

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

~~TOP SECRET~~

TALKING POINTS ON BILATERAL ISSUES FOR
SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH PRC LEADERS

Thursday, December 4, 1975
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Great Hall of the People
Peking, People's Republic of China

From: Henry A. Kissinger

I. PURPOSE

As you have noticed from your discussion with Chairman Mao and your first two sessions with Vice Premier Teng, bilateral questions do not occupy a major proportion of their attention in our relationship. At the same time, the normalization issue remains of considerable political significance for the longer-term development of our relations.

The Chinese clearly understand that you are not prepared to complete the normalization process on this visit, but they will view your remarks on this set of issues as a measure of how seriously you taken the relationship. As well, the manner in which you present your approach to this question will probably have some effect on how the senior leadership presents the results of your visit to other officials in the Party and government as a basis for sustaining their policy toward the U.S.

As noted in the scope analysis and normalization paper, in discussion of this issue over the past year the Chinese have tried to limit our flexibility by defining their conditions for a solution in ever more explicit and constrictive terms. They will not press you on the matter, however; indeed, as Chairman Mao indicated in his discussion with you yesterday, he does not anticipate any movement on normalization for several more years.

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DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958 (as amended) SEC 3.3
NSC Memo, 3/30/06, State Dept. Guidelines
By NARA, Date 6/24/10



I believe your best course is to take the initiative on the issue, both to create an atmosphere of candor and to preserve as much elbow room as possible for detailed negotiations on a normalization agreement at some future time. You should not get into a debate on terms; however, you are putting your position into the official record.

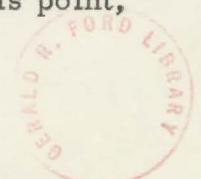
From this perspective, there are a number of purposes to be served by your discussion of the normalization issue:

-- You should confirm your Administration's position that we seek to build an enduring and vital relationship with the PRC in order to strengthen the basis for parallel action on the security issues which have brought us together.

-- Establish an atmosphere of frankness and candor in the discussions by stating that you recognize the Taiwan question remains the basic issue obstructing the full normalization of relations. Then review in a positive and non-defensive manner the genuine progress that we have made over the past several years in this area (such as by substantially reducing our military manpower level and removing all weapons with an offensive capability from Taiwan) and the degree to which we in fact have agreed on certain basic approaches to the eventual resolution of our differences on this issue.

-- You should indicate in a low-key manner that, in eventually resolving the Taiwan issue as a point of contention between us, we cannot appear to be just casting away people with whom we have been associated with. Such a solution would not be accepted by the American people, and would have significant repercussions on our allies. State that we will support any negotiated resolution of this issue between the two Chinese parties.

-- You should express recognition of the position the Chinese took during my visit in October (and reiterated by the Foreign Minister last night) that, given "the present state of our relations," they see no need for further steps at this time to improve our bilateral relations in such areas as exchanges and trade. You should emphasize that while you are prepared to proceed with our bilateral relationship in its present form, you would be less than frank if you did not state that the interests of both sides would be served by conveying a sense of some vitality in our relations rather than stagnation. You should not get into a long debate on this point, however.



-- For domestic reasons you will want to touch very briefly on the question of MIAs. Vice Premier Teng indicated during my October visit that he had some information to give you on the matter of the remains of servicemen from the Indochina war killed in the PRC. You should also make a low-key reference to the continuing concern of our people for the fate of the MIAs in Indochina.

II. TALKING POINTS

Normalization

-- I understand clearly that from your perspective the Taiwan issue remains the obstacle to creating a formally normal relationship in the sense of establishing diplomatic relations. What is my approach to this issue? First, I want to reaffirm the five principles which President Nixon stated during his discussions here in 1972. That is:

- I affirm that we will support the principle of the unity of China. As you know from Secretary Kissinger's visit in October, we were prepared to do this in a more direct and public way than was done in the Shanghai Communiqué.
- We have not and will not support any Taiwan independence movement.
- We will use our influence to discourage any third country from moving into Taiwan. Indeed, it is evident that



the step-by-step pace with which we have proceeded in adjusting our policy has helped to keep the situation in Taiwan calm and has not given other countries an opportunity to replace our presence.

-- My Administration will support any negotiated resolution of the Taiwan issue that can be worked out, and we will obviously not use the island to threaten your security directly or indirectly.

President Nixon committed the United States to the progressive reduction of our military presence on the island. You understand that there is no longer any American weaponry with an offensive capability on Taiwan. Our military manpower presence on the island has been reduced from about 10,000 at the time the Shanghai Communique was issued to less than 2,800 men today. I will continue to reduce this manpower level -- as a manifestation of the continuing direction of our policy -- to less than 1,400 by the end of next year.

-- President Nixon's final point was that his Administration would work to complete the normalization process. Secretary Kissinger said last month that it is our



intention to do this in a measurable period of time.

I affirm that objective. We don't take your position of patience on this matter for granted. I believe we should complete the process in the next several years.

-- I have reviewed the record of discussion of the normalization question over the past four years. I think we each clearly understand the views the other has put forward. A year ago in his discussion with the Vice Premier, Secretary Kissinger expressed basic acceptance of your three principles for normalization, or what you also call "the Japanese model." We agreed with you on what the transformation of our relations with you will look like.

At the same time, I should frankly say that what remains for us is to make these changes without appearing to simply cast away people we have been associated with for many years. For me, and indeed I believe for any incumbent in my job, this is a matter of considerable political weight. As I said, we would support any negotiated solution that the Chinese parties might work out themselves. If we normalize with you without concern for this matter, the American people will not support such a policy.



The other aspect of this issue is how other countries --
Japan or our allies in Europe -- will perceive our policy.

-- I am aware of the attitude of patience the Chinese side has shown on this issue. I am not complacent because of your attitude, but we must have the right overall political context to complete the process. Frankly, I believe that the way we have proceeded on this issue has benefitted both our countries. While Taiwan's formal ties to the rest of the world have eroded since 1971, the island has not been driven into rash actions which would present both the United States and the People's Republic very difficult problems. At the same time, I understand full well this is a matter of basic principle to you, and an issue of great emotional significance as well.

-- As I said earlier, I intend to order further reductions in our residual military presence on Taiwan. In the coming year manpower will be cut to less than 50 percent of its current level.



This will indicate to all parties concerned the continuing direction of our policy.

-- OPTIONAL POINT: I authorized Secretary Kissinger before his visit here last month to see if we could take certain partial steps which would more visibly sustain the momentum toward full normalization. I understand from your response to our proposals that you were not prepared to follow this approach.

Frankly, I think that a direct public American statement of support for the unity of China would have been a meaningful, if partial, step forward. I can tell you that it would have had a significant impact on American public opinion, and in Taiwan. But since you are not prepared to proceed in this manner, that is acceptable to us.

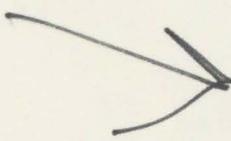
-- I also understand that you are not prepared to take certain steps which would indicate in a more public manner a sense of vitality in our bilateral relations -- as through expanded exchange programs or certain developments in the trade area. Here again, we are prepared to accept your position, but frankly we do not think it serves your own interests. My intention was to show our people and the world that considerable momentum exists in the normalization process and our determination to sustain it.



1 -- Trade between our two countries is unlikely to be much more than one percent of our overall foreign trade for a long time; so this is not a matter of economics for us. But some development in this area would have had a significant impact on the way our people think about our relationship. It would give important elements in our society a greater stake in a normal relationship with China.

-- Similarly, exchanges in the cultural and scientific fields are not ends in and of themselves. They sustain the interest of important and vocal elements in our society -- the intellectual community, the press, and the business world -- in normalization.

As you have indicated that you wish to keep the structure and number of such activities at their present level, we can only agree to do so. But I would not be frank if I did not say that some people will interpret this as a sign of stagnation, or even a backward step, in our relationship.

 MIA's

-- Let me briefly mention one issue that I know is of deep concern to the American people. I raise this in part because I understand Vice Premier Teng mentioned to Secretary Kissinger last month that you have some new



information on American servicemen missing in action in China. Anything you can provide us on this issue will be a great relief to the families concerned. I know this question has been raised with you on a number of occasions in the past, and I appreciate your responsiveness.

-- Let me add that the American people are also deeply concerned about the fate of more than 2,300 of our service-
men still unaccounted for in Indochina. In addition, there are about 30 journalists who disappeared in Cambodia and who have never been heard from since. I understand your view that this question is basically for us to resolve with the countries of Indochina.

I am also aware, however, of your suggestion that the US should forget the past and establish normal relations with the countries of Indochina. We are prepared to move in this direction, but our ability to do so will be affected in no small measure by progress we can make in accounting for these missing servicemen. Thus, it would be very helpful if you could use your good offices with the leaders of the countries of Indochina and urge them to be as forthcoming with us on this issue as you have been.

