

# Dual Representation: Reviewing the Republic of China's Last Battle in the UN\*

PHILIP HSIAOPONG LIU

*Current studies of Chinese representation in the United Nations assume that the Republic of China's expulsion was inevitable because of Chiang Kai-shek's one China principle and Beijing's role in U.S. foreign policy. This paper provides another perspective on this event by mapping how the United States, using a two Chinas strategy, endeavored to secure Taipei's seat and how Chiang Kai-shek faithfully executed this plan.*

**KEYWORDS:** Chinese representation; dual representation; Chiang Kai-shek; two Chinas; one China.

\* \* \*



There are two common explanations for the expulsion of the Republic of China (hereafter ROC or Taiwan) from the United Nations (UN). The first centers on the stubbornness of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石), whose insistence that the ROC was the only legitimate

---

PHILIP HSIAOPONG LIU (劉曉鵬) is an assistant professor in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He can be reached at <hpliu@ntu.edu.sg>.

\*The author appreciates the valuable comments of Professor Bruce Cumings and Professor Guy Alitto of the University of Chicago, as well as the assistance of Cindy Kou, McGill University.

©Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan (ROC).

government of China killed Taiwan's last chance to stay in the UN.<sup>1</sup> The other is that Taiwan lost its UN seat due to Washington's betrayal. The Nixon administration's intimacy with Beijing compromised Washington's ability to control this issue, and Taiwan therefore lost support.<sup>2</sup> In other words, Chiang's stubborn opposition to two Chinas plus Nixon's new pro-Beijing policy contributed to Taipei's failure to retain its seat in the UN. Given this convergence of circumstances, Taiwan's expulsion from the UN was so inevitable that even if it had survived in 1971, "Taipei could have remained in the UN for at most only one year."<sup>3</sup>

As Taipei and Washington declassified documents, scholars began to develop new perspectives. The most popular revisionist view is that Chiang Kai-shek was willing to accept the presence of two Chinas in the UN.<sup>4</sup> Thus, in 1971, Taipei seemed to be pursuing two opposing policies. As demonstrated in part by Nixon personally corraling votes to protect Taiwan's seat,<sup>5</sup> Nixon and Kissinger were actively involved in this two Chinas proposal and planned to keep Taiwan in the UN. As Robert

---

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, John W. Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance: Nationalist China and American Cold War Strategy in Asia* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 248-63. Blaming Chiang for Taiwan's losing its chance to separate from China, most pro-Taiwan independence scholars hold the same perspective; for example, Li Hsiao-feng, *Taiwanren yinggai renshi de Jiang Jieshi* (Chiang Kai-shek—what Taiwanese should know) (Taipei: Yushan-she, 2004), 143-45. Adopting the same point of view, some mainland Chinese scholars praise Chiang's insistence on a one China policy.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Nancy Tucker, *Uncertain Friendships: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992* (New York: Twayne, 1994), 104-5; James Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1999), 38-39; Wang Jin-hung, *Caifang lishi: cong huafu dang'an kan Taiwan* (Interviewing history: seeing Taiwan through Washington's archives) (Taipei: Yuanliu, 2000), 337-91.

<sup>3</sup>Jaw-Ling Joanne Chang, "Taiwan's Policy toward the U.S., 1969-1978," in *Normalization of U.S.-China Relations: An International History*, ed. William Kirby, Robert Ross and Gong Li (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 232.

<sup>4</sup>Many MA theses based on newly declassified documents have confirmed Chiang's attitude. See Peng Tao, "The Policy toward the Issue of Chinese Representation in the UN of the Nixon Administration" (MA thesis, Northeastern Normal University, Changchun, China, 2006); and Tsai Bingxiu, "Study of the Process of the ROC's Withdrawal from the United Nations 1949-1971" (M.A. thesis, National Central University, Chungli, Taiwan, 2008).

<sup>5</sup>See Zhang Shaoduo, "Meiguo yu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti" (America and UN Chinese representation), *Dangdai zhongguoshi yanjiu* (Contemporary China History Studies) 14, no. 6 (November 2007): 72-73.

Accinelli indicates, Nixon and Kissinger remained committed to improving relations with Beijing while keeping Taiwan in the UN.<sup>6</sup> This pledge manifested itself as promising one China to the People's Republic of China (PRC) while lobbying for a two-seat agenda in the UN.

Therefore, interpreting the last battle over Chinese representation in the UN is more complicated than it once seemed to be. Contemporary conclusions concerning Taiwan's "pre-ordained" and "inevitable" expulsion may oversimplify the case.<sup>7</sup> Hoping to provide another perspective on the event, this paper will review the history of this development from a different angle from that of the existing scholarship: that is, Chiang's acceptance of two Chinas and the U.S. two Chinas proposal.

## **Before 1971**

### *Understanding Chiang Kai-shek*

The simplest thing that can be said about Chiang Kai-shek's attitude toward the idea of two Chinas is that he always opposed it. His resistance to the idea is understandable considering his nationalism, and it easily becomes the default lens through which to analyze his foreign policy. Yet, his record of struggling against and compromising with warlords and the Japanese makes it difficult to believe that he was not a realist who understood the necessity of timely compromise.

Most analyses focus on Chiang's dedication to the one China ideal and fail to notice his second choice. Zhang Chunying, for instance, praises Chiang's opposition to Washington's two Chinas plan of the 1950s because Chiang, for fear of being suspected of splitting his government on Taiwan from the Chinese mainland, resisted U.S. pressure to give up the

---

<sup>6</sup>Robert Accinelli, "In Pursuit of a Modus Vivendi," in *Normalization of U.S.-China Relation*, 37.

<sup>7</sup>For Taiwan's preordained and inevitable destiny, see, for example, Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston Mass.: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 773; and Zhang, "Meiguo yu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," 73-74.

Kinmen (金門) islands and also resisted surrendering Taiwan to UN trusteeship.<sup>8</sup>

At the time when Zhang was making this argument, part of Chiang's diary from the 1950s was made public, revealing him in this, his weakest moment. Although UN trusteeship would have meant the de jure separation of Taiwan from Chinese territory, Chiang was willing to make this sacrifice, hoping simply to retain "de facto governance."<sup>9</sup> This diary entry serves as an early instance of Chiang's potential willingness to accept a division of sovereignty. He was willing to do this because to him, titles were less important than state survival. Moreover, even though Kinmen was one of his last links with the Chinese mainland, Chiang also repeatedly considered withdrawing from the islands.<sup>10</sup> In other words, a symbolic link between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan might not have been as sacred to him as was previously thought.

In the face of massive challenges, like most leaders, Chiang was probably prepared to grin and bear unfavorable alternatives. Chiang's adherence to one China served as camouflage for his deficient military capability, and he used this facade to fight for the best outcome for the ROC before he made any compromises—his strategy would safeguard his reputation if ever negotiations turned sour. We should consider Chiang's attitude toward Chinese representation in the UN via the comment of George Yeh, the ROC's ambassador to the United States, 1958-1961: "Chiang looks tough, but he will escape through the backdoor at the right moment."<sup>11</sup>

### *The 1961 U.S.-Taiwan Dispute over UN Strategy*

During the 1950s, the United States adopted a moratorium strategy to protect the ROC's seat in the UN: whenever a UN member proposed

---

<sup>8</sup>Zhang Chunying, "Shilun Jiang Jieshi wuci dizhi Meiguo fenli Taiwan de tumou" (On the five times that Chiang Kai-shek blocked the U.S. conspiracy to separate Taiwan), *Taiwan yanjiu* (Taiwan Studies) (Beijing), no. 2 (2000): 61-67.

<sup>9</sup>Qin Xiaoyi, ed., *Zongtong Jianggong dashi changbian chugao* (Chiang Kai-shek Chronology), vol. 9 (Taipei: Zhongzheng wenjiao jijinhui, 2003), 4335, 4356.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 4308-10.

<sup>11</sup>Shen Qi, *Wode yisheng* (My Life), vol. 4 (Taipei: Lianjing, 2000), 21.

to expel the ROC by replacing it with the PRC, the United States would propose a motion to table the issue until the following year. This strategy was successful until 1960, when many of the UN's new members complained of Washington's antics. In 1955, the ROC used its veto power against Mongolia's admission to the UN because Mongolia was constitutionally part of China. When Mongolia re-applied for UN membership in 1961, Moscow threatened to exercise its veto to block the entry of newly independent African countries if the ROC blocked Mongolia again. Because the ROC needed these new African members to support its efforts to retain its right to represent China, Taipei's one China principle and Washington's moratorium strategy both underwent revisions.

Washington devised two new methods to pacify the other member states: a proposal to establish a UN research committee to suggest a resolution to the Chinese representation issue or invoking the "important question" clause. According to Article 18 (2) of the UN Charter, important questions concerning matters such as the expulsion of members require a two-third majority of the UN's full membership to pass. Taipei disliked both of these methods because they opened the Chinese representation question to public discussion.

Because Mongolia's admission to the UN implied the partition of China, Taipei insisted on vetoing it regardless of the African votes Taipei would lose as a consequence. In other words, Taipei acted as if it would rather commit political suicide than violate its principle of representing a united China, even though this gesture would hurt Washington's leadership of the anti-communist world.

After serious disputes between Taipei and Washington, Taipei agreed to tacitly accept Mongolia's admission and surrender its one China principle. Moreover, the important question became the new strategy: China's representation was an "important question" that could only be decided with a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>Many scholars have analyzed the 1961 Washington-Taipei dispute based on the U.S. State Department's *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter FRUS) 1961-1963 Vol XXII. See, for example, Tang Xiaosong, "1961 nian Mei Jiang guanyu wai Mengu

By using the "important question" strategy, the U.S.-ROC alliance could easily defeat the annual Albanian Resolution calling for the ROC to be replaced by the PRC.<sup>13</sup> If the issue was accepted as an "important question," the Albanian Resolution would require a two-thirds majority, meaning that most UN members would understand how difficult it would be to expel Taipei that year. For fear of offending either Washington or Taipei, both of whom were permanent members of the Security Council at the time, UN members tended to favor the ROC when they voted on the Albanian Resolution. As Dean Rusk put it, "If the issue were decided to be an important matter, there would probably not be a two-thirds majority for any solution."<sup>14</sup>

The 1961 dispute was significant for three main reasons. First, it took Chiang about seven months to soften his one China stance. Official Washington-Taipei negotiations concerning the new strategy began around March and ended just before the UN voting in October. President John F. Kennedy had to personally convince Chiang to yield on the Mongolia issue by promising some important concessions: the United States committed itself to assisting Taiwan in building diplomatic relations in Africa, and Kennedy pledged to use the Washington's veto power against Beijing when necessary.

Second, due to right-wing pressure, Kennedy could not publicly support Beijing's admission. Taiwan needed protection even though the Kennedy administration obviously preferred a two Chinas solution. As

---

Lianheguo daibiaoquan wenti de zhenglun" (The dispute between the U.S.A. and Taiwan on the deputy right of the Republic of Mongolia in the United Nations in 1961), *Shixue Yuekan* (Journal of Historical Science) (Kaifeng), no. 1 (2003): 61-65; and Niu Dayun, "Kennidi zhengfu yu 1961 nian de Lianheguo daibiaoquan zhizheng" (the Kennedy administration and the 1961 UN Chinese representation dispute), *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* (Journal of Chinese Communist Party History Studies) (Beijing), no. 4 (2000): 78-84; and Zou Yao-yong, "1961 nian Mei Ying guanyu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan de fenqi" (The dispute on the Chinese Representation in UN between U.K. and U.S. in 1961), *Journal of Shanghai University* (Social Science Edition) 14, no. 2 (March 2007): 92-96.

<sup>13</sup>From the 1960s onwards, Albania proposed an annual motion in the General Assembly to transfer the Chinese UN seat from the ROC to the PRC. For this reason, the motion is commonly referred to as the Albanian Resolution.

<sup>14</sup>See document #13, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html) (accessed August 25, 2010).

Dean Rusk described it, "It is fundamental to the United States that Formosa retain a seat in the United Nations. If this is unacceptable to Peking then they are at fault. We don't believe we should have to pay the ticket for Peking's admission at Formosa's expense. If Peking won't accept admission under these conditions, then that is their choice and we would not be responsible."<sup>15</sup>

Third, the question of Chinese representation attracted so much international attention because a small China occupied such a very important position. Chinese legitimacy was a problem between Taipei and Beijing, and it would have been less important to the rest of the world if neither had held a permanent seat on the Security Council or if the importance of this seat were diluted.

Fearing for its legitimacy as the government of China as well as its status as a Security Council member, Taipei opposed the formation of a research committee because it would almost guarantee a two Chinas outcome. There was no way to control the composition of such a committee, and worse, the committee might suggest that the General Assembly revisit the Chinese position in the Charter, and "India, Japan, Brazil, and Nigeria, all of whom wanted permanent membership of the Security Council, might then take over the China seat."<sup>16</sup>

1961 was not the first time that China's right to occupy a Security Council seat was put in question. As early as 1954, Secretary of State John Dulles had thought to solve the problem of China's seat by replacing China with India on the Security Council in a move to accommodate both Chinese regimes in the General Assembly. Dulles approached an international lawyer about changing the composition of the Security Council and even discussed the issue with the British foreign secretary, Anthony Eden.<sup>17</sup> A

---

<sup>15</sup>See document #14. FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html) (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>16</sup>Telegram, ROC Delegation of the UN to ROC Embassy in the USA, 8/23/1961, in "Dishiliu jite lianda daibiaoquan wenti" (Representation issue in the 16th Assembly), August 22-November 20, 1961, International Organization Department Files (hereafter IOF) 88086/633.02, ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereafter MOFA).

<sup>17</sup>Nancy B. Tucker, "John Foster Dulles and the Taiwan Roots of the Two Chinas Policy," in

similar scenario arose in 1961 when the U.S. ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson, mentioned to President Kennedy and the British prime minister, Harold Macmillan, the alternative of "amend[ing] the United Nations Charter."<sup>18</sup> The Kennedy administration did seriously consider using Japan and India to dilute the importance of the China seat.<sup>19</sup>

Taipei, though small, was the only permanent member of the Security Council that represented people of color. It was therefore a concern that other peoples of color would press for a change in representation. A UN research committee on the Chinese seat would certainly see states such as "India, Japan, Brazil, or Nigeria" logically requesting to replace China on the Security Council. Taipei therefore considered that the "important question" strategy was safer than that of establishing a research committee.

#### *The 1966 U.S.-Taiwan Dispute over UN Strategy*

In 1965, the "important question" proposal was passed (56:49), but the Albanian Resolution for the first time resulted in a tie (47:47). The United States sensed a general rise in dissatisfaction about postponing the PRC's admission and was concerned that this tie would affect the 1966 ballot. To convince more UN members to support the "important question," the United States again suggested instituting a research committee to resolve the dilemma of Chinese representation. For the same reasons as in 1961, Chiang was opposed to this plan. Because this proposal strongly implied U.S. acceptance of two Chinas, Chiang once again threatened to commit political suicide by withdrawing from the UN if the proposal passed. Taipei and Washington were again in serious disagreement.<sup>20</sup>

---

*John Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, ed. Richard Immerman (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 255.

<sup>18</sup>See document #18, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html) (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>19</sup>See Document #28, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html), (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>20</sup>Many scholars have analyzed the 1966 Washington-Taipei dispute based on the U.S. State Department's *FRUS* 1964-1968, Vol XXX. See, for example, Liu Zikui, "Meiguo yu 1966 nian Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti" (The US and China's Representation in the UN in 1966), *Contemporary China History Studies* (Beijing) 14, no. 6 (November 2007): 55-61, Chen Changwei, "Yuehanxun zhengfu dui Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti



The implications of this dispute were similar to those of 1961. The first one was that it took Chiang about six months in 1966 to soften his insistence on one China. This quarrel began around May and ended just before the UN voting in November. Like his predecessor, President Lyndon B. Johnson had to personally coax Chiang, who again only yielded after the United States made two concessions that echoed those made in 1961. Johnson committed to extending U.S. sponsorship of Taiwan's aid to Africa<sup>21</sup> and to upholding Kennedy's promise to exercise the U.S. veto power against Beijing. Consequently, Chiang modified his threat: if the two Chinas proposal was passed, Taipei would effect a "temporary withdrawal from the General Assembly only . . . not [a] withdraw[al] from the Security Council."<sup>22</sup>

Another implication was that maintaining Taiwan's presence in the UN was again at the heart of U.S. policy for two reasons. First, pressure from the right wing meant that Taipei's withdrawal would have caused serious international and domestic problems for Johnson, who was already facing difficulties with his Vietnam policies. Second, as long as the ROC stayed in the UN, Beijing would not join. As Dean Rusk explained to Taipei, "a two-Chinas formula . . . is not . . . the view of the United States . . . your presence in the UN, in effect, is the surest guarantee against a Communist China presence."<sup>23</sup>

---

zhengce zhi yanjiu" (A Study of Lyndon Johnson's Policy toward Chinese Representation in the United Nations), *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* (Journal of Chinese Communist Party History Studies), (Beijing) no. 3 (2006): 31-41; Zhang Ying and Chi Haibo, "Yanjiu weiyuanhui jueyi yu 60 niandai zhongqi Meiguo dui hua zhengce de tiaozheng" (The Regulating of the Policy of the US to China and the Raising of Study Committee Resolution), *Dongbei shifan daxue xuebao* (Journal of Northeast Normal University) (Changchun), no. 2 (2002): 18-24.

<sup>21</sup>Regarding the extension of Taiwan's assistance to Africa, see Philip Hsiaopong Liu, "Reassuring Friendship with Funds: Reviewing US-Taiwan Cooperation in Africa during the 1960s," *Identity, Culture, and Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue* 8, no. 1-2 (2007): 19-44.

<sup>22</sup>Deputy Foreign Minister Shen Qi reports to the Executive Yuan, 12/1/1966, in "Daibiao-quanan yiban ziliao" (General Information of the Representation Issue), November 1971, IOF 90043/640, MOFA. U.S. records use the terms "walk out" and "absent itself." See Document # 218 and #219, FRUS 1964-68 Vol XXX, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/210\\_219.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/210_219.html) (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>23</sup>Document # 217, FRUS 1964-68 Vol XXX, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/210\\_219.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/210_219.html) (accessed August 25, 2010).

The issue of the Chinese seat in the Security Council had become an annual annoyance to the U.S. government. Domestic politics required the ROC to remain in the UN, but international politics opposed a small China occupying such a critical position. Therefore, as it had done when it quarreled with the ROC in the past, the United States considered amending the UN Charter to rotate the Security Council seat between India, Japan, and China.<sup>24</sup>

### Reviewing 1971

#### *A New Voting Strategy*

Before discussing the U.S.-Taiwan negotiation of 1971, I would like to briefly describe the 1971 Washington-Taipei voting strategy. Essentially, it was a combination of a new version of the "important question" and "dual representation" approaches. The "important question" became the "important question variable," and "dual representation" became "dual representation complex."

The difference between the "important question" and the "important question variable" was that the new resolution applied only to Taiwan's expulsion. Thus, a simple majority could lead to Beijing's admission, but Taiwan's expulsion would need a two-thirds majority, which was still a big challenge to supporters of the Albanian Resolution. Since the "important question variable" was the key issue of the 1971 voting, to attract more supporters, Washington needed a way to ensure the settlement of the China issue.

Washington therefore introduced "dual representation" to demonstrate to UN members that it sincerely intended to permanently resolve the Chinese representation issue. "Dual representation" was in fact a clearer version of the previous research committee proposal. In essence, it meant

---

<sup>24</sup>See Document # 202, Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Canada, FRUS 1964-68, [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/200\\_209.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/200_209.html) (accessed August 25, 2010).

one China with two representatives, and thus effectively produced two Chinese governments in the UN. However, "dual representation" did not mention which Chinese government should take over the Security Council seat. Later, "dual representation complex" was born when extra articles were appended to the original "dual representation" proposal specifying that the Chinese seat on the Security Council should be assigned to the PRC and implying the ROC's demotion from the Security Council to the General Assembly.

The order of the resolutions on the voting agenda was "important question variable," Albanian Resolution, and then "dual representation complex." Ideally, "important question variable" would pass, thereby nullifying the Albanian Resolution, and then the "dual representation complex" vote would take place. Since the United States had gone to great lengths to promote both "important question variable" and "dual representation complex," it hoped that countries that supported one of these proposals would also support the other. Therefore, if "important question variable" passed, there was a chance that "dual representation complex" could pass also. However, if "important question variable" failed, most members would understand that the Albanian Resolution would pass, and then "dual representation complex" would not even be put to the vote.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>John Garver opines that the United States did not try hard enough to dominate the General Committee, the congregation that sets the agenda for the General Assembly's deliberations. The U.S. ambassador to the UN George Bush had proposed combining the Albanian Resolution and the U.S. "dual representation" resolution into a single "question of China" item to be considered together by the General Assembly, because leaving the two separate could mean that the Assembly's debate and actions on the first proposal might prejudice or preempt consideration of the second item. This eventually became the case. Bush's proposal was defeated 12:9 with 3 abstentions. Garver argues that the United States should have been able to win over three or four votes because among those abstaining were Belgium and Ireland, whose delegates had earlier spoken in favor of the U.S. proposal, and among those voting against the proposal was Britain. Garver further contends that this agenda-setting failure had a decisive influence on the U.S. proposal. He quotes Kissinger, "U.S. officials believed that they could win one more vote in the Important Question (Variable) which would have forced a debate and a vote on the U.S. dual representation solutions," suggesting that the State Department was overconfident. See Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 253-55.

*Nixon's Two-Pronged Diplomacy*

In broad terms, Richard Nixon's friendliness toward Beijing in 1969 and Henry Kissinger's 1971 Beijing visits contributed to Taipei's demise in the UN. Scholars have meticulously outlined why Nixon turned to the PRC and how Kissinger confessed to Beijing that Taiwan was part of China. I will not discuss the White House's new policy toward Beijing, but would like to emphasize that even though Nixon and Kissinger seduced the PRC by claiming that Taiwan was part of China, they still attempted to secure Taiwan's place in the UN.

When Nixon assumed office, the Cultural Revolution was drawing to a close in the PRC but the Sino-Soviet conflict and the U.S. involvement in Vietnam were just beginning and hightening. Rapprochement with the PRC was a rational move for the United States, but Nixon could not forsake Chiang because of the threat of domestic challenges. Although Nixon's right-wing political history could ward off accusations of appeasement, selling out an ally might have cost him his main support base. As Tucker indicates, Taiwan's debacle in the UN did in fact anger the right wing and cost Nixon his second term.<sup>26</sup>

Nixon was particularly anxious about the response of Governor Ronald Reagan of California. Reagan's reputation would secure California for Nixon and calm pro-Taiwan rightists (Kissinger even told Zhou Enlai (周恩來) that if their discussion about Reagan's function became public, Zhou would have to find him a job). Having the UN expel Taiwan might have turned people like Reagan against him. As Kissinger told Zhou, because 62 percent of Americans opposed the expulsion of Taiwan, passing the Albanian Resolution would rally Nixon's opponents.<sup>27</sup> He later confirmed his message to Nixon, "It was better for both of our countries [the United States and the PRC] if the Albanian Resolution did not pass this year [1971], for then the process [of normalization] would be too fast and

---

<sup>26</sup>Nancy Bemkopf Tucker, "Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China," *Journal of American History* 92, no. 1 (June 2005): 109-35.

<sup>27</sup>Doc #162, p 506, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

there would be a rallying point for opponents of your China policy."<sup>28</sup> So, in 1971, as in the 1960s, at least because of right-wing pressure, the White House needed to keep Taiwan in the UN.

In essence, although Taipei first hoped to continue with the old "important question" strategy and later requested to keep its Security Council seat, Nixon did not let Taipei commit suicide. To keep the ROC in the UN, Washington patiently worked to convince Taipei to accept new strategies ("important question variable," "dual representation," and "dual representation complex") to attract more votes. When the situation was unfavorable to Taiwan, Nixon and Kissinger mandated the State Department to win votes and personally fought for Taiwan behind closed doors.<sup>29</sup> If Nixon had not wanted to keep Taiwan in the UN, he need not have invested this effort; he could have yielded to Taiwan's outdated strategy and waited for Taiwan's expulsion.

Nixon was not alone in adopting this two-pronged approach to Chinese representation in the UN. He followed the tactics of previous administrations by opening the door more widely for the PRC while working to keep Taiwan in the UN. The difference between Nixon and his two predecessors was that Nixon could earn political credit both by helping Taiwan and by approaching Beijing. It was logical for him to pursue the two goals at the same time: ideally, he would achieve both, but by only accomplishing one or the other, he would still have gained.

### *A Sustainable Plan*

To accomplish both of these goals simultaneously, the White House was trying to realize a form of two Chinas in the UN, which was why Zhou Enlai criticized Kissinger for America's "one China, two Governments"

---

<sup>28</sup>Doc #164, p 537, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>29</sup>Doc #425, p 844, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49149.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010); and Zhang, "Meiguo yu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," 72-73. Zhang argues that Nixon was only feigning his support.

plan.<sup>30</sup> The logic was as follows:<sup>31</sup>

We saw no legal obstacle to the General Assembly deciding that, for the present at least, China shall be represented by a delegation from PRC and a delegation from ROC. . . . The Charter nowhere defines either "state" or "member" and [the] two terms cannot be considered synonymous. India, for example, became a member of the UN when still a part of the British Empire and before it had attributes of sovereignty which would permit it to be described as "state" in international law. Other original members of the UN (e.g., the Philippines, Syria, Lebanon) were in a similar situation. The best examples of members which were not states remain Ukraine and Byelorussia.

From the very beginning, even Kissinger agreed to have "a strategy . . . for preventing Taipei's expulsion, not just for a year or so, but for the foreseeable future."<sup>32</sup> To let Taiwan stay for the foreseeable future, Beijing must be admitted also, so, in Kissinger's words, "if we opt for Peking's membership in the UN, it brings us very close to an unspoken two China policy."<sup>33</sup>

But how unspoken was this strategy in actuality? Even though Nixon and Kissinger were trying to seduce Beijing with a one China strategy, they were actually practicing two Chinas in the UN. Kissinger tried to convince Zhou Enlai that "this is temporarily one China, one Taiwan,"<sup>34</sup> and that "[if the U.S. resolution passed] it will make it easier next year to moderate our policies in the UN."<sup>35</sup> Kissinger's goal was to convince Zhou to accept two Chinas in 1971, but he did not elaborate on policies for the following year. This was how Kissinger explained the "important question variable"

---

<sup>30</sup>Doc #162, p 499, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>31</sup>Doc #393, p 775, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49149.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>32</sup>Doc #344, p 658, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>33</sup>Doc #341, p 644, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>34</sup>Doc #143, p 448, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70142.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>35</sup>Doc #162, p 506, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

to Zhou Enlai: "You would be able to take the Security Council's seat to China, and as soon as you can get the two-thirds vote for expulsion, you would be the only representative of China in the UN."<sup>36</sup> He talked only about the "important question variable," but did not emphasize that the "important question variable" "would have the effect that dual representation would win," which is what he told Nixon.<sup>37</sup>

Scholars and documents focus mostly on negotiations that occurred before Taiwan was expelled, but rarely discuss what the United States was prepared to do if Taiwan had stayed. It was generally accepted that even if "dual representation complex" had passed, Beijing would not have joined unless Taiwan left the UN. This is based on the assumption that China was very important and that the whole world hoped to see Beijing instead of Taipei in the UN.

However, Taipei's problem was that it purported to represent mainland China and occupied a permanent seat on the Security Council. It followed logically then that Beijing could ask to resume its legal right in the UN and expel Taipei. Had Taipei acted as Taiwan, where it enjoyed effective rule, and had Taipei stayed in the General Assembly like most other states, UN members would likely have been more reluctant to expel it. Beijing surely would force Taipei to leave, but Kissinger was hoping to "hold together a coalition of those who like Taipei, those who dislike Peking, and those who are beholden to us, sufficient to resist such a demand from Peking."<sup>38</sup>

The White House's 1971 plan was essentially a remnant of U.S. strategies of the 1960s: "[our strategy] would stand a good chance of commanding majority support and thus blocking passage of the Albanian Resolution. Moreover, if Peking refused to enter on this basis, the onus for

---

<sup>36</sup>Doc #140, p 413, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70142.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>37</sup>Doc #342, p 645, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>38</sup>Doc #341, p 640, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

its non-participation would be squarely on Peking."<sup>39</sup> The only major revision was that Beijing would get the Security Council seat and the United States would publicly support it. If Beijing still refused to join the UN in order to force Taiwan to leave, it would not be surprising if an annoyed U.S. government re-used another 1960s strategy:<sup>40</sup>

Passage of a dual representation resolution by the Assembly is unlikely to result in Peking taking the seat in the immediate future, but could lead to a situation in which the ROC representative is expelled from the Council (in order to make possible the offer of the seat to Peking) and the seat remains temporarily vacant.

PRC membership on the Council is likely to increase pressures for Charter revision (something which we have generally opposed and to which, according to intelligence reports, Peking is also opposed) to enlarge the Council by the addition of new permanent members (e.g. Japan and/or India, and perhaps the FRG after it becomes a member of the UN), to do away with the permanent member veto, or to add new permanent members without the right of veto. If Charter revision continues to appear inadvisable or unobtainable, one possible but unlikely solution might be agreement in the respective regional caucuses to give states such as Japan, India or Brazil semi-permanent member status through repeated elections to the Council.

Finally, should the seat remain empty for any substantial period of time, this might lead to pressures to reassign it to another Asian power (again Japan and India would be the logical contenders), a factor which Peking would also have to take into account.

In other words, the American strategy entailed forming a two Chinas framework in the UN and forcing the PRC to accept it by threatening to deprive China of its position on the Security Council. If Taipei had been moved to the General Assembly but Beijing had still refused to join the Security Council, it was possible that the United States would have proposed promoting Japan or India to the Security Council in an attempt to provoke Beijing to join. It would be almost unthinkable for Beijing to accept Japan, China's long-standing enemy, becoming a world power by Beijing's absence. As for India, although there had been a military conflict

---

<sup>39</sup>Doc #341, p 639, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>40</sup>Doc #352, p 680, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).



with the PRC in the early 1960s, India had always supported the PRC as the legitimate representative of China in the UN because of its leadership of the non-aligned movement. Its effort to expel Taiwan from the General Assembly would be in doubt if India was a replacement candidate for China on the Security Council.

*Chiang Kai-shek's Two-Pronged Diplomacy*

Between late-1970 and late-March 1971, Beijing gained eight allies: Canada, Equatorial Guinea, Italy, Ethiopia, Chile, Nigeria, Kuwait, and Cameroon. Of the eight, five had switched recognition from Taipei. This was a direct result of the unfavorable vote on Chinese representation in 1970, when the Albanian Resolution was passed by two votes (51:49). Luckily for the ROC, the "important question" passed 66:52 before the Albanian Resolution was put to the vote, and thus a two-thirds majority was necessary to change the representation of China.

Nixon commented that "the old man [President Chiang Kai-shek] is partly a realistic figure."<sup>41</sup> Chiang Kai-shek may have been stubborn, but he was not dumb. He was aware that many changes had taken place in the world and the ROC consequently needed to adjust its China policy. He had considered putting Taiwan under UN trusteeship and withdrawing his army from Kinmen in 1950 when the world was against him, and he was prepared to ditch the one China principle in both 1961 and 1966 when the prospects for the UN looked unfavorable. It is therefore not surprising that he adjusted his position on Chinese legitimacy in 1971. His challenge was to make this adjustment look good.

Chiang, like the US presidents he dealt with, had to face domestic dissent on policy changes. If the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for instance, gave the slightest attention to Japanese or American opinions on UN policy that differed from those of the ROC, senior legislators or influential party leaders were quick to attack the government for being in favor of two

---

<sup>41</sup>Doc #342, p 654, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

Chinas.<sup>42</sup> Both the Legislative Yuan and the National Assembly proposed imaginative ways to secure the ROC's world status. Some wanted to launch a "Charter Protection Movement" in the UN to guarantee the ROC's seat on the Security Council because the UN Charter still recognized the ROC as a permanent member of the Security Council, while others proposed using Chinese morals and culture to influence the views of other countries.<sup>43</sup> A former foreign minister and senior party leader, Huang Shaogu (黃少谷), suggested that the ROC propose to abolish the Security Council's veto power in an effort to win the friendship of smaller countries and thus improve the ROC's popularity.<sup>44</sup> Obviously, more than twenty years into the Cold War, many of the political elite in Taiwan still had no realistic awareness of the state of world affairs and therefore stood firmly by their one China principle.

In these circumstances, Chiang's best strategy was to feign a one China stance while quietly acquiescing in Washington's two Chinas proposal. If the UN vote was favorable, Chiang would be celebrated for securing the ROC's position in the UN, and if the PRC refused to join, Taipei would remain the sole representative of China in the UN. If the vote was unfavorable, domestic politicians would still respect Chiang for upholding the ROC's historic nationalist mission and the one China principle.

### *Taipei's Prompt Response to Dual Representation*

As usual, official discussions between Washington and Taipei on UN strategy began around February 1971. The United States formally advised Taipei that the best way to win over the 1971 General Assembly was to

---

<sup>42</sup>Reference Note, Executive Yuan to MOFA, 3/9/1971, in "Lianheguo wodaibiaoquan—yibanxin shiwu" (Chinese Representation in the UN—General Affairs), from December 19, 1970 to June 29, 1971, IOF: 90019/640, MOFA.

<sup>43</sup>See in Letter, Liu Dongyen from National Assembly to MOFA, *ibid.*, and *Dahua Wanbao* (Dahua Evening News), 8/6/1971, in "Zhongguo waijiao zhengce yu duiwaiguanxi" (Chinese Foreign Policy and Foreign Relations), from February 1, 1967 to November 30, 1971, Department of North American Affairs Files, 411.1/0043, MOFA.

<sup>44</sup>Letter, the Nationalist Party to MOFA, 9/15/1971, in "Lianda di ershiliujie wodaibiaoquan zaxian" (Collected Information on Chinese Representation in the 26th UN General Assembly) from July 29, 1971 to October 13, 1971, IOF: 90088/640, MOFA.

put forward a proposal that featured one China with two different seats. According to Taipei's records, U.S. officials pointed out that in this way, Beijing "would not enter for at least another three to five years."<sup>45</sup> Secretary of State William Rogers even predicted to Nixon that Taiwan might have up to four years with this plan.<sup>46</sup>

Since Taipei and Beijing would have separate seats under this proposal, any motions to expel the ROC would require the Security Council's consent—an impossibility, because the United States would exercise its veto—as well as a two-thirds vote in the General Assembly. The ROC wanted to use the "important question" strategy again to defeat the Albanian Resolution, and replied that coexistence with Communist China was unacceptable because it was against Taipei's fundamental interests.

However, on March 15, without any pressure or concessions from Washington, Chiang Kai-shek informed the ROC's ambassador to the United States that he, in essence, accepted Washington's "new proposal," but would not allow this strategy to affect the ROC's position on the Security Council.<sup>47</sup> In mid-April, Nixon sent his special envoy, Robert Murphy, to Taiwan to officially accept Chiang's request. The United States would safeguard the ROC's seat on the Security Council while the dual representation proposal was introduced in the UN.

The United States did not communicate any further details on the UN voting strategy after Murphy's departure, so Taipei essentially relied on Murphy to convey its message and awaited the oncoming battle. However, after Kissinger visited Beijing, the situation seemed very unpromising. On July 23, Taipei asked the U.S. government to keep its promise and adopt effective measures to secure the ROC's seat on the Security Council.

---

<sup>45</sup>See above information in "Lianda daibiaoquan yinying jinguo jiyao" (Summary of Dealings with UN Chinese Representation), from October 7, 1971 to October 18, 1971, IOF 640/90038, MOFA. The U.S. officials were Jenkins, Shoemith, and Feldman from the State Department.

<sup>46</sup>Doc #342, p 654, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>47</sup>See in "Lianda daibiaoquan yinying jinguo jiyao" (Summary of Dealings with UN Chinese Representation), from October 7, 1971 to October 18, 1971, IOF 640/90038, MOFA.

Secretary Rogers said that Washington wanted to comply, but after consulting with other countries, it could only guarantee the ROC's UN seat by admitting Beijing's right to the China seat in the dual representation proposal.<sup>48</sup>

Although Washington's response contradicted Murphy's promise, Taipei's response was cool. On July 25, the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs formally informed the U.S. government that the ROC itself would have to speak against the dual representation proposal, and requested the United States not to comment on which party should take the Security Council seat. Taipei further requested that the United States oppose any motions to amend the proposal and give the seat to Beijing.<sup>49</sup> Meanwhile, Chiang adjusted his definition of "being opposed to two Chinas": he instructed his ambassador to speak, but not necessarily vote, against "dual representation."<sup>50</sup> Taipei already knew that it would lose its Security Council seat, and simply asked the United States not to publicly agree with or facilitate this result.

On August 2, Secretary Rogers formally revealed Washington's proposal to the world. The United States would support the PRC's admission to the UN, but would oppose the expulsion of the ROC. Honoring Taipei's request, Rogers did not acknowledge Beijing's right to a seat on the Security Council, but remarked only that the seating problem would be a decision for all UN members.

Jaw-Ling Joanne Chang suggests that because Taipei was reluctant to agree to Beijing's admission, friendly states were unaware of the ROC's attitude toward "dual representation" and this was a key reason why Taiwan was defeated in the UN.<sup>51</sup> This argument is problematic, however, because Taipei's allies would have known its real intention. On August 19, the ROC

---

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Chien Fu, *Chien Fu huiyilu* (The Memoirs of Chien Fu), vol. I (Taipei: Tianxia, 2005), 151. Chien was director of North American affairs in the ROC Foreign Ministry from 1969 to 1972 as well as being ROC foreign minister from 1990 to 1996.

<sup>51</sup>Chang, "Taiwan's Policy," 231-32.

Foreign Ministry directed its ambassadors to inform host countries that the ROC opposed giving the Security Council seat to Beijing, but at the same time, foreign posts were instructed to "verbally" request that host countries support "dual representation" and "disregard [the ROC's official] attitude."<sup>52</sup>

There is written proof of these directions. For example, on August 24, Malawi received a "strictly confidential" memorandum from the Embassy of the ROC:<sup>53</sup>

For the purpose of providing an alternative to the so-called Albanian draft resolution which prescribes the expulsion of the Republic of China as a sine qua non to the seating of the Chinese Communist regime in the United Nations, and with a view to defeating such a resolution, a proposal known as "Dual Representation" has been advanced by Governments friendly to the Republic of China, in collaboration with those Governments which maintain a fair and just attitude toward the matter. Although the Republic of China, for obvious reasons, cannot itself subscribe to this formula, the endorsement given to said proposal by the Government of the Republic of Malawi will ensure its adoption. Furthermore, any attempt to prevent the adoption of "Dual Representation" proposal . . . must be effectively opposed and rejected.

On September 8, the United States told Taiwan that, because its proposal had failed to receive sufficient endorsement, it was now necessary to add an additional article assigning the Security Council seat to Beijing. In other words, the United States would replace "dual representation" with "dual representation complex," which stated clearly that Beijing should take over the Security Council seat.

It is likely that the ROC was humiliated because Washington's preference for Beijing demonstrated its new allegiance. But, again, Taipei's response was measured. On September 11, the ROC Foreign Ministry sent telegrams to all its overseas missions informing them that it was inappropriate for the ROC to request host countries to support the U.S. proposal, and that, for the moment, host countries should look to the United States and the ROC's other allies for indications as to whether to vote in favor of

---

<sup>52</sup>See note 47 above.

<sup>53</sup>Memorandum, ROC Embassy to Malawi Ministry of External Affairs, August 24, 1971, in "Admission of Communist China to the UN" (10-1-7R/37506/EA12116), National Archives of Malawi.

"dual representation complex." If host countries asked about the ROC's position on the matter, diplomatic missions should simply say that they were waiting for Taipei's response.

Kissinger prophesied that "Chiang Kai-shek would find it intolerable if the United States openly supported or acquiesced in depriving Taipei of its Security Council seat. Taipei might very well prefer to walk out of the UN rather than accept such a development."<sup>54</sup> However, that did not happen. Taipei's quandary took only about ten days to resolve internally. When the United States officially submitted "dual representation complex" to the UN on September 22, Taipei simultaneously released news of an official policy change: ambassadors were to tell host countries that the ROC would understand their endorsement of "dual representation complex" if they felt that it was truly in the ROC's best interests.<sup>55</sup>

On September 27, the Foreign Ministry re-published this order with detailed instructions. The revised version informed all missions that even though "dual representation complex" violated the ROC's position, because its purpose was to secure the ROC's place in the UN, Taipei would fully understand if its allies supported the proposal. To prevent misunderstandings, the Foreign Ministry attached to this memorandum a message in English that diplomats were forbidden to allow host countries to see in written form. The ROC's diplomats were again to "verbally" convey the following message:<sup>56</sup>

If the government of [the host country] in its own judgment co-sponsors and/or supports [the contents of the Dual Representation Complex], it would have the full understanding of the government of the ROC.

For the moment, the ROC could relax. Using "dual representation complex" to help pass "important question variable" worked. On October 2, Taipei estimated that the result of the "important question variable" vote

---

<sup>54</sup>Doc #341, p 642, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2010).

<sup>55</sup>See note 47 above.

<sup>56</sup>Telegram, Foreign Minister Zhou to all Diplomatic Posts Abroad, 9/27/1971, in "Ershiliujie lianheguo daibiaoque wen" (Chinese Representation in the 26th UN General Assembly), from September 15, 1971 to October 27, 1971, IOF: 90031/640, MOFA.

would be sixty-three votes for, sixty-one against, three abstentions, and four unknown (but about which the ROC was optimistic).<sup>57</sup> The U.S. mission to the UN shared Taipei's optimism.<sup>58</sup> Three days later, however, the White House announced that Kissinger would soon be making another visit to Beijing. Taipei re-estimated the results of the "important question variable" vote on October 8, notably with more pessimism: sixty votes for, sixty-three against, and six abstentions. Although the U.S. delegation struggled hard on Taipei's behalf, Kissinger's visit inflicted damage. Kissinger was leaving for Beijing around October 20, and at that time, the United States released its most optimistic estimate of the "important question variable" result: fifty-eight for, fifty-seven against, and fifteen abstentions, while Taiwan anticipated a vote of 58:60:12. On October 22, the ROC ambassador to the United States informed Taipei that "the situation is at a stalemate; all estimations of votes are extremely close."<sup>59</sup> Two days later, a phone call from Nixon pushed Argentina into the "maybe for" category, and the last projection of the "important question variable" result was 58:58.<sup>60</sup>

The situation was so tense that nobody could reliably predict the vote. At 16:00 Taipei time (04:00 New York time) on October 25, 1971, Chiang made the following speech in the National Security Conference.<sup>61</sup>

Our permanent seat in the UN Security Council has become a token seat. In fact, for a very long time, other powers have derecognized our position as a permanent member of the Security Council. Whenever critical questions arose, they did not listen to us, and decisions were always made by a couple of big powers. It is a humiliation for us to sit as a permanent member of the Security Council. This is a national disgrace. Therefore, I am considering withdrawing from the UN when the appropriate time comes. . . . If we must lose our battle

---

<sup>57</sup>Chien, *Chien Fu huiyilu*, 155.

<sup>58</sup>Accinelli, "In Pursuit of a Modus Vivendi," 37.

<sup>59</sup>Telegram, James T.H. Shen from Washington DC to Taipei, 10/22/1971, in "Ershiliujie lianda daibiaoquanan meiguo lichang" (American Position on Chinese Representation in the 26th UN General Assembly) from August 5, 1971 to October 16, 1971, IOF: 90003/640.635, MOFA.

<sup>60</sup>Chien, *Chien Fu huiyilu*, 155-58.

<sup>61</sup>Conference Note, 30th National Security Conference, 10/25/1971, in "Lianda zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti zajuan" (Collected File of UN Chinese Representation), from Aug 29, 1970 to Aug 29, 1971, IOF: 90081/640, MOFA.

in the UN, we should make it an honorable exit rather than a shameful one. Maintaining the dignity and honor of our country is far more important than keeping a seat in the UN. . . . Since there is no justice and law in the UN today, it has become a filthy place, so why does it deserve our attachment? . . . Both the resolutions on UN Chinese representation, that is, the Albanian and American (dual representation complex) proposals, violate the UN Charter. The only difference between them is the degree to which they deprive us of our rights. . . . Thus, before the voting on the Albanian proposal takes place, we should withdraw from the UN. Even when voting on the American proposal, we should vote against or absent ourselves from the balloting. Now I am making this decision in the position of the (Chinese) revolutionary leader. We will keep the honor of our country rather than a shameful seat.

More importantly, Chiang's speech was followed by supplementary written instructions on his UN strategy:

1. If the "important question variable" cannot be discussed first, or if it fails to pass, we will announce our withdrawal before the Albanian Resolution vote occurs. We can wait a little to see if a revision of this proposal is in progress. If not, the Albanian Resolution will surely pass, and we must withdraw before it is put to the vote.
2. If the "important question variable" passes and the Albanian Resolution fails, when the U.S. "dual representation complex" is put to the vote, we should speak against it because it violates Article 23 of the UN Charter. Even though this proposal supports our membership in the UN, its contents recommend that the Communists take our seat on the Security Council. We will protest "dual representation complex," boycott the vote on it, and make appropriate announcements after the proposal passes. We will also see if the Communists are coming and make further just and honorable statements. If the U.S. proposal is revised and dissected by disapproving countries, we should vote for the articles that support our membership, but vote against the rest.

Chiang's last instructions are revealing evidence of the ROC's UN strategy. On the one hand, the ROC opposed any measures that violated its legitimacy as the government of China, but on the other hand, it had tacitly agreed to two Chinas. The public heard Chiang's impressive instruction to "vote against" "dual representation complex," but his real intention was contained in the following words: "or absent ourselves from the balloting." Prior to that day, Taipei had informed the United States that it would abstain,<sup>62</sup> the same method of acceptance as it had adopted in 1966. The

---

<sup>62</sup>Chang, "Taiwan's Policy toward the U.S.," 231.



written instruction was even more flexible—Chiang ordered his UN representatives to "speak against," "protest", or "boycott," but said nothing about voting against.

Given these statements, even if "dual representation complex" had passed, Taipei would likely have left the conference room temporarily to save face. Considering Taipei's tacit acceptance of two Chinas, however, Chiang's mention of the "just and honorable statement" and the making of "appropriate statements" would likely have meant quietly accepting reality.

Compared to previous negotiations on strategy changes, there appear to have been fewer disputes between Taipei and Washington in 1971. Without any pressure from the U.S. president and even though Washington had broken its promise, Taipei's response to Washington's two Chinas proposal was prompt, calm, and cooperative. It accepted the dual representation concept as soon as the bilateral talk began, and tacitly accepted the fact that Beijing would obtain the Security Council seat once the United States had adopted the "dual representation complex" strategy. The ROC was obviously willing to pay any price for its seat in the UN, even if it was only in the General Assembly. Its one China statements were only a mask for its new position.

## **Conclusion**

*"The remarkable thing about the effort to preserve a place for the Republic of China in the 26th General Assembly was not that it failed, but that it failed so narrowly." – US State Department<sup>63</sup>*

The results of the 1971 vote are well known. The U.S. "important question variable" proposal was defeated by four votes (59:55, with 17 abstentions or absentees). The Albanian Resolution was then passed by a

---

<sup>63</sup>Doc#455, p. 917, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) 1969-76 Vol V*, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49149.pdf>, (accessed August 25, 2010).

wide margin. The vote in favor of the Albanian Resolution meant that dual representation never had a chance to be tested.

History claims that due to the rise of the PRC, Taiwan's failure was pre-ordained. Nixon's pro-Beijing policy and Chiang's one China doctrine became the scapegoats for Taipei's exclusion from the UN. But the fact was that Beijing was ready to lose the 1971 UN vote given Washington's endeavors to secure Taiwan's seat.<sup>64</sup> Although historical discussions should not be based on events that never transpired, it is equally wrong to fixate entirely on what did occur without investigating the preparations that had been made for a different outcome. If the results of the votes had been slightly different, history might have chosen to praise Chiang's two Chinas diplomacy and Nixon's efforts to secure the ROC's place in the UN.

Scholars and politicians have rarely noted Taipei's compliance with Washington's two Chinas proposal or its endeavors to convince its allies to accept this policy. As in the 1960s, there was still strong right-wing pressure on the White House to support Taiwan, and the United States still planned to force Beijing's entry into the UN by diluting the importance of China's seat. The major difference was that Chiang Kai-shek's response to the United States was prompt and cooperative.

Seeing the entirety of the negotiations and efforts between Washington and Taipei, we can logically assume that, had Taipei not lost the "important question variable" vote in 1971, the ROC's allies, including the United States, would have pushed it toward a clearer two Chinas framework in order to guard against the Albanian Resolution in subsequent years. Accordingly, Chiang (and his son) would have had to endure the pressure of redefining Taipei's one China policy on an annual basis until it satisfied UN members. Taiwan's destiny was not so pre-ordained.

Unfortunately, the PRC replaced the ROC on the Security Council and obtained veto power, so Taiwan was never able to rejoin the UN. Thus, without the annual problem of securing its UN seat, the Chiangs and their fellow Nationalists won a reprieve from external pressure and were able

---

<sup>64</sup>Tsai, "Zhonghua minguo tuichu Lianheguo," 239-42.

to keep themselves hidden away in their fortress of Chinese legitimacy. Although a popular explanation for Taiwan's loss of its UN seat was Chiang's insistence on a rigid one China policy, in actuality the causality is reversed: Chiang's one China policy appeared rigid because Taiwan lost its seat.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Primary Sources:**

#### **I. US State Department Document. Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS, see in [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov), accessed on Aug 25, 2010)**

##### **1. FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII:**

Doc #13, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html)

Doc #14, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html)

Doc #18, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html)

Doc #28, FRUS 1961-1963 Vol XXII [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusXXII/01to50.html)

##### **2. FRUS 1964-68, Vol XXX:**

Doc # 202, FRUS 1964-68 Vol XXX [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/200\\_209.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/200_209.html).

Doc # 217, FRUS 1964-68, Vol XXX [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/210\\_219.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/210_219.html).

Doc # 218, FRUS 1964-68, Vol XXX [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/210\\_219.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/210_219.html)

Doc #219, FRUS 1964-68 Vol XXX [http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/vol\\_xxx/210\\_219.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxx/210_219.html)

##### **3. FRUS 1969-76, Vol V:**

Doc #341, p 639, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.

*ISSUES & STUDIES*

- Doc #341, p 640, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #341, p 642, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #341, p 644, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #342, p 645, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #342, p 654, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #344, p 658, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #352, p 680, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49148.pdf>.
- Doc #393, p 775, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49149.pdf>.
- Doc #425, p 844, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49149.pdf>.
- Doc#455, p. 917, FRUS 1969-76 Vol V <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/49149.pdf>.

**4. *FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII:***

- Doc #140, p 413, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70142.pdf>.
- Doc #143, p 448, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70142.pdf>.
- Doc #162, p 506, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf>.
- Doc #162, p 499, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf>.
- Doc #164, p 537, FRUS 1969-76, Vol XVII <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/70143.pdf>.

## **II. ROC Foreign Ministry Files (MOFA)**

### **1. Department of International Organization Files, Republic of China (IOF, MOFA)**

IOF: 88086/633.02, MOFA. Telegram, ROC Delegation of the UN to ROC Embassy in the USA, 8/23/1961, in "Di shiliu jie lienda daibiaoquan wenti" (Representation Issue in the 16th Assembly), August 22, 1961 to November 20, 1961.

IOF: 90019/640, MOFA. Reference Note, Executive Yuan to MOFA, 3/9/1971, in "Lianheguo wodaibiaoquan—Yibanxin shiwu" (Chinese Representation in the UN—General Affairs), from December 19, 1970 to June 29, 1971.

IOF: 90031/640, MOFA. Telegram, Foreign Minister Zhou to all Diplomatic Posts Abroad, 9/27/1971, in "Ershiliujie lianheguo daibiaoquan wenti" (Chinese Representation in the 26th UN General Assembly), from September 15, 1971 to October 27, 1971.

IOF: 90038/640, MOFA. "Lianda daibiaoquan yinying jinguo jiyao" (Summary of Dealings with UN Chinese Representation), from October 7, 1971 to October 18, 1971.

IOF: 90043/640, MOFA, Report, Deputy Foreign Minister Shen Qi to the Executive Yuan, 12/1/1966, in "Daibiaoquan yiban ziliao" (General Information on the Representation Issue), November 1971.

IOF: 90081/640, MOFA. Conference Note, 30th National Security Conference, 10/25/1971, in "Lianda zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti zajuan" (Collected File of UN Chinese Representation), from August 29, 1970 to August 29, 1971.

IOF: 90088/640, MOFA. Letter, the Nationalist Party to MOFA, 9/15/1971, in "Lianda di ershiliujie wodaibiaoquan zaxian" (Collected Information on Chinese Representation in the 26th UN General Assembly) from July 29, 1971 to October 13, 1971.

IOF: 90003/640.635, MOFA. Telegram, James T. H. Shen from Washington DC to Taipei, 10/22/1971, in "Ershiliujie lianda daibiaoquanan meiguoli chang" (American Position on Chinese Representation in the 26th UN General Assembly) from August 5, 1971 to October 16, 1971.

### **2. Department of North American Affairs Files, Republic of China**

Department of North American Affairs Files: 411.1/0043, MOFA *Dahua Wanbao* (Dahua Evening News), 8/6/1971, in "Zhongguo wajiao zhengce yu du-

iwaiguanxi" (Chinese Foreign Policy and Foreign Relations), from February 1, 1967 to November 30, 1971.

### III. National Archives of Malawi

National Archives of Malawi: 10-1-7R/37506/EA12116, Memorandum, ROC Embassy to Malawi Ministry of External Affairs, August 24, 1971, in "Admission of Communist China to the UN."

#### Secondary Resources:

- Accinelli, Robert. 2005. "In Pursuit of a Modus Vivendi." In *Normalization of U.S.-China Relations: An International History*, edited by William Kirby, Robert Ross, and Gong Li, 9-55. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Chang, Jaw-Ling Joanne. 2006. "Taiwan's Policy toward the U.S., 1969-1978." In *Normalization of U.S.-China Relations: An International History*, edited by William Kirby, Robert Ross, and Gong Li, 209-51. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Chen, Changwei (陳長偉). 2006. "Yuehanxun zhengfu dui Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti zhengce zhi yanjiu" (約翰遜政府對聯合國中國代表權問題政策之研究, A study of Lyndon Johnson's policy toward Chinese representation in the United Nations). *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* (中共黨史研究, Journal of Chinese Communist Party history studies) (Beijing), no. 3: 31-41.
- Chien, Fu (錢復). 2005. *Chienfu huiyilu* (錢復回憶錄, The memoirs of Chien Fu), Vol. 1. Taipei: Tianxia chubanshe (天下出版社).
- Garver, John W. 1997. *The Sino-American Alliance: Nationalist China and American Cold War Strategy in Asia*. Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe.
- Kissinger, Henry A. 1979. *White House Years*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Li, Hsiao-feng (李筱峰). 2004. *Taiwanren yinggai renshi de Jiang Jieshi* (台灣人應該認識的蔣介石, Chiang Kai-shek—what Taiwanese should know). Taipei: Yushan She (玉山社).
- Liu, Philip Hsiaopong. 2007. "Reassuring Friendship with Funds: Reviewing US-Taiwan Cooperation in Africa during the 1960s." *Identity, Culture, and Politics: An Afro-Asian Dialogue* 8, no. 1-2: 19-44.
- Liu, Zikui (劉子奎). 2007. "Meiguo yu 1966 nian Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiao-

- quan wenti" (美國與 1966 年聯合國中國代表權問題, The US and China's Representation in the UN in 1966). *Dangdai Zhongguoshi yanjiu* (當代中國史研究, Contemporary China History Studies) (Beijing) 14, no. 6 (November): 55-61.
- Mann, James. 1999. *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China from Nixon to Clinton*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Niu, Dayong (牛大勇). 2000. "Kennedi zhenfu yu 1961 nian de Lianheguo daibiaoquan zhizhen" (肯尼迪政府與 1961 年聯合國的中國代表權之爭, The Kennedy Administration and the 1961 UN Chinese Representation Dispute). *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu* (中共黨史研究, Journal of Chinese Communist Party History Studies) (Beijing), no. 4: 78-84.
- Peng, Tao. 2006. "Nikesong zhengfu dui Zhongguo Lianheguo daibiaoquan wenti zhengce" (尼克松政府對中國聯合國代表權問題政策, The Policy toward the Issue of Chinese Representation in the UN of the Nixon Administration). MA thesis, Northeastern Normal University (東北師範大學), China.
- Qin, Xiaoyi (秦孝儀), ed. 2003. *Zongtong Jiangong dashi nianbian chugao* (總統蔣公大事年編初稿, Chiang Kai-shek chronology). Vol. 9. Taipei: Zhongzheng wenjiao jijinhui (中正文教基金會).
- Shen, Qi (沈琦). 2000. *Wode yisheng: Shen Qi huiyilu* (我的一生: 沈琦回憶錄, My life: the memoirs of Shen Qi). Vol. 4. Taipei: Lianjing chubanshe (聯經出版社).
- Tang, Xiaosong (唐小松). 2003. "1961 nian Mei Jiang guanyu wai Menggu Lianheguo daibiaoquan wenti de zhenglun" (1961 年美蔣關於外蒙古聯合國代表權問題的爭論, The Dispute Between the U. S. A. and Taiwan on the Deputy Right of the Republic of Mongolia in the United Nations in 1961). *Shixue Yuekan* (史學月刊, Journal of Historical Science) (Kaifeng, China), no. 1: 61-65.
- Tsai, Bingxiu (蔡秉修). 2008. "Zhonghua minguo tuichu Lianheguo licheng zhi yanjiu, 1949-1971" (中華民國退出聯合國歷程之研究, Study of the process of the ROC's withdrawal from the United Nations, 1949-1971). MA Thesis, National Central University (中央大學), Taiwan.
- Tucker, Nancy Bernkopf. 1989. "John Foster Dulles and the Taiwan Roots of the Two Chinas Policy." In *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, edited by Richard H. Immerman, 235-62. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1994. *Uncertain Friendships: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*. New York: Twayne Publishers.

- \_\_\_\_\_. 2005. "Taiwan Expendable? Nixon and Kissinger Go to China." *Journal of American History* 92, no. 1 (June): 109-35.
- Wang, Jin-hung (王景弘). 2000. *Caifang lishi: cong huafu dang'an kan Taiwan* (採訪歷史: 從華府檔案看台灣, Interviewing history: seeing Taiwan through Washington's archives). Taipei: Yuanliu chubanshe (遠流出版社).
- Zhang, Chunying (張春英). 2000. "Shilun Jiang Jieshi wuci dizhi Meiguo fenli Taiwan de tumou" (試論蔣介石五次抵制美國分離台灣的圖謀, On the five times that Chiang Kai-shek blocked the U.S. conspiracy to separate Taiwan). *Taiwan Yanjiu* (台灣研究, Taiwan Studies) (Beijing), no. 2:61-67.
- Zhang, Shaoduo (張紹鐸). 2007. "Meiguo yu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaquan wenti" (美國與聯合國中國代表權問題, America and UN Chinese Representation). *Dangdai zhongguoshi yanjiu* (當代中國史研究, Contemporary China History Studies) (Beijing), no. 6:62-74.
- Zhang, Ying (張穎), and Chi Haibo (遲海波). (2002). "Yanjiu weiyuanhui jueyi yu 60 niandai zhongqi Meiguo dui hua zhengce de tiaozheng" (研究委員會決議與 60 年代中期美國對華政策的調整, The Regulating of the Policy of the US to China and the Raising of Study Committee Resolution). *Dongbei shifan daxue xuebao* (Journal of Northeast Normal University) (Changchun), no. 2:18-24.
- Zou, Yao-yong (鄒耀勇). 2007. "1961 nian Mei Ying guanyu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaquan de fenqi" (1961 年美英關於聯合國中國代表權的分歧, Dispute over Chinese representation in the UN between the UK and the U.S. in 1961). *Shanghai daxue xuebao* (Journal of Shanghai University) (Social Science Edition) (Shanghai) 14, no. 2 (March): 92-96.