 1971, Nixon’s approval rating had dropped 20 points and his campaign pledge of “peace with honor” appeared no closer to fruition.<sup>2</sup> Amidst this turmoil, Nixon noted the increased willingness of states to establish diplomatic relations with a PRC that was creating fissures within the Eastern bloc as it distanced itself from Soviet leadership. In this, he sensed an opportunity to position the US as the keeper of balance between China and the USSR, and in the same stroke manage Chinese influence in Asia while leveraging it to US benefit in Vietnam.<sup>3</sup>

## **The Means**

To accomplish this within his remaining years in office, however, would require drastic foreign policy alterations that far outpaced the country’s shifting attitudes towards a post-McCarthy era. While a growing number of American academics and businesspeople were open to the idea of reengaging with Communist China, most Americans were against the idea of

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<sup>1</sup> Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> “Presidential Approval Ratings -- Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends,” Gallup.com (Gallup, August 12, 2021), <https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Nixon, “Transcript of the Speech by President on Vietnam.” *The New York Times*. The New York Times, January 24, 1973.

ousting Taiwan from the United Nations in favor of PRC representation.<sup>4</sup> Nixon, however, was willing to make major concessions to get what he wished from China, including on the issue of US policy towards Taiwan.

Insistent that “if too much was said publicly, that would be seized upon by Americans who opposed the opening to China from both right and left ... as an excuse to disrupt normalization,” Nixon took great pains to keep all initial negotiations secret from the press and the public.<sup>5</sup> A deep suspicion of leaks within his own State Department and disdain for bureaucracy essentially meant that Nixon would “run foreign policy out of the White House.”<sup>6</sup> He established a small ring of foreign policy advisers, led by his National Security Advisor and right-hand man, Henry Kissinger, enabling him to exercise unilateral control over US foreign policy.<sup>7</sup>

Once the mandate of secrecy was established, certain atypical channels needed to be created to enable the two countries to communicate. China’s border war with India in 1962 had brought China and Pakistan closer through their common tensions with India. While American foreign policy had previously recommended supporting India as a powerful democratic counterweight in Asia, Nixon saw that relationship as expendable in the face of what he had set out to achieve.<sup>8</sup> Thus autocratic Pakistan became the primary avenue of clandestine diplomacy between the US and China.

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<sup>4</sup> “Gallup Poll Reports a Plurality Favors Entry of Peking in U.N.,” *The New York Times* (The New York Times, May 30, 1971), [www.nytimes.com/1971/05/30/archives/gallup-poll-reports-a-plurality-favors-entry-of-peking-in-un.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1971/05/30/archives/gallup-poll-reports-a-plurality-favors-entry-of-peking-in-un.html).

<sup>5</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *The Kissinger Transcripts: The Top Secret Talks with Beijing and Moscow*, ed. William Burr (New York, NY: New Press, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Henry Kissinger, “Opening Remarks by Dr. Henry Kissinger,” *U.S.-Soviet Relations in the Era of Détente, 1969-1976*: Office of the Historian (U.S. Department of State, 2007), <https://history.state.gov/conferences/2007-detente/roundtable2>.

<sup>7</sup> Ray Locker, *Nixon's Gamble: How a President's Own Secret Government Destroyed His Administration* (Guilford, CT: LP, an imprint of Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

<sup>8</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1972* (Washington, D.C., 2005; <http://www.state.gov>) Nixon—Ford Administrations: Volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972.

In July 1971, Kissinger embarked on an abrupt tour of Asia. Soon after his arrival in Pakistan, he claimed a severe case of “Delhi belly,” and Pakistani dictator Yahya Khan readily offered him the use of a private, secluded villa in the hills to recuperate. While Kissinger’s plane remained on the Pakistani runway, he secretly boarded a military jet that Khan had previously arranged for him, and left for Beijing to lay the groundwork for a potential presidential visit.<sup>9</sup> No other allies were aware that America was reestablishing relations with China.

## **The Ends**

While the US had managed to negotiate US withdrawal from Taiwan as a parallel to rather than a prerequisite of the China visit, the question of PRC recognition and Taiwan remained the core issue of meaningful discussion between the two countries.

Nixon and Kissinger were privately of the mind that ‘the situation would eventually resolve itself’, with Taiwan inevitably becoming an official part of the PRC.<sup>10</sup> “There is one China,” stated Nixon to that end during his first meeting with Chou, “and Taiwan is part of China.” The US was eager to normalize relations, and therefore was committed to meeting all of Premier Chou’s demands: gradually withdrawing all its forces from the island, to defending China against Japanese designs on Taiwan and Taiwanese attacks on the mainland, and to not supporting any independence movements in Taiwan.<sup>11</sup> However, Nixon did not wish it to appear that he was backing down in the face of Communism by suddenly reversing his position. To that end, he had nominally pushed for the ROC to retain its seat on the UN, a move seen as “fighting the battle of people who obviously do want to see us lose.”<sup>12</sup> Nixon had similar concerns about

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<sup>9</sup> Kissinger, Henry A. *The Kissinger Transcripts*.

<sup>10</sup> National Archives, *Nixon Presidential Materials*, NSC Files, Box 1032, Files for the President—China Material, Polo I, Record, July 1971 HAK Visit to PRC. Top Secret; Sensitive; Exclusively Eyes Only.

<sup>11</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *The Kissinger Transcripts*.

<sup>12</sup> National Archives, *Conversation Among Nixon, Kissinger, and U.N. Ambassador George Bush*, 30 September 1971. (Nixon White House Tapes, Conversations 581-1 and 582-2). Transcript prepared by Sharon Chamberlain.

the communique that would result from the visit. “Our problem,” he told Chou, “is to be clever enough to find language [for the communique] which will meet your need yet does not stir up the animals so much that they gang up on Taiwan and thereby torpedo our initiative.”

Both Nixon and Mao had approved the communique by the time it was shown to Secretary of State Rogers. Although the communique said nothing of the numerous unwritten commitments made by Nixon to the Chinese, to Rogers and his advisers it still appeared a near renunciation of years of US commitment to Taiwan. “The US acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain... that Taiwan is a part of China,” stated the draft, but State Department officials pointed out that a significant portion of the Taiwanese population desired self-government. Additionally, the communiqué listed American defense commitments to a number of Asian governments, with the US-Taiwan treaty conspicuous by its absence.<sup>13</sup>

Though attempting to dismiss the issues raised as trivial complaints, Kissinger was eventually forced to re-enter negotiations with Chinese officials. They agreed to remove specific mentions of American commitment in Asia and speak instead in broader terms; this is one of the reasons that later US presidents were able to maintain defensive contracts with Taiwan in some measure. However, the Chinese refused to make the proposed change from “all Chinese” to “the Chinese,” effectively sealing America’s disregard of the Taiwanese independence movement.<sup>14</sup> By providing a glimpse into what might have resulted from healthy dialogue and debate from the onset of negotiations, this episode further demonstrates the significance of Nixon’s decision to eliminate that possibility by opting for total secrecy.

In exchange for their considerable concessions on Taiwan, Nixon and Kissinger had hoped to establish a connection between reduced American presence on the island and Chinese

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<sup>13</sup> *Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China (Shanghai Communiqué)*. Wilson Center Digital Archive, February 28, 1972. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121325>.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster trade paperbacks, 2011).



assistance with negotiations from North Vietnam. “Mr. President, I have not said this before,” exclaimed Kissinger upon receiving the initial invitation from Beijing, “but I think if we get this thing working, we will end Vietnam this year.”<sup>15</sup> However, Chinese leadership was not interested in intervening in Asia at the expense of their Vietnamese ally. They refused to stop sending aid and supplies to North Vietnam, denied a request to arrange a meeting between Nixon and a North Vietnamese diplomat, and stated bluntly that it was an issue for the US and Vietnam to work out between themselves.<sup>16</sup>

Much of the substantive negotiation having gotten underway during Kissinger’s secret trip to Beijing, Nixon’s week in China was constructed around a made-for-TV diplomacy of symbolic gestures and photo opportunities. Well aware of the power of good publicity, Nixon negotiated the number of journalists allowed on the trip from 10 to 90 and filled the slots almost entirely with broadcasters.<sup>17</sup> Live footage of sweeping toasts and front-page worthy photos of Nixon atop the Great Wall or shaking hands with President Mao allowed him to present a narrative of triumphant reconciliation while obscuring debate around meaningful policy making.

With American citizens having no knowledge that the visit had signified anything other than the numerous banquets and gift exchanges that reporters had access to, Nixon’s return to America was “like the arrival of a king.”<sup>18</sup> Polls in the aftermath of the visit found that 70% of the US population thought the meeting was useful, while awareness of the visit, at 98%, was the highest of any event in Gallup history. Nixon’s personal approval rating was the highest it had been that year, and he won re-election a few months later in a landslide.

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<sup>15</sup> Margaret MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed the World* (New York, New York: Random House, 2007), 264.

<sup>16</sup> Li, Danhui. “Vietnam and Chinese Policy Toward the United States.” In *Normalization of U.S.-China Relations: An International History*, Mass., 2005.

<sup>17</sup> H. R. Haldeman, *The Haldeman Diaries: Inside the Nixon White House* (New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's, 1994).

<sup>18</sup> John Osborne and Paul Conrad, *The Fourth Year of the Nixon Watch* (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing, 1973).

## Impact

In the following years, Nixon's personal legacy would be marred by the unfolding of Watergate, but the positive view of his China visit remained unchallenged. Nixon and Kissinger discussed few specifics in their initial accounts of the visit, with Kissinger writing in his memoirs that not much of importance was discussed regarding Taiwan.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, the actual internal documentation of the visit were not declassified until decades later, long after any of the details could have compromised national security. As the substance of both Nixon's week in China and the preceding diplomacy that was necessary to achieve is now in public domain, however, there is a renewed debate around both the ends and means of Nixon's "opening China."

Nixon's decision to quell debate through secrecy profoundly affected the US's relationship with countries around the world. That the establishment of this secret channel had fundamentally changed US policy in South Asia was made tragically evident upon the outbreak of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971. In response to East Pakistan's calls for independence and India's support of the cause, Pakistani forces embarked on a campaign of mass genocide in response to East Pakistan's call for independence and eventually launched air-strikes against India. Nixon and Kissinger secretly coordinated their response with China, agreeing that aiding India or a nascent Bangladesh would be unacceptably supportive of the Soviet Union's interests in India. US ambassadors who bemoaned the government's lack of action, including the author of the infamous Blood Telegram, were fired, and in fact Nixon actively (and possibly illegally) aided Pakistani forces in the days before the ceasefire and West Pakistan's defeat.

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<sup>19</sup> National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 106. Electronically published 2003. See also Elaine Sciolino, "Records Dispute Kissinger On His '71 Visit to China," New York Times, 28 February 2002, and National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book, "The Beijing-Washington Back Channel and Henry Kissinger's Secret Trip to China," at <http://www.nsarchive.org/NSAEBB/NSAEBB66>.

When asked about this period decades later, Kissinger maintained that the American response was nothing more than one of many pragmatic decisions that had to be taken for the sake of preserving the secret talks with Beijing. "To condemn these violations publicly would have destroyed the Pakistani channel, which would be needed for months to complete the opening to China, which indeed was launched from Pakistan," he said. "The results require no apology."

Bangladesh and India are marked to this day by the sheer economic and human toll of genocide, refugees, and war. Political repercussions aside, American inaction in the Indo-Pakistani War stands as "one of the worst moments of moral blindness in US foreign policy."

Additionally, almost all of America's major allies felt blindsided when learning about the huge shift in US foreign policy in the same TV broadcast that announced Nixon's upcoming China visit to the American public. From Japan, formerly the country's most significant ally in the region, to the UK, Australia, and others, the lack of forewarning sowed distrust and anger towards the US.<sup>20</sup>

The content of the shift was similarly jolting, perhaps no more so than in Taiwan. The ROC had lost one of its longest and fiercest supporters, and the decisions made during the normalization process continue to form the parameters of the US-Taiwan relationship today.

In South Asia, the announcement confirmed Indian perception of American hostility, and when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was asked "where Indo-U.S. relations went wrong, she said "she supposed that U.S. policy towards India changed when 'U.S. policy towards China changed.'" The impact was also felt in Africa, where a number of nations saw American

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<sup>20</sup> Doran, Stuart, and David Lee, eds. *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and Recognition of the People's Republic of China, 1949-1972*. Canberra, 2002.

acceptance of the PRC as a green light to form close economic and diplomatic ties with the government themselves, accepting Chinese loans/aid “since the United States ha[d] now started talks with [Beijing].”<sup>21</sup>

While, at the time, Nixon may have predicted an “infinitesimal” economic impact from opening up trade with the PRC, increasing influence in Africa is just one of many ways the state was able to take advantage of a US -backed entrance into the world stage. Today, China’s GDP is the second-largest in the world, and it has leveraged that to gain diplomatic support through Africa and Asia.<sup>22</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Nixon’s historic China visit ushered in an era of diplomacy in which maintaining a symbiotic relationship with China outweighed ideological principles, alliances, and precedent. In the last two decades, however, China has become an economic, military and diplomatic superpower.<sup>23</sup> Far from becoming “more like us,” as Nixon had hoped, it is marked by a lack of transparency, alleged human rights abuse, unfair labor practices, and a disregard for Intellectual Property rights.

February 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of Nixon’s historic trip to China. It is a testimony to just how much popular opinion has changed that, while the event’s 30th-anniversary was marked by another Presidential visit to China, this year has seen little remembrance, much less celebration. In fact, Nixon-era calculus is shifting, due to the very open debate that was

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<sup>21</sup> Bonnie Girard, “Nixon Goes to China: The Wider Impact,” *The Diplomat* (The Diplomat, February 25, 2022), <https://thediplomat.com/2022/02/nixon-goes-to-china-the-wider-impact/>.

<sup>22</sup> Margaret MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao*.

<sup>23</sup> Richter, Felix. “Infographic: China Is the World's Manufacturing Superpower.” (Statista Infographics, 4 May 2021) [www.statista.com/chart/20858/top-10-countries-by-share-of-global-manufacturing-output/](http://www.statista.com/chart/20858/top-10-countries-by-share-of-global-manufacturing-output/).

missing in 1972.<sup>24</sup> Voices being raised against China’s alleged genocide of Uighurs in Xinjiang have spurred Congress to act, holding businesses accountable for the use of forced labor despite the potential monetary loss and diplomatic repercussions of Chinese backlash.<sup>25</sup> Meanwhile, Russia’s unchecked aggression towards Ukraine has given rise to a bipartisan push for American foreign policy to move from an era of “strategic ambiguity” that Nixon implemented to a clear strategic deterrence of aggression towards Taiwan.

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<sup>24</sup> “Fifty Years On, 'Nixon in China' Loses Its Sparkle in Beijing and Washington.” The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, February 21, 2022. [www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/21/fifty-years-on-nixon-in-china-loses-its-sparkle-in-beijing-and-washington](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/21/fifty-years-on-nixon-in-china-loses-its-sparkle-in-beijing-and-washington).

<sup>25</sup> “China: Draconian Repression of Muslims in Xinjiang Amounts to Crimes against Humanity.” Amnesty International, 10 June 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2021/06/china-draconian-repression-of-muslims-in-xinjiang-amounts-to-crimes-against-humanity/>.

# Annotated Bibliography

## Primary Sources

“China: Draconian Repression of Muslims in Xinjiang Amounts to Crimes against Humanity.” Amnesty International, 10 June 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2021/06/china-draconian-repression-of-muslims-in-xinjiang-amounts-to-crimes-against-humanity/>.

This report from Amnesty International is being used as a primary source in order to demonstrate global attitudes towards human rights abuses in Xinjiang today. The tone of the article, as well as the findings themselves, allowed me to draw a sharp contrast with newspaper articles from the 1970s and 80s, demonstrating the wide divergence between popular opinion towards China then and now.

“China Lobby, 'Once Powerful Factor in U. S. Politics, Appears Victim of Lack of Interest.’” The New York Times. The New York Times, April 26, 1970. <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/04/26/archives/china-lobby-once-powerful-factor-in-us-politics-appears-victim-of.html>.

This article from 1970 explains the reasons that the Pro-Taiwan China Lobby is a less powerful political factor by 1970 than it was in prior years. It allowed me to understand public sentiment around the PRC and ROC in America directly prior to Nixon’s announcement that he would be opening relations.

Doran, Stuart, and David Lee, eds. *Documents on Australian Foreign Policy: Australia and Recognition of the People's Republic of China, 1949-1972*. Canberra, 2002.

These notes from the Australian government on their foreign policy towards China cover the period between the establishment of the PRC and Nixon’s visit. They were helpful in providing international context to America’s decision not to establish diplomatic relations for years after WWII, since other countries had already made the decision to recognize the PRC.

“Fifty Years On, 'Nixon in China' Loses Its Sparkle in Beijing and Washington.” The Guardian. Guardian News and Media, February 21, 2022. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/feb/21/fifty-years-on-nixon-in-china-loses-its-sparkle-in-beijing-and-washington>.

This article demonstrates the shift in public and academia opinion on the real cost and implications of the once heralded visit. It helped me understand how much current world affairs has forced us to re-evaluate the conventional wisdom.

*Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976, vol. E-13: Documents on China, 1969-1972*, edited by Steven E. Phillips (Washington, D.C., 2006).

An electronic archive of all the US State Department's documents regarding China from 1969-1972, this was one of my most invaluable resources. The memorandums, conversations, transcripts, and more all allowed me to analyze what the US's intentions were regarding opening relations, and how those negotiations ended up happening.

*Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1972* (Washington, D.C., 2005; <http://www.state.gov>) Nixon—Ford Administrations: Volume E-7, Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972.

These State Department documents catalog US policy and actions regarding South Asia; I focused on the resources regarding US decisions during the Nixon administration. The material I found on how the US coordinated its response to genocide in Bangladesh with China, deciding not to take action, was shocking, as was the way that South Asians were discussed between Nixon and Kissinger. This allowed me to grasp the moral consequences of limiting debate.

“Gallup Poll Reports a Plurality Favors Entry of Peking in U.N.” *The New York Times*. *The New York Times*, May 30, 1971.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1971/05/30/archives/gallup-poll-reports-a-plurality-favors-entry-of-peking-in-un.html>.

This Times article provides a snapshot of popular opinion regarding Chinese representation in the UN. I was surprised to find that nearly 50% of Americans supported PRC representation in the UN by 1971, but that most did not want Taiwan to be removed from the organization, demonstrating public favorability towards a “two China” or “one China, one Taiwan” approach - an approach that Nixon unequivocally rejected.

Haldeman, H. R. *The Haldeman Diaries: Inside the Nixon White House*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's, 1994.

Haldeman was Nixon's Chief of Staff, and accompanied him to China for his historic week-long visit. It was fascinating to get another firsthand perspective of the unfolding events and atmosphere of secrecy within the White House from someone who was involved in some, but not all, of Nixon and Kissinger's intimate negotiations.

*Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China (Shanghai Communiqué)*. Wilson Center Digital Archive, February 28, 1972.

<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121325>.

This document is the complete text of the Shanghai Communiqué, the joint statement released by Chinese and American leadership in the aftermath of Nixon's China visit and one of three communiqués that would shape US policy towards China for decades. It was instructive to compare records of Nixon's actual debates with Mao to what was included in the statement issued to the public.

Kissinger, Henry A. *The Kissinger Transcripts: The Top Secret Talks with Beijing and Moscow*. Edited by William Burr. New York, NY: New Press, 1999.

A comprehensive record of transcripts formerly classified “Top/Secret/Sensitive/Exclusive Eyes Only,” these transcripts provide a firsthand look at Kissinger’s negotiations and conversations with Mao Zedong, Chou Enlai, Richard Nixon, and a host of other American and Chinese officials. Unfiltered by another historian’s analysis, they allowed me to draw my own conclusions about American negotiations with China.

Kissinger, Henry A. “Opening Remarks by Dr. Henry Kissinger.” U.S.-Soviet Relations in the Era of Détente, 1969-1976: Office of the Historian. U.S. Department of State, 2007.

<https://history.state.gov/conferences/2007-detente/roundtable2>.

This is a speech by Dr. Kissinger in which he goes in depth about the level of secrecy that surrounded his diplomacy with China. He mentions, for example, Nixon’s distrust of the State Department and desire to have complete control over foreign policy, which was interesting to read about.

Kissinger, Henry. *White House Years*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster trade paperbacks, 2011.

This is the first of Dr. Kissinger’s memoirs, and covers his time in the White House. He was one of a small ring of foreign policy advisers, and its National Security Advisor, enabling him to exercise unilateral control over US foreign policy. It was invaluable to read the first hand account of the man who almost single-handedly opened China.

Li, Danhui. “Vietnam and Chinese Policy Toward the United States.” In *Normalization of U.S.-China Relations: An International History*, edited by William C. Kirby, Robert S. Ross, and Gong Li. Cambridge, Mass., 2005.

National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 106. “Nixon’s Trip to China Records Now Completely Declassified, Including Kissinger Intelligence Briefing and Assurances on Taiwan,” December 11, 2003. <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB106/index.htm>.

National Archives, *Conversation between President Nixon and National Security Adviser Kissinger, followed by Conversation Among Nixon, Kissinger, and U.N. Ambassador George Bush, 30 September 1971*. Nixon White House Tapes, Conversations 581-1 and 582-2] Transcript prepared by Sharon Chamberlain.

Fascinating to get a peek in ‘the room where it happened.’ It is astounding that the gap between the public image and policy positions taken by Nixon contrast with what he really thinks and sees w.r.t China, India and other allies.

Nixon, Richard M. *RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*. Norwalk, CT: Easton Press, 2012.



Nixon, Richard M. "Transcript of the Speech by President on Vietnam." The New York Times. The New York Times, January 24, 1973. <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/01/24/archives/transcript-of-the-speech-by-president-on-vietnam-essential.html>.

Public speech given by President Nixon that shows his promise of restoring normalcy and bringing back the troops. This promise is one of the reasons for his pivot on China.

Osborne, John, and Paul Conrad. *The Fourth Year of the Nixon Watch*. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing, 1973.

A collection of articles that appeared in *The New Republic* between January 1972-January 1973, this compilation allowed me to get a sense of public opinion around Nixon's announcement that relations are being opened with China, as well as coverage of the trip itself. I was struck by how little access the reporters of the time had to information about Nixon's diplomacy or his visit. This prompted me to consider the role of the press in creating public debate.

"Presidential Approval Ratings -- Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends." Gallup.com. Gallup, August 12, 2021.

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx>.

Shows how Nixon is mired in low public approval ratings prior to his visit to China and the 20% jump he gets post the visit.

Public Record Office, Surrey: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (21: 818, 823, 824, 825, 828, 833, 982, 983)

Archived internal documents from the UK provided a wealth of context, allowing me to compare the policies of two similar Western powers towards China. UK's early rapprochement with China, as well as its move towards the EU in the aftermath of Nixon's sudden announcement, were revealing.

## Secondary Sources

Ambrose, Stephen E. *Nixon: The Triumph of a Politician, 1962-1972*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1989.

Written in terms of Nixon's positive impacts on US domestic and foreign policy, this book allowed me to get a sense of both public perception in the years after Nixon's presidency. I was also prompted to consider the viewpoint that Nixon's visit was an overall success, especially before the author had access to much archival information about the visit.

Bader, Jeffrey A. "China and the United States: Nixon's Legacy after 40 Years." Brookings. Brookings, July 29, 2016.

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2012/02/23/china-and-the-united-states-nixons-legacy-after-40-years/>.

A look at the state of US-China relationship after four decades since the historic visit. It is interesting to note how the opinions on the visit have begun to change and are being evaluated in the context of current affairs.

Girard, Bonnie. "Nixon Goes to China: The Wider Impact." *The Diplomat*. The Diplomat, February 25, 2022.

<https://thediplomat.com/2022/02/nixon-goes-to-china-the-wider-impact/>.

Almost exactly 50 years after Nixon went to China, this article is one perspective of the international repercussions of that visit. It was useful not only in its content, describing the US's current alliances, but also because its critical tone is a contrast to the articles written about the visit decades earlier.

Horne, Alistair. *Kissinger: 1973, the Crucial Year*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2010.

A zoomed-in account of the year after Kissinger's negotiation of opening relations with China, this book allowed me to put Nixon's visit in context of its immediate impacts in the US. It was an intriguing look at how little newly established relations actually benefited the US in the short term, especially with regards to the Vietnam War.

Richter, Felix. "Infographic: China Is the World's Manufacturing Superpower." Statista Infographics, 4 May 2021, <https://www.statista.com/chart/20858/top-10-countries-by-share-of-global-manufacturing-output/>.

Demonstrates China's drastic and rapid growth on the world stage today, in sharp contrast to the state that Nixon dealt with in 1972. This helps draw a contrast between the type of diplomacy that was championed then and the context of US-China relations today.

Jian, Chen. *Mao's China and the Cold War*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Drawing on internal Chinese documents that it's difficult to get access to from the US,

this book describes the unfolding of the Cold War from the perspective of the Chinese administration. It was invaluable in allowing me to consider the importance of Nixon's visit from the Chinese angle, as well as in considering whether the US ended up giving more to China than was necessary.

Kine, Phelim. "The GOP Push to Ukraine-Proof Taiwan." POLITICO, March 3, 2022.

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/politico-china-watcher/2022/03/03/the-gop-push-to-ukraine-proof-taiwan-00013401>.

As China and Taiwan watch the US's response to Russian aggression towards Ukraine, this article explains that both Chinese and American leadership continue to abide by promises made by Nixon when he visited China. It demonstrates the repercussions of saying that there is "One China" all those years ago, and the ensuing relationship with the Taiwanese independence movement.

Locker, Ray. *Nixon's Gamble: How a President's Own Secret Government Destroyed His Administration*. Guilford, CT: LP, an imprint of Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

A thorough look at the systemic restructuring of Nixon's government once he came into office, the sections of this book about how foreign relations were handled under Nixon enhanced my understanding of the ways he was able to bypass the State Department when carrying out negotiations with the PRC. It prompted me to consider the adverse consequences of lack of debate, not just among the public, but within an administration.

Minami, Kazushi. "Perspective | It Wasn't Richard Nixon Who Changed Relations with China." The Washington Post. WP Company, February 28, 2022.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/02/28/it-wasnt-richard-nixon-who-changed-relations-with-china/>.

A measured opinion that goes against the conventional wisdom about what Nixon's visit to China signified. It helps illuminate the real negative implications of the visit and how compromises made at the time had unforeseen consequences.

MacMillan, Margaret. *Nixon and Mao: The Week That Changed the World*. New York, New York: Random House, 2007.

This historical account provides an in-depth analysis of the many players involved in the process of Nixon's rapprochement with China. It was incredibly helpful in allowing me to get a comprehensive initial understanding of the topic, while also providing innumerable primary sources in the bibliography as I began more deeply examining the topic.

Zhibua, Shen. "Sino-Soviet Relations and the Origins of the Korean War: Stalin's Strategic Goals in the Far East." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2.2 (Spring 2000): 44-68.

This analysis of China-Russia relations prior to Nixon's visit provided international context to Nixon's actions. It was valuable to learn the Chinese perspective on the

weighing benefits of allying with Russia, supporting North Vietnam, and establishing close ties with the United States.