

**FOREIGN  
RELATIONS  
OF THE  
UNITED  
STATES**

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**1969–1976  
VOLUME XVIII**

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**CHINA  
1973–1976**



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**DEPARTMENT  
OF  
STATE**

**Washington**



**Foreign Relations of the  
United States, 1969–1976**

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**Volume XVIII**

**China  
1973–1976**

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*General Editor* Edward C. Keefer

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# Preface

The *Foreign Relations of the United States* series presents the official documentary historical record of major foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity of the United States Government. The Historian of the Department of State is charged with the responsibility for the preparation of the *Foreign Relations* series. The staff of the Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, under the direction of the General Editor of the *Foreign Relations* series, plans, researches, compiles, and edits the volumes in the series. Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg first promulgated official regulations codifying specific standards for the selection and editing of documents for the series on March 26, 1925. These regulations, with minor modifications, guided the series through 1991.

Public Law 102–138, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, established a new statutory charter for the preparation of the series which was signed by President George Bush on October 28, 1991. Section 198 of P.L. 102–138 added a new Title IV to the Department of State’s Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 USC 4351, et seq.).

The statute requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be a thorough, accurate, and reliable record of major United States foreign policy decisions and significant United States diplomatic activity. The volumes of the series should include all records needed to provide comprehensive documentation of major foreign policy decisions and actions of the United States Government. The statute also confirms the editing principles established by Secretary Kellogg: the *Foreign Relations* series is guided by the principles of historical objectivity and accuracy; records should not be altered or deletions made without indicating in the published text that a deletion has been made; the published record should omit no facts that were of major importance in reaching a decision; and nothing should be omitted for the purposes of concealing a defect in policy. The statute also requires that the *Foreign Relations* series be published not more than 30 years after the events recorded. The editors are convinced that this volume meets all regulatory, statutory, and scholarly standards of selection and editing.

## *Structure and Scope of the Foreign Relations Series*

This volume is part of a subseries of volumes of the *Foreign Relations* series that documents the most important issues in the foreign policy of Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford. The subseries presents in multiple volumes a comprehensive documentary record of major foreign policy decisions and actions of both administrations. This specific volume documents the U.S. policy towards

China, 1973–1976. Although this volume is meant to stand on its own, it is best read in conjunction with three other volumes: *Foreign Relations, 1969–1976*, Vol. XV, Soviet Union, 1972–1974; Vol. XVI, Soviet Union, 1974–1976; and Vol. E–12, East Asia, 1973–1976.

*Focus of Research and Principles of Selection for Foreign Relations, 1969–1976, Volume XVIII*

This volume is organized chronologically. As such it conveys the shift in control over U.S. China policy from the White House to the Department of State as a result of the Watergate crisis, the appointment of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State, the resignation of Richard Nixon as President, and Gerald Ford's request that Kissinger relinquish his position as Advisor to the President for National Security Affairs. The chapters integrate documents about U.S. relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan, reflecting the fact that the former government received much more attention from high-level American policymakers than did the latter. The central theme of the volume is the effort to strengthen and formalize the PRC–US relationship, which had been established during 1971 and 1972 after decades of bitter estrangement, and the concurrent disestablishment of formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan, a task that remained unfinished at the end of the Ford Administration. The primary means used to improve relations during these years were long conversations between U.S. and PRC leaders, which were supposed to initiate—but generally substituted for—a more developed and institutionalized relationship.

The first chapter, January through May 1973, documents the establishment of unofficial liaison offices in Washington and Beijing, the most concrete achievement of the 1973–1976 period. Both sides expressed their desire to fully normalize relations by 1976. In retrospect, however, Kissinger's February 1973 visit to the People's Republic of China would prove to be the acme of Sino-American relations during this period. Although the United States and China agreed to finesse the Taiwan dispute and formed a tacit anti-Soviet alliance, the two countries did not agree on the war in Cambodia or on the wisdom of détente.

The second chapter, June 1973 through August 1974, demonstrates how domestic politics in both countries threatened the still-fragile Sino-American relationship. In China, aftershocks from the Cultural Revolution and the death of Lin Biao, as well as the aging of China's leadership, raised doubts about the stability of Chinese foreign policy. This chapter also reveals American efforts to reassure Chinese leaders baffled by Watergate and fearful that American policy would become erratic. China was also dissatisfied with the pace of U.S. disengagement from formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan. At the same time in the

United States, escalating economic competition produces fear in U.S. textile manufacturers that they would be hurt by increased American trade with China.

The third chapter, September 1974 through July 1975, covers the Sino-American effort to reestablish a momentum toward normalization. Along these lines, the United States attempted to reconcile the normalization of Sino-American relations with the preservation of Taiwanese security through such policies as a careful diminution of U.S.-Taiwanese military links. Nonetheless, the United States and China continued to bicker over détente and Cambodia.

The fourth chapter, August through December 1975, covers the planning and realization of President Ford's trip to Beijing. China experts within the U.S. Government asserted that the President should attempt to quickly normalize relations, but Secretary of State Kissinger believed that such a policy would produce a right-wing backlash against Ford that would endanger the administration's effectiveness and reelection. The Chinese Government agreed to host Ford without a prior agreement for rapid normalization. The visit maintained existing friendly relations, while breaking little new ground.

The final chapter, January 1976 through January 1977, documents how domestic political developments in both countries distracted policymakers from the Sino-American relationship. During these years, relations between the United States and China were conducted at the highest political level, which meant that incapacitation of the top leadership tended to bring progress to a standstill. More than most volumes in the *Foreign Relations* series, this one documents the influence of domestic politics on foreign policy. However, despite numerous obstacles and failures, each country's troubled relationship with the Soviet Union produced a continual impetus to improve the Sino-American relationship.

Like all recent *Foreign Relations* volumes in the Nixon-Ford sub-series, the emphasis of this volume is on policy formulation, rather than the implementation of policy or day-to-day diplomacy. Influence on U.S. policy was mainly restricted to a small circle, including the President and some influential officials trusted by Henry Kissinger.

#### *Editorial Methodology*

The documents are presented chronologically according to Washington time. Memoranda of conversation are placed according to the time and date of the conversation, rather than the date the memorandum was drafted.

Editorial treatment of the documents published in the *Foreign Relations* series follows Office style guidelines, supplemented by guidance from the General Editor. The documents are reproduced as exactly as

possible, including marginalia or other notations, which are described in the footnotes. Texts are transcribed and printed according to accepted conventions for the publication of historical documents within the limitations of modern typography. A heading has been supplied by the editors for each document included in the volume. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are retained as found in the original text, except that obvious typographical errors are silently corrected. Other mistakes and omissions in the documents are corrected by bracketed insertions: a correction is set in italic type; an addition in roman type. Words repeated in telegrams to avoid garbling or provide emphasis are silently corrected. Words or phrases underlined in the original document are printed in italics. Abbreviations and contractions are preserved as found in the original text, and a list of abbreviations is included in the front matter of each volume.

Bracketed insertions are also used to indicate omitted text that deals with an unrelated subject (in roman type) or that remains classified after declassification review (in italic type). The amount and, where possible, the nature of the material not declassified has been noted by indicating the number of lines or pages of text that were omitted. Entire documents withheld for declassification purposes have been accounted for and are listed with headings, source notes, and number of pages not declassified in their chronological place. All brackets that appear in the original text are so identified in footnotes and all ellipses, unless otherwise noted, are in the original documents.

The first footnote to each document indicates the source of the document, original classification, distribution, and drafting information. This note also provides the background of important documents and policies and indicates whether the President or his major policy advisers read the document.

Editorial notes and additional annotation summarize pertinent material not printed in the volume, indicate the location of additional documentary sources, provide references to important related documents printed in other volumes, describe key events, and provide summaries of and citations to public statements that supplement and elucidate the printed documents. Information derived from memoirs and other first-hand accounts has been used when appropriate to supplement or explicate the official record.

The numbers in the index refer to document numbers rather than to page numbers.

### *Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation*

The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, established under the *Foreign Relations* statute, reviews records, advises, and makes recommendations concerning the *Foreign Relations*

series. The Advisory Committee monitors the overall compilation and editorial process of the series and advises on all aspects of the preparation and declassification of the series. The Advisory Committee does not necessarily review the contents of individual volumes in the series, but it makes recommendations on issues that come to its attention and reviews volumes, as it deems necessary to fulfill its advisory and statutory obligations.

#### *Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act Review*

Under the terms of the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act (PRMPA) of 1974 (44 USC 2111 note), the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has custody of the Nixon Presidential historical materials. The requirements of the PRMPA and implementing regulations govern access to the Nixon Presidential historical materials. The PRMPA and implementing public access regulations require NARA to review for additional restrictions in order to ensure the protection of the privacy rights of former Nixon White House officials, since these officials were not given the opportunity to separate their personal materials from public papers. Thus, the PRMPA and implementing public access regulations require NARA formally to notify the Nixon Estate and former Nixon White House staff members that the agency is scheduling for public release Nixon White House historical materials. The Nixon Estate and former White House staff members have 30 days to contest the release of Nixon historical materials in which they were a participant or are mentioned. Further, the PRMPA and implementing regulations require NARA to segregate and return to the creator of files private and personal materials. All *Foreign Relations* volumes that include materials from NARA's Nixon Presidential Materials Staff are processed and released in accordance with the PRMPA.

#### *Declassification Review*

The Office of Information Programs and Services, Bureau of Administration, conducted the declassification review for the Department of State of the documents published in this volume. The review was conducted in accordance with the standards set forth in Executive Order 12958, as amended, on Classified National Security Information and applicable laws.

The principle guiding declassification review is to release all information, subject only to the current requirements of national security as embodied in law and regulation. Declassification decisions entailed concurrence of the appropriate geographic and functional bureaus in the Department of State, other concerned agencies of the U.S. Government, and the appropriate foreign governments regarding specific documents of those governments. The declassification review

of this volume, which began in August 2005 and was completed in 2007, resulted in the decision to withhold no documents in full, excise a paragraph or more in 3 documents, and make minor excisions of less than a paragraph in 13 documents.

The Office of the Historian is confident, on the basis of the research conducted in preparing this volume and as a result of the declassification review process described above, that the record presented in this volume presented here provides an accurate and comprehensive account of the U.S. foreign policy towards China.

*Acknowledgments*

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David Nickles collected the documentation for this volume, made the initial selections, and annotated the documents he chose. The volume was completed under the supervision of Erin Mahan, Chief of the Asia, Africa, and Arms Control Division, and Edward C. Keefer, General Editor of the series. Chris Tudda coordinated the declassification review, under the supervision of Susan C. Weetman, Chief of the Declassification and Publishing Division. Keri E. Lewis and Aaron W. Marrs did the copy and technical editing. Do Mi Stauber prepared the index.

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*The Historian*

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