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Since at least the early 1940s, more often than not relations between the United States and China have been strained and problematic. They hit rock bottom during the 1950s, a decade when U.S. troops fought Chinese military forces and two crises sparked by mainland operations against Taiwan prompted fears of a potential nuclear superpower confrontation. From 1949 onward, the United States not only declined to recognize the new, Communist-led People's Republic of China (PRC) as the country's legitimate government, but maintained that the rump regime on the island of Taiwan led by China's ousted Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek still represented all of China. The United States further asserted that the mainland was not entitled to join the recently established United Nations, opposition that until 1971 was instrumental in denying representation in the organization to the PRC regime led by Chinese Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong, as the United States leaned on other nations to endorse its position and ostracize and exclude China. Seeking to weaken the infant PRC, the United States not only took the lead in imposing draconian economic sanctions upon the country, but sought to persuade and pressure its allies to join in these restrictions. Even if PRC officials were willing to grant them access, which was by no means a given, Americans found it almost impossible to win permission from their own government to travel to the mainland.

The near total breakdown in relations with the PRC had serious repercussions for many U.S. diplomats involved with China policy, together with academics studying China or Asia. Those who had criticized Chiang Kai-shek's policies or predicted that the Nationalist Kuomintang government he led was unlikely to win the civil war with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that erupted within months of the Allied victory over Japan in 1945 became political targets not just for Chiang but for his fiercely anti-Communist supporters in the United States. Several high-profile China specialists—John Stewart Service, John Paton Davies, John Carter Davies, and O. Edmund Clubb—were purged from the State Department, while other diplomats, notably Robert W. Barnett (elder brother of the sinologist A. Doak Barnett), switched at least temporarily from Asia to Europe.

Academics and scholars who had held official U.S. government positions during and after World II also became targets. Many among them had been associated in some way with the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR), a private think-tank federation of over one dozen national member organizations established in 1925, with backing from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which encouraged Asian-related research and held major transnational conferences every two to three years. As the 1940s progressed, the organization split over various issues, including opposition to British policies in India and more broadly European colonialism in Asia, as well as policies toward China, especially the respective merits of Chiang Kai-shek and his Communist rivals for power. Revelations in the late 1940s that Frederick V. Field, one of the IPR's leading officers during the 1930s, was a covert member of the Communist Party of the USA, and that two Chinese research associates, Chi Chao-ting and Chen Hansheng, were likewise secret CCP members, made the U.S. headquarters of the organization and its American Council targets for repeated attacks and lengthy investigations by Republican Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, his colleague Senator Pat McCarran, and others.

As the organization became politically radioactive, some of its members turned on each other. In the mid-1940s, Jerome D. Greene, a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation and past chairman of both the IPR's American Council and International Council, expressed private concern over what he considered its increasingly radical tendencies. From 1944 onward one member, Alfred D. Kohlberg, a New York textile manufacturer with close ties to Chiang Kai-shek, launched a protracted and highly publicized campaign intended to expose pro-Communist leanings among IPR members and officers. Assisting his efforts were several prominent American anti-Communist journalists and activists. At least two other well-known academics, the political scientist Kenneth T. Colegrove of Northwestern University, who had been an important figure in the development of the discipline of international relations in the United States, and the German-born Sinologist Karl August Wittfogel, a former Marxist who held professorships first at Columbia University and then at the University of Washington, joined in assailing former IPR colleagues. Prominent among these were Edward Carter, the organization's long-time secretary; and Owen D. Lattimore of Johns Hopkins University, editor from 1933 to 1941 of *Pacific Affairs*, the IPR's flagship journal.[1]

The list of allegedly suspect individuals included American scholars of Asia with IPR connections who had served in the U.S. military or intelligence during or immediately after World War II, most notably John King Fairbank of Harvard University, who found himself accused of being at least naïve in his dealings with and views on Chinese Communists. Others tainted by IPR associations included Fairbank's Harvard colleague Edwin O. Reischauer; William Lockwood of Princeton University; C. Martin Wilbur of Columbia University; and Robert W. Barnett, who had established the IPR's Washington office in the early 1940s, served in the U.S. military in China during the war, and then joined the State Department. While in the U.S. Air Force, Barnett had worked cordially under such stalwart pro-Chiang officers as General Claire Chennault and General Albert D. Wedemeyer, but he was still subpoenaed for the IPR investigations and endured a lengthy five-hour grilling before being deemed innocuous.[2] Although the academics generally kept their jobs, throughout the 1950s several had to offer character references and other proof of their political soundness before they could obtain passports to travel abroad. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of State and other government departments largely excluded them from advisory positions as consultants, a ban that in Fairbank's case was not lifted until the late 1960s.

Ilnyun Kim's article demonstrates how American liberals, primarily those associated with the Democratic Party, still sought to work around these liabilities and address the vexed and controversial issue of China during the 1950s. Kim focuses particularly on three figures: Fairbank, the leading U.S. academic specialist on China and Asia; Fairbank's brother-in-law and Harvard colleague, the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.; and Chester Bowles, U.S. ambassador to India from 1951 to 1953 and again from 1963 to 1969. All three were New Deal Democrats, liberal supporters of domestic reform who believed that internationally the United States should oppose colonialism and seek to encourage the non-Communist left, a faith expounded by Schlesinger in 1949 in his influential book *The Vital Center*. Married to sisters, Fairbank and Schlesinger were personally as well as politically close. Helped by generous funding from the Ford Foundation and other sources, during this decade Fairbank was engaged in the process of making Harvard into one of the leading academic nodes of Asian studies in the United States, while writing extensively himself and mentoring dozens of doctoral students.[3] His views also influenced the thinking of leading Democratic politicians, including not just Bowles, one of whose policy aides had been a Ph.D. student of Fairbank's, but likewise Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relation Committee from 1959 to 1974, and George McGovern of South Dakota, his party's presidential candidate in 1972.

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[1] John N. Thomas, *Institute of Pacific Relations: Asian Scholars and American Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974); Michael Richard Anderson, "Pacific Dreams: The Institute of Pacific Relations and the Struggle for the Mind of Asia" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2009); Harvey Klehr and Ronald Radosh, *The Amerasia Spy Case: Prelude to McCarthyism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

[2] Robert W. Barnett, Oral History Interview, 2 March 1990, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Oral History Project, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/mss/mfdip/2004/2004bar07/2004bar07.pdf.

[3] Fairbank's more notable books included *The United States and China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948; 4th updated ed., 1983); *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports, 1842–1854,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953); *China Perceived: Images and Policies in Chinese-American Relations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974); *Chinabound: A Fifty-Year Memoir (*New York: Harper and Row, 1982); *The Great Chinese Revolution, 1800–1985* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986); and *China: A New History* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992).

Kim seeks "to demonstrate that notwithstanding the nadir of United States-China relations, the 1950s . . . marked the ideological genesis of rapprochement in which a group of China-watching intellectuals reshaped the Democratic Party's outlook on China" (611).[4] This movement occurred despite bitter internal rifts on the subject among liberal Democrats, which erupted mid-decade within both Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) and the American Congress for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), the U.S. offshoot of the Paris-based Congress for Cultural Freedom, which was covertly backed and funded by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Schlesinger was among the original founders of the ADA, and both organizations reflected his philosophy of encouraging and working with the international non-Communist left. From 1950 to 1955, corrosive internal civil wars raged within the ADA and ACCF over whether or not the lengthy congressional investigations and eventual trial for perjury of the scholar Owen Lattimore, former editor of the journal *Pacific Affairs*, were justified. Besides spearheading and fuelling the charges against Lattimore, Karl Wittfogel of the University of Washington attacked Fairbank as a Communist sympathizer, ultimately resigning from the ADA when its members continued to back Fairbank. Wittfogel's allegations were more favorably received in the ACCF, where Schlesinger waged an unsuccessful campaign to rebut them and to condemn the harassment of Lattimore. After the ACCF executive board rejected Schlesinger's demands in 1955, moderates resigned en masse. The charges against Lattimore were finally dismissed, and the ACCF was ultimately dissolved in late 1956.

While Schlesinger and his liberal allies may have eventually come out ahead in this internecine warfare, Kim rightly notes that their broader hopes that a relatively liberal "Third Force" would gain political power within China had by this time been proved to have been illusory. On the mainland, during the 1950s the CCP was cementing its grip on the country through incessant ideological campaigns intended to eliminate opponents and impose hard-line Communist policies. Across the Taiwan Strait, the authoritarian Chiang Kai-shek cracked down fiercely on all dissenters to his rule. In both Chinese states, social democrats and the non-Communist left were in short supply.

Kim also demonstrates the differences separating Fairbank's early position on China from the initial hopes of Schlesinger, Walt Rostow of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and other Cold War Democrats that a "Third Force" of non-Communist liberals or leftists might win power in China. Fairbank and other China specialists, including Lattimore and those diplomats who were purged from the State Department during the 1950s, generally recognized at the time as well as later that, while they might have enjoyed friendly personal relations with the CCP members they encountered during the 1940s, these were dedicated and often ruthless Marxist revolutionaries, who also identified strongly as Chinese. (Kim brackets Lattimore with the journalist Edgar Snow, a staunch friend of the early Chinese Communists and author of *Red Star over China* (1937), which helped to introduce these revolutionaries in favourable terms to the Western world.[5] In doing so, Kim significantly exaggerates the degree to which Lattimore shared Snow's warm feelings for the early CCP. Although Lattimore, like Snow, visited their Yanan base during the 1930s, where he appreciated the ability and candor of leaders such as Mao Zedong and future Chinese premier Zhou Enlai, he nurtured no illusions as to their fierce ideological commitment and disliked their policies towards ethnic minorities, including the Mongolians, with whom Lattimore strongly identified.[6])

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[4] Ilnyun Kim, "The Vital Center for United States-China Relations in the 1950s." *Diplomatic History* 44:4 (September 2020): 609-635

[5] Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1937).

[6] Robert P. Newman, *Owen Lattimore and the "Loss" of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 34-36; Owen D. Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928-1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 12-20.

Kim rightly states that from the late 1940s onward, Fairbank believed that the revolution had improved basic living standards for most Chinese, even while simultaneously acknowledging that New China was an authoritarian Communist dictatorship embracing a highly ideologically charged worldview. Indeed, he applauded many of the revolution's accomplishments in the areas of land reform, the emancipation of women, education, and the breakdown of social hierarchies and Confucianism. In Kim's interpretation, while Fairbank enjoyed warm friendships with prominent Chinese liberals, such as the well-known scholar and diplomat Hu Shih, and hoped that their ideas would influence social revolution in China, he considered these individuals too remote from the everyday masses to constitute a viable political alternative to the CCP, a view that he expounded to the ADA. Yet Fairbank also recognized that China's new leaders were "doctrinaire communists" who were likely to use their faith "first to liberate the populace but later to enslave it." (621) Furthermore, as Fairbank advised the ADA in early 1951, should the United States seek to attack the CCP, it was likely to alienate those Chinese people who had benefited from the changes implemented by the party. In February 1951, he prevailed upon the ADA to adopt a resolution supporting recognition of the PRC, a decision strongly opposed by Wittfogel and a group of labor representatives. This dispute marked the beginning of the corrosive internal disputes over China among American liberals that would continue for several years.

Kim argues strongly and largely convincingly that the policy of "contact and competition" towards Red China that Fairbank advocated at this juncture eventually became the basis of the dualistic stance of "containment without isolation" of China that increasing numbers of liberal Democrats advocated publicly during the 1960s. Throughout the 1950s, when the Republican administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower and his first secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, remained publicly adamant in its opposition to almost all dealings with China, Fairbank quietly continued to lobby potentially receptive Democratic politicians who might support this outlook. High on the list was Chester Bowles, a former governor of Connecticut who was positioning himself as a potential Democratic secretary of state. Bowles was also significantly influenced by the counsel of his close friend, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, that China was not merely authoritarian and Communist but also expansionist, representing a potential threat to its neighbors. Even so, India had been among the first states to recognize the new PRC, a neighbor that could not be safely ignored and was unlikely to collapse.

Bowles, who had since the early 1950s hoped to divide China from the Soviet Union, believed that the task facing the United States was to neutralize both the threat that potential Chinese expansionism represented to its Asian neighbors and China's appeal as an attractive alternative political model. The best means to this end were, he believed, a resumption of U.S. trade and communication with China and ultimately, the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Bowles discussed with Fairbank and his Harvard colleague Edwin Reischauer his proposed strategy of "competitive coexistence," which he laid out in the book *New Dimensions of Peace* (1955). Like Reischauer's own publication, *Wanted: An Asian Policy* (1955), Bowles's volume also recommended that Taiwan remain separate from China, ruled by an independent government, ideally one that was democratic and responsive to popular demands.[7] Fairbank likewise shared this "two-China" vision, one that was acceptable neither to PRC leaders nor to Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan, who cracked down harshly on dissent in 1960, undercutting American hopes that his regime was evolving in a liberal direction and away from authoritarianism.

By 1960, when Senator John F. Kennedy narrowly defeated the Republican Richard Nixon in the U.S. presidential election, the outlook spearheaded by Fairbank and Bowles had become something of an orthodoxy in Democratic Party foreign policy-making circles. Adlai Stevenson, Kennedy's ambassador to the United Nations, and W. Averell Harriman, who held multiple State Department posts first under Kennedy and then during the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson, his successor, both subscribed to it, as did lower level officials such as James Thomson and Roger Hilsman, assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern Affairs from 1963 to 1964. Yet Kim's article opens with a vignette from one of the early visits to Beijing by Henry Kissinger, national security adviser to Richard Nixon. Despite the growing interest in some kind of rapprochement with mainland China displayed by the Democratic foreign policy elite and their academic advisers, neither

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[7] Chester Bowles, *The New Dimensions of Peace* (New York: Harper, 1995); Edwin O. Reischauer, *Wanted: An Asian Policy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955).

Kennedy nor Johnson ultimately took the plunge. Kennedy, a fundamentally cautious and risk-averse politician, probably considered China one of the sensitive issues best deferred until a second term. Under Johnson, a change in China policy became just one of the might-have-beens devoured in the all-consuming maw of the conflict in Vietnam. Yet as Kim points out, during the 1960s, highly publicized congressional hearings on China and smaller but significant moves by second-level administration figures signaled a new readiness to embark upon constructive U.S. engagement with New China.

It is also worth remembering that it takes two to tango. For the relationship between the PRC and the United States to improve, should one side make overtures, the other needed to be receptive. For most of the 1960s, it was very far from a given that friendly gestures from the American side would have prompted a favorable response from Chinese officials. During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, mainland China first endured the ravages of the devastating Great Famine, the end result of the Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s, and three years later fell victim to the political and social disruptions of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. China was, moreover, engaged in an intensifying ideological battle with the Soviet Union, a contest in which Mao Zedong portrayed his country as the guardian of uncompromising revolutionary purity and opposition to capitalism, a pejorative contrast to the Soviet embrace of 'peaceful coexistence' with the West.

Kim's article is drawn from his research for what is clearly an innovative and stimulating Ph.D. thesis on American liberalism during the 1950s, focused on three major figures: Schlesinger, Bowles, and the noted Harvard economist John Kenneth Galbraith.[8] All were Democrats, prominent and articulate members of their party's liberal wing. Kim suggests that in the wake of McCarthyism, Fairbank and those younger scholars who shared his approach to China, such as the journalist and academic A. Doak Barnett, son of a China missionary, and Fairbank's student Robert A. Scalapino, who became a leading professor of Asian Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, gravitated towards the Democratic Party. Overall, their associations with Democrats were more intimate than their ties to the Republicans. As Kim notes, Fairbank bombarded Kennedy with unsolicited advice on China, communications often intercepted and deflected by the president's aides, especially Secretary of State Dean Rusk (633). In the 1960s and 1970s, Barnett likewise offered suggestions on China policy to successive Democratic presidents and their advisers, pressuring officials in the Carter administration to proceed to full normalization of relations with China.

Yet altering U.S. China policy was by no means simply a partisan issue, something at which Kim hints but perhaps does not give sufficient weight. The Democrats enjoyed no monopoly in seeking alterations in U.S. China policies. Hard-line critics of mainland China and devotees of Chiang Kai-shek and his regime were undoubtedly concentrated among sections of the Republicans. But from the mid-1950s onward, a significant contingent from that party began to question the wisdom of the existing American policies on China, especially the continued recognition of the Nationalists on Taiwan as the sole legal government. This perspective reflected in part fears that the American identification with the island and Chiang Kai-shek's bellicosity toward the PRC might drag the United States into an unwanted and unwelcome conflict with the mainland regime and potentially even into a nuclear confrontation with Red China's Soviet patron. Arthur H. Dean, long-time law partner of John Foster Dulles, who was Dwight D. Eisenhower's secretary of state, publicly expressed such apprehensions, arguing in 1954 that, should the United States wish to provoke difficulties between China and the Soviet Union, American efforts to improve relations with Beijing might accomplish this, and advocating a "two Chinas" policy resembling that suggested by liberal Democrats. The following spring Dean went so far as to publish an elaborated version of his views in the influential pages of *Foreign Affairs*, house journal of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the premier U.S. foreign policy think tank.[9]

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[8] Ilnyun Kim, "The Party of Hope: American Liberalism from the Fair Deal to the Great Society" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 2019).

[9] Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 104-105; Arthur Dean, "U.S. Foreign Policy and Formosa," *Foreign Affairs* 33:3 (April 1955): 360-375.

As Kim notes, Allen W. Dulles, brother of the secretary of state and director of the CIA from 1953 to 1961, favored an "'inducement' approach" to China, as did Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York, a liberal Republican with presidential ambitions (626). In the late 1950s, Rockefeller commissioned the Special Studies Project, a major set of reports on issues facing the United States, produced by several panels of experts co-ordinated by Henry Kissinger, who was at that time a Harvard academic. The group on International Objectives and Strategies considered recommending moves toward some level of rapprochement with China, but was stymied by objections from dissenting members, including former assistant secretary of state for East Asia Dean Rusk, then chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation.[10]

The input from Allen Dulles seems to have been particularly consequential. China clearly intrigued him. A director since 1927 of the Council on Foreign Relations, of which he had been president from 1946 until joining the CIA in 1950, throughout the 1950s Dulles continued to serve on the CFR's Committee of Studies, which decided on its research program. In this capacity, in the later 1950s Dulles approved funding for a wide-ranging study of China by Doak Barnett, who argued that, while not abandoning Taiwan, the United States should seek improved relations with the PRC's government, which was solidly established and unlikely to lose its grip on China. When it appeared in 1960, this volume became the CFR's best-selling title of all time.[11] In the late 1950s, Dulles himself more than once addressed the topic of China in CFR meetings, stating that the CCP controlled the mainland, a situation he expected to continue for the foreseeable future. He was also tantalized by the possibility of a falling out between China and the Soviet Union, which the United States might potentially exploit, but thought such a break unlikely to occur in the near future.[12]

Forced to resign as CIA director following the failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, in retirement Dulles chaired the Steering Committee directing a massive set of studies on "The United States and China in World Affairs," a three-year project covering all aspects of China's international policies and activities that was undertaken by the CFR with Ford Foundation funding between 1962 and 1965. The launching of this initiative went in tandem with the recognition by a range of State Department, CIA, and academic specialists on China that the breach between China and the Soviet Union was genuine and deep.[13] Throughout its operations, project members enjoyed access to confidential information and significant input from officials in the State and Defense Departments, the National Security Council, and the CIA, as well as insights from non-American specialists on China, who joined in some meetings. An evaluation of the project in the mid-1960s suggested that its most important feature was to demonstrate that the subject of China and a variety of potential policy options toward it could actually be openly discussed in the United States.[14] The overview volume, edited and completed by Doak Barnett following the death of former Asia Society president Robert Blum, who had originally been commissioned to write it, reaffirmed earlier recommendations for incremental changes in US policy towards China, moving towards gradual normalization of relations, without abandoning Taiwan.[15] Blum and Barnett's capstone study and the seven specialized companion volumes, which appeared as congressional hearings likewise called for a new opening to China, contributed to shifting the broader climate of public opinion on the subject.

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[10] Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, 178-182.

[11] A. Doak Barnett, *Communist China and Asia: Challenge to American Policy* (New York: Harper, 1960); A. Doak Barnett to John King Fairbank, 31 January 1984, Folder 3, Box 53, Council on Foreign Relations Papers [CFR Papers], Mudd Manuscripts Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

[12] Allen W. Dulles, "An Intelligence Review of the Communist Bloc," 28 October 1958, Dulles, notes on China for speech, 28 October 1958, Folder 1, Box 86, Allen W. Dulles Papers, Mudd Manuscripts Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ; Digest of Discussion, dinner meeting with Allen W. Dulles, "An Intelligence Review of the Communist Bloc," 28 October 1958, Folder 3, Box 450, CFR Papers; and Digest of Discussion, "Special Meeting on Communist China," 1 December 1958, Folder 2, Box 450, CFR Papers.

[13] "Special Round Table on Unity and Disunity Within the Communist Bloc," 1 February 1962, Allen Whiting and Bernard Morris, "Sino-Soviet Schism and Implications for U.S. Policy," 21 February 1962, Digest of Second Meeting, "Special Round Table on Unity and Disunity within the Communist Bloc," 21 February 1962, Folder 4, Box 456, CFR Papers; "Summary prepared by S/P on meeting of specialists who discussed 'Implications of the Sino-Soviet Dispute for U.S. Policy'," 29 March 1962, and Walt W. Rostow to Secretary of State: Conclusions of Special Study Group re Implications of the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 27 March 1962, John F. Kennedy National Security Files 1961-1963, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, Massachusetts.

[14] Council on Foreign Relations, Board of Directors, Meeting of 9 March 1967, Evaluation of Methodology of Ford Projects, Folder Council on Foreign Relations 1966-1967, Box 125, A. Doak Barnett Papers, Columbia University Library.

So too did "Asia After Vietnam," an article by Richard Nixon, the former vice-president and potential Republican presidential candidate, which was published in late 1967 in the CFR's prestigious journal, *Foreign Affairs*. While not envisaging immediate U.S. recognition, which he believed should be predicated on changes in Chinese behavior, Nixon nonetheless asserted: "Taking the long view, we simply cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations, there to nurture its fantasies, cherish its hates and threaten its neighbors. There is no place on this small planet for a billion of its potentially most able people to live in angry isolation." The policy of "containment without isolation" recommended by Fairbank and Barnett should, he argued, be supplemented by efforts to restrain and counter Chinese revolutionary activities beyond its borders.[16] And as Kim notes, when Nixon selected Kissinger as his National Security Adviser, on occasion the new appointee, whose previous experience had focused primarily upon European and nuclear policy, still turned to Fairbank for advice and information on China and Asia, as he had done while at Harvard (634).

As Kim—following in the footsteps of the Stanford historian Gordon H. Chang[17]—accurately remarks, somewhat ironically, the absence of close contacts between China and the United States during this decade, a consequence of the virtual shutdown of interchanges of all kinds that followed the break in diplomatic relations, made the counsel of Fairbank and his fellow China specialists more valuable and convincing to Democrats and Republicans alike (611). Experts of any kind on China or indeed Asia were in short supply, though a new cohort of academics was beginning to emerge in the United States. Prominent among them were not just Barnett and Scalapino, but also such individuals as Lucian Pye of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Allen Whiting, Richard Solomon, Michel Oksenberg, and Kenneth Lieberthal of the University of Michigan. Several among these would repeatedly interrupt their academic careers to take up influential positions in government, usually as China or Asia experts within the State Department or the National Security Council. Though—emulating Fairbank—specific individuals might gravitate more to one party than the other, the majority, driven by an amalgam of personal conviction and in at least some cases ambition, were willing to advise and sometimes serve under a wide spectrum of receptive politicians and officials.

One final question remains. Even during the McCarthyite 1950s, it seems that a sizeable cohort of influential members of the U.S. foreign policy elite, together with many leading academic experts on Asia, felt that their country's policy of non-recognition of the PRC flew in the face of reality and had little logical justification. Compounding and exacerbating their ideological differences, the absence of diplomatic relations, especially in conjunction with mainland China's exclusion from the United Nations and other international organizations, meant that in times of crisis, channels of communication between the two countries were vestigial to non-existent. The lack of a U.S. presence in China did, of course, mean that during the Cultural Revolution Americans were spared the violent attacks and abuse to which residents of the British mission in Beijing and other assorted foreign diplomats were subjected. Forty years on, relations between the United States and Iran still bear the scars of the 1979-1981 hostage crisis.

Within the United States, Fairbank, Barnett, Scalapino, and other China experts labored long and hard on multi-level initiatives to change both official policy and the climate of public opinion on China. One might also mention their work with the newly founded National Committee on U.S.-China Relations in the second half of the 1960s, which complemented and dovetailed with their more formal academic endeavors to this end.[18] The forces of inertia, supplemented by determined opposition from supporters and allies of Taiwan to any opening to China, were nonetheless hard to overcome.

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[15] Robert Blum, *The United States and China in World Affairs*, ed. A. Doak Barnett (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966).

[16] Richard Nixon, "Asia After Viet Nam," *Foreign Affairs* 46:1 (October 1967): 113-125, quotation from 121.

[17] Gordon H. Chang, *Fateful Ties: A History of America's Preoccupation with China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 213–214.

What ultimately broke the logjam in relations between mainland China and the United States was not a revolt against the irrationality of the existing situation, but a response to perceived clear and present dangers. In spring 1969, armed skirmishes between Soviet and Chinese troops on their joint border apparently caused Chinese leaders, especially Mao Zedong, to panic that a full-scale Russian attack might be imminent. Most top officials departed Beijing for remote locations elsewhere in the country, with only Premier Zhou Enlai left behind in the capital to hold the fort and keep the wheels of government turning. Chinese overtures to the new administration of Richard Nixon, a president embroiled in an unwinnable war in Vietnam with no proper exit strategy, and acutely conscious that on the international scene the United States needed to manage its substantial but by no means limitless resources more effectively, arrived at the right psychological moment. Top policymakers in both countries finally came together in identifying substantial immediate advantages their own nations might derive from the resumption of at least partial relations. On the American side of the great divide, Fairbank and his allies had done much to facilitate a reversal of policy, not least by persistently and plausibly highlighting the potential ensuing benefits for the United States. Chance and political contingency, however, determined whether and when their vigorous and protracted campaign would finally be rewarded.

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[18] See the voluminous files on the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations in Boxes 128-133, Barnett Papers; also Norton Wheeler, *The Role of American NGOs in China's Modernization: Invited Influence* (New York: Routledge, 2012).