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US media and foreign policy making: the case study of the US media coverage on Taiwan

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US media and foreign policy making:
The Case study of the US Media coverage on Taiwan

by

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Chapter One: Introduction

Sixty-two years have passed since the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) lost the civil war with the Communist Party (CPC) and fled to Taiwan. Insisting on the “one China” policy, in which Taiwan is a part of China, both the CPC and the KMT have put great efforts into a unification campaign while oppositionists in Taiwan call for “self-determination” and an independent Taiwan. The unification of East and West Germany seemed to reignite the hope for the unification of Taiwan and Mainland China. The breakaway republics in Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union, however, highlighted Taiwan’s anomalous status and encouraged the separatists. *The New York Times*, therefore, describes Taiwan as “a tiger with an identity crisis,” and says that 20 million people face an uncertain future (Kristof 1999).

The United States is continuing to debate the unification issue as Beijing has made it an important component of Sino-American relations. Both Washington and Beijing realize that the question of Taiwan has been the major obstruction for developing a “normal” relationship between the United States and China. In dealing with Taiwan and China at the same time, however, the attitude of the U.S. government on the issue is often ambiguous. On the one hand, the U.S. government insists on the one China policy. On the other hand, the United States has continued to sell arms to Taiwan to increase the island’s defensive ability. The PRC government has accused the U.S. arms sales action as a violation of the Shanghai Communiqués, saying that the White House intends to make

“two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan.” The Taiwanese authority, however, interprets this action as recognition of Taiwan’s sovereignty and protection of the island.

Concerning the relationship between the press and foreign policy-making, various notions, such as “watch dog,” “lapdog,” and “ad hoc” concepts have been proposed. Regardless of the differences among these stances, researchers agree that the press serves as a link between the public and public policies and represents an essential component in the formation of foreign policy. Based on the controversy over the Taiwan issue, the triangular relationship among the US, Mainland China and Taiwan, and the strong link between the press and foreign policy-making.

How does the American press view Taiwan? It is my contention that in foreign policy, the press supports the government, and therefore, the US press echoes the US government. The acknowledgement of the media’s political linkage provides a foundation for discussions on the relationship between the media and policy making. In order to answer the question of role of the press in foreign policy making in US with respect to Taiwan, there are three sub-questions I wish to examine: (1) what was American foreign policy toward Taiwan between the years of 1995-2005? (2) What was the attitude of the American press towards any topic related to Taiwan during that period of time? (3) Did the press support or oppose the president’s policy during this time? In this study, the “Taiwan issue” refers to any topic or event related to Taiwan mentioned by the editorials in a sample of US national and regional newspapers from 1995 to 2005.

I have two goals in this research: First, this study will provide insight into the

Taiwan issue and the triangular relationship among the US, China, and Taiwan. Second, it will contribute to a greater understanding of the theories regarding the relationship between the press and foreign policy-making from the case study of Taiwan.

Why US-Taiwan Policy and American Press?

There is no more sensitive issue in the Sino-American relationship than Taiwan. Moreover, the U.S.-Taiwan relationship is probably the most controversial aspect of the relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC). In settling the uncertain future of Taiwan, both Taipei and Beijing pay much attention to the US government. If the White House repeatedly stresses its position on adhering to the “one China” policy, the governments on both sides of the Taiwan Strait might speed up their pace of promoting unification. However, if the US government holds an ambiguous attitude toward the issue, that might encourage the separatists in Taiwan to declare independence. Therefore, American foreign policy toward Taiwan in particular and China, in general, has become an important factor in resolving the Taiwan issue.

Chapter Two: Evolution of US-Taiwan-China Policy

The China-Taiwan embroilment, a relic of an unfinished Chinese civil war that has continued to rankle the sensibility of people both on the mainland and on the island with varying degree of intensity, may be divided into two phases. In the first, Washington supported Taiwan as a bastion of freedom, opposed to communist tyranny and rising to its defense when the mainland threatened to force the issue in 1954-1955 and 1958. In the second phases, the United States attempted to, “back off and download the unification dilemma to the two principals that has had the most at stake in the relationship, encouraging them to work out their own solution” (Qu Xing Fifty Years of Chinese Diplomacy 2000). The first period coincides with the ascendancy of the nationalist regime in Taiwan in the global arena, when it could claim with US support to represent “China” in the UN and other such international governmental organizations (IGOS)-- even then however, China was strategically a more important actor in any substantive sense. The second period coincides with the rise of China to a dominant formal position corresponding to its growing economic and military power, claiming the diplomatic recognition of most countries in the world as well as full membership in virtually all IGOs and INGOs pushing Taiwan out of most international for and indeed to the margins of the international arena, using every means short of war to induce the island state to abandon its pursuit of independence and to negotiate reunification with the mainland.

During the Cold War, Washington’s primary concern was with the bipolar balance of

power, meaning that Soviet-American relations tended to dictate the form and disposition of all subordinate alliance systems “Even the attempt to form a nonaligned bloc was implicitly oriented to the bipolarity from which it was trying to break free” (Michael Swaine, *US-Taiwan Security Cooperation: Enhancing Unofficial Relations* 2005). The Soviet Union appeared to be approaching or, according to some commentators, to have achieved strategic parity with the US and began taking a more active role in promoting socialist regimes in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua, and other poor countries in the Third World. Meanwhile, China’s threat to the international order seemed to American strategists to have subsided, as first signaled by the decline in Chinese support for the Vietnamese insurgency after 1972. This was partly due to the increasingly embittered Sino-Soviet split: As communist regimes or parties in the Third World and elsewhere shifted allegiance to Moscow, they became for that reason less attractive to Beijing, and the PRC began to de-emphasize the export of revolution (without abandoning loyal friends such Albania or North Korea). Through its 1971-1972 opening to China, “the United States was able to exploit this bilateral antagonism in a ‘romantic triangle’ that improved relations with both Moscow and Beijing while containing further escalation of the Cold War, facilitating withdrawal from Vietnam and a more modest military commitment in the Pacific,” (Qu Xing *Fifty Years of Chinese Diplomacy* 2000). The price of this strategic demarche was the first Shanghai Communiqué, which implicitly defined Taiwan as being in China’s legitimate sphere of influence while refusing to renounce the use of force to defend it (as China refused to renounce the use of force to

regain it). In the course of the decade that followed, Sino-American relations improved slowly but steadily in the face of ongoing Soviet strategic arms buildup and proxy initiatives in the Third World, “culminating in diplomatic recognition in January 1979, the conditions of which were set forth in the Second Communiqué” (Qu Xing Fifty Years of Chinese Diplomacy 2000).

After several years of leaning to China’s side, abandoning Taiwan, and focusing on efforts on countering Soviet advances during the tenure of US Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan in his 1980 presidential campaign criticized Carter’s China policy on behalf of Taiwan. This precipitated a post-election Chinese counterattack in which Beijing “not only adamantly refused any such adjustment, but focused strong criticism of the continuing US arms sales to Taiwan ,Which the State Department had hoped to allay by offering simultaneous arms sales to China, ”(Nancy Bernkope Tucker Strategic Ambiguity or Strategic Clarity 2003). The arms sale was resolved in August 1982 in the third of the three communiqués (1972, 1979, 1982), which have (along with the TRA) since defined Sino-American relations vis-à-vis Taiwan. Paragraph 6 was decisive, promising to reduce and eventually to end sales gradually over time “as the situation permits.” In Paragraph 7, American weapons sales were called a “legacy of history” that “after a period of time will lead to a final solution.” The August 17 communiqué came as a great shock to Taiwan, which had considered Reagan a “friend,” but Taiwanese anxieties were subsequently assuaged by oral issuance of “six assurances,” which promised that the United States:

Had not agreed to set a date for ending arms sales to the Republic of China.

Had not agreed to hold prior consultations with the PRC's regarding arms sales to the Republic of China.

Would not play any mediation role between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China.

Would not revise the Taiwan Relations Act

Had not altered its position regarding sovereignty over Taiwan.

Would not exert pressure on the Republic of China to enter into negotiations with the PRC. (Qu Xing Fifty Years of Chinese Diplomacy 2000)

In the context of a collapsed strategic triangle and a revived Chinese mini-triangle animated by the irrepressible economic upsurge of China and the expanded array of options available to Taiwan, Washington discovered new options but found no new strategic calculus to decide meaningfully among them. Taiwan, in contrast, made dramatic progress toward democracy, and seemed unlikely to pose threat to US strategic interests in the region that many anticipated from China (Michael Swaine, US-Taiwan Security Cooperation: Enhancing an Unofficial Relations 2005). On the other hand, China was clearly the largest and likely in due course to become the most powerful country in the most populous and dynamic region in the world, whose cooperation would become increasingly necessary to US strategic interests. The Clinton administration handled this situation with an ambivalence frequently rationalized among policy analysts. This refers to "the policy of keeping the ultimate goals of American foreign policy

vis-à-vis the Taiwan Strait issue deliberately shrouded in uncertainty: on the one hand, the United States refused to say what it would do in the event of a Chinese resort to force (even during the height of the 1995 to 1996 crisis, administration spokesmen refused to say that the United States would defend Taiwan if China attacked), ” (Lowell Dittmer: Bush, China, Taiwan: A Triangular Analysis 2005). On the other hand, what action would the US take if Taiwan declared independence was also undisclosed. The intended impact of this dual uncertainty was to deter advocates of a one-sided or violent solution to the Taiwan issue from pressing their case, thereby moderating behavior between the wings and leading to a peaceful resolution. In the wake of the Strait crisis, this policy came under critical reconsideration. Critics pointed out that it did not function as advertised, as partisans on either side of the spectrum were not deterred but sought to probe the limits of uncertainty: Taipei was first to do this with its salami-slicing approach to independence, and Beijing responded with its war games and missile shots (Lowell Dittmer: Bush, China, Taiwan: A Triangular Analysis 2005).

Although the immediate American response to the crisis was that China’s brinkmanship was more provocative and dangerous than Taiwan’s creeping independence, the Clinton administration, “bought into the Chinese argument that Lee Teng Hui’s tactics had so intolerably flustered Beijing that it had to draw a red line” (Qu Xing, Fifty Years of Chinese Diplomacy 2000). Thus, during the waning years of the 1990s, there was growing divergence between US public opinion, which continued to regard China as the major threat to peace, and the administration’s determination to muzzle Lee the

troublemaker and propitiate Beijing.

The turn of the millennium seemed at the outset to presage, “a new departure for the Taiwan triangle, as new leadership coalition took command in the United States, Taiwan, and eventually in China.”(Lowell Dittmer, *Bush, China, Taiwan: A Triangular Analysis* 2005). The election of George W Bush brought up a new foreign policy premised on unblushing acceptance and optimal exploitation of America’s premier position as sole superpower to, “reorient the rest of the world in directions compatible with US national interest.” (Lowell Dittmer, *Bush, China, Taiwan: A Triangular Analysis* 2005).

With regard to China and Taiwan, the underlying assumption was that Taiwan was good but small and of marginal utility, whereas China was bad but large and too powerful to attack or coerce. Thus, in the first 18 months, the Bush administration disavowed Clinton’s “Three Noes,” and allowed officials on both sides to visit each other’s buildings, and fly their national flags, and allow Taiwan’s leaders to conduct longer transit visits on US territory. China was clearly not a “strategic partner”; initially the Bush administration saw neither moral advantage nor strategic utility in collaborating with this emerging threat, as the new defense minister proposed a redeployment of US military forces from Europe to Asia and “the administration reinstated the Shultz strategy of relying on US allies on the Asian rim land while keeping China at bay”, (Qu Xing, *Fifty Years of Chinese Diplomacy* 2000). The China-Taiwan standoff was now defined in terms of strategic clarity. Bush promised in one of his first press conferences that the United States would do “whatever it takes to defend Taiwan” in the event of a Chinese invasion. This

new policy direction was brought to a head in April 2001 by the Hainan incident in south China and by an arms sales to Taiwan of unprecedented size and expense (estimated at US\$15-18 billion)(Gang Lin: The Taiwan Dilemma in US-PRC Relations 2005). Hainan was seized upon as a pretext for the US to discontinue further military cooperation with China. Chinese opposition to the arms sale resulted in concealing future such discussions from public scrutiny. Opposition to this downward spiraling relationship might have been anticipated from the business community, which continued to view the PRC as a promising economic frontier, but unlike Clinton's support of Taiwan on behalf of human rights, Bush's policy reorientation focused solely on security without directly impinging economic concerns, not giving the business community any opening to enter the debate.

Looking back on the cross-Strait relations of the past decade, changes in China-Taiwan relations have been determined by three important factors: Beijing's policy on Taiwan, Washington's cross-strait policy, and Taiwan's internal politics. By and large, it is mainly Taiwan's internal political environment that has complicated the situation (Gang Lin The Taiwan Dilemma in US-PRC Relations 2005). With the rise of the Taiwanese identity and its dominance in domestic elections, Taiwan's policy toward mainland China depends on the dynamic change of its internal politics. Therefore, Beijing's policy toward Taipei was more reactive than initiative during this period of time.

Options for U.S-China policy in solving the Taiwan issue on both sides

In solving the Taiwan issue, both sides of the Taiwan Strait pay much attention to the responses of the US government. When the United States strongly supports the “one China” policy, the PRC might speed up the pace of unification and even bring Taiwan “back to the embrace of the motherland” by force, if necessary. Yet if Washington encourages an independent Taiwan and urges Beijing to renounce “armed liberation” of the island, it is very likely that the KMT’s second generation will join the oppositionists (mainly the Democratic Progressive Party or the DPP) and declare independence. The position of the US on the issue will affect not only Chinese domestic policy, but also international opinion on the Taiwan issue.

Martin Lasater writes that, US decision makers have three major policy options to “solve the Taiwan issue: “(1) support for a specific outcome of Taiwan’s future (2) support for a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue by the Chinese themselves; and (3) total disengage from the Taiwan issue .” (Lasater 1989). The US is likely to continue its present policy of supporting the evolutionary process now underway in the Taiwan Strait without becoming more directly involved.

According to Martin Lasater(1989), this non-involved, ambiguous policy serves several interests for the United States. First, the policy enables Washington to pursue a “dual-track” China policy, allowing the US government to maintain friendly, cooperative relations with the PRC and keep close, nondiplomatic ties with Taiwan at the same time.

Second, the policy also allows American businessmen to profit in both China and Taiwan.

Third, it reduces China's threat to US interests in Asia. Fourth, it contributes to regional peace and stability by reducing tensions in the Taiwan Strait. Finally, the policy increases US credibility and prestige in Asia because most US allies in this region do not want Washington to strengthen PRC national power by promoting China's unification nor do they want a conflict in the area.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

In the fields of journalism and political science, the relationship between the media and policy-making has long been a major topic for research. This chapter covers related studies from two perspectives: the relationship between the press and policy making; and the role of editorials in newspapers. Terms such as the media, the mass media, the news media, and the press are inter-changeable in this study.

The Press and Policy-making

The acknowledgement of the media's political linkage provides a theoretical foundation for further discussions on the relationship between the media and policymaking. Denton and Woodward (1990) echo this view, saying that "the political world is not experienced firsthand. Instead, it is more the product of the impression that we gather from the vast information sources that incessantly sell, entertain, and inform". (145). Cobb and Elder (1991) call communication "the essence of policy" and claim that "public policy is part of an ongoing process of communication and feedback..." (P393). The main task of the press is to stand on the front line of the political world and inform its readers what the government has done and intends to do.

In the international arena, the news media not only serves as a source of information for policy-makers, but also a channel for signaling and causing disclosures among decision makers. Y. Cohen (1996) notes that the media link the public to policy-makers

by providing a forum of debate on foreign policy, creating a climate of opinion on international matters, and then reflecting this debate in public opinion to policy-makers. He further suggests that the media connect policy-makers to foreign governments by including policy-makers' attitudes "in editorial matters and by disclosing information which has the political effect of changing policy"(P8)

What impact do the media have on policy-making? Depending on the emphasis of their studies, researchers have found different influences of the news media on policy-making. The media's agenda-setting effect is one of them. This hypothesis was first proposed by B. Cohen (1963) and then elaborated by McCombs and Shaw (1977) and Weaver, Graber, McCombs, and Eyal(1981). These scholars believe that the media set up the topics of concern and conversation for the public because "issues that attract media attention attract the attention of the public." (Kenamer 1992 p6). Lederman (1992) also claims that since the beginning of this country, the press has always played a significant role in helping to set the social and political agenda.

Berkowitz (1992) points out the difference between agenda "setting" and agenda "building." He states that agenda-setting means "the effect of the media agenda on society." Agenda-building, however, "is concerned with a broader picture, where media and public agendas influence public policy" (p83)

This "agenda-building" effect of the press is accepted by government officials because they often use media content as an indication of public opinion. Linsky (1986) suggests that what becomes a high priority issue for the media may be a reflection of

what people are thinking about. An official said: “Those (issues) that were highlighted in the press and those that came up repeatedly at press conference were bound to get into the White House and get Presidential attention” (Linsky, 1986, p9). The press building the agenda, therefore, has become part of the routine at the White House.

Besides the agenda setting function, researchers such as Linsky (1986) and O’Hefferman (1991) also suggest that the coverage of the media tends to speed up the process of decision-making, to push the decision-making up to a higher level of officials, and even might lead to a change on policies. Whatever these effects of the media, Y. Cohen (1986) asserts that unless coverage and editorials comment are critical to government policy and all the news media stand on a “single solid line,” the influence of the press on decision-makers will still be limited.

Concerning the extent of press involvement in governmental affairs, Orren (1986) lists several perspectives: neutral transmitter, selective transmitter, interpreter and explain foreign policy largely as a “neutral transmission belt.” As participants in foreign policy, however, reporters question officials and criticize the governments on behalf of the public. While recognizing the power of government, B. Cohen views the press as “a political actor of tremendous consequence” (p268)

Chang (1994) emphasizes the perspective of the news media as participants. He argues that in the process of policy-making, the press serves not only as transmitter but, more importantly, as a critic of the policy established. Reston (1986) also believes that the news media engage in the making of American policy, and argues that the press is

more than an “observer” or “neutral reporter,” also serving as an “independent and active participant.” This situation seems to be particularly true in the formation of foreign policy because so much of these issues is considered news and so many reporters are viewed as experts on covering the State Department.

If the press is a participant, what is its relation to policy-maker? Is the press foe or friend? Does it serve as a watchdog or lapdog of government? Although researchers agree that the two institutions are closely related to each other, they have different views about the roles of the press in the formation of foreign policy-making. The following text will address various concept about the roles of the press in policy-making.

Chang (1992) proposes an “ad hoc” role of the press in US foreign policy making. The news media, thus, play a supportive role rather than an advocacy role in governmental actions. Gans (1989) shares the same view, arguing that the American news media tend to follow rather than lead American foreign policy. Therefore, news reports “tend closer to the State Department line on foreign news rather than to the White House line on domestic news” (p37). Research by the Gannett Foundation (1991) on the Persian Gulf War also concludes that the perspective of the press on the international scene has come from the seat of government and is driven by America’s economic and military interests.

Some researchers (e.g. Bullion 1983) hold another view that in authoritarian societies the press plays the role as a “lapdog” of the government. They argue that for political stability and economic development, the press must not interfere with the operations of

the government nor endanger its survival. Journalists in authoritarian societies therefore are required to firmly support the government and its policies. Such strict censorship eventually makes journalists become passive instruments for propaganda or tools for maintaining the government's power and advancing its policy. In other words, according to B. Cohen (1986), the media "are important devices in sustaining both the constitutional and political position at the center" (16)

In non-authoritarian societies, however, researchers perceive the news media as an adversary in the process of foreign policy making. The press see itself as a "fourth estate" and "watchdog" of the government (B. Cohen 1986). Entman (1989) points out an "accountability," or watchdog, standard of the press, saying that this standard requires that the media actively select the information they transmit, and that the news reflects not just any reality, but the specific data needed to hold the government accountable.

Some even believe that "the press should not make peace with the government" (Chang 1992 p7). Therefore, journalists actively and autonomously represent the public's right to know, monitoring the government's behavior, criticizing its wrong doings, advocating proposed policies, and sometimes even promoting their own policy proposals. Denton and Woodward (1990) use the Watergate scandal as an example to demonstrate the watchdog role of the press, arguing that the mass media help "prevent the erosion of legitimacy."

When these actions occur, an adversarial relationship between policy-makers and the press arises. B. Cohen (1986) describes the press and policy makers as "natural

enemies” because each side wants the other side to accept its own position and permit it to achieve its own preference. Eizenstat, who serves as an assistant for domestic affairs and policy for Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981, complains that the news media often focus on “anything that shows a problem for a president, a disagreement by a cabinet officer, a criticism by a member of Congress” (Linsky 1986, P54). He sees that press not as a means of communicating the president’s policy, but as “a useful testing device, sort of litmus test” for policy. Ithiel de Sola Pool uses two metaphors to describe the close but combative relationship of the news media and the government:

“The whole relationship of reporter and politician resembles a bad marriage. They cannot live without each other, nor can they live without hostility. It is also like the relationship of competing athletic teams that are part of the same league. It is conflict within a shared system(Orren 1986, p17)”

Orren (1986) points out that this hostile relationship might be affected by what Lionel Trilling once called the “adversary culture.” As a result, the press in the United States has gradually cultivated an antagonistic attitude toward American government and society.

Nevertheless, some researchers believe that the adversarial relationship between the press and policy makers merely results from different job-orientations of the two entities. For their interests, policy-makers have an interest in presenting their Sunday best to the public. Therefore, they want positive stories to be reported and negative sides of

government to be kept secret. News-people, however, want to fulfill the concept of the “people’s right to know.” They want to present exciting, highly visible stories. Digging inside governmental affairs, therefore, is inevitable for reporters. Edwin Diamond describes journalists and policy-makers as “professional wrestlers,” noting that “most of their interaction is governed by ritual and convention, although occasionally someone gets hurt almost by accident as a by-product of each doing their jobs in such close quarters” Orren(1986) hold the same opinion, saying that the adversarial relationship is only “a function of conflicting professional requirements of the two jobs”(p15)

Another perspective denies the all-powerful press theory. Reston (1977) recognizes that the press may have a great influence on domestic affairs; in the arena of foreign policy-making, however, the concept of the all-powerful press seems to be “out of date and wildly inaccurate” (p45). Chang (1992) explains that the foreign policy environment is a playground where only a few select players are allowed. This situation limits the role and power of the press in the game of international politics and decreases the news media’s capability as a watchdog over governmental actions.

Control of the news source is the major point for supporting this press manipulation argument. Sigal (1996) states that the news is basically what sources say, and a large proportion of the news originates from press releases. Some researchers, such as Hess (1994) and Berry (1990), claim that over half of the Washington reporters’ stories come from routine contact with government officials. Despite the adversarial relationship with government,” most news stories reserve for official sources, the first, the last, and many

of the words in between” (Denton& Woodward 1990 p154). This situation seems to limit the adverbial role of the press because “a reporter’s access to officials can vanish if the reporter becomes too critical of officials or their policies” (Berry, 1990) This outcome, as Berkowitz (1992) has pointed out, might make unwitting servant of government, “accepting news handouts and publishing them almost uncritically” (p95)

B. Cohen (1986) believes that the more the press sees itself as the watchdog of the government, “the more easily it lends itself to the use of others, and particularly to public officials whom reporters have come to regard as prime sources of news by virtue of their positions in government”(p28). Y. Cohen (1992) has the same concern, saying:

“By its control of the sources of information, with the implied threat that criticism of policies would lead to a less full flow to that correspondent, by co-opting all of us diplomatic correspondents into a cozy club of those in the know, I fear that the government did manage the news of our foreign policy (p20)”

Researchers of international relations and foreign policy often tend to discount the influence of the press in the process of policy-making, viewing the press as “no more than a pawn in the political game played by the powerful political authority and establishment in Washington” (Chang, 1992, p7). As Y. Cohen (1986) and Mosettig (1981) state, the leak and counter-leak are the best examples for demonstrating how the media have become the tools of diplomats to send signals and promote policies.

A study by Berry (1990), however, suggests that successful press manipulation and

execution stages because press manipulation comes only when policy fails. Berry further explains that the press is incapable of inciting a debate in the process of policy formulation and implementation. The press acts after the fact. In his opinion, journalists are only evaluators of policies because “they have knowledge and facts at the outcome stage” (118)

Some scholars criticize the notions of media’s adversarial role and media manipulation because neither fully illustrates the relationship between the news media and policy-makers. Linsky (1986) says the distinction between friend and foe fails to capture what actually happens. He argues that in reality the relationship is not as separable and immutable as the distinction implies because a journalist might be an ally on one story and an enemy on the next. In his study on the relationship between the New York Times and foreign policy-making, Berry (1990) finds that the independent role of the press in foreign policy is minimal and so is its manipulation by government.

Recent research upholds a mutual exploitation model of the press and foreign policy-maker (Alger 1993). This model is based on the theory that the two entities are locked in an interdependent and “mutually exploitive relationship” in which “both need each other to function, both use one another to succeed, and both change one another’s outputs in the process” (O’Hefferman, 1993, p199). Sigal (1973) argued that the press constitutes one network in the central nervous system of the government. The news media and the government have, therefore, become symbolic entities. Molotch, Protes, and Gordon (1987) call this interdependent relationship an ecological approach. They

claim that “media and policy are part of a single ecology in which systemic transfers of cultural materials cumulate and dissipate, often imperceptibly throughout a media- policy web”(p28)

Berkowitz (1992) points out the dynamic, rather than the static, role of the press. He said that in depending on the specific situation of their interaction, reporters and policy-makers sometimes are allies, and sometimes are enemies. Linsky(1986), therefore, describes this relationship as alternating between “stroking” and “poking.”

After reviewing several studies, Chang (1992) concludes:

- (1) As far as foreign policy reporting is concerned, the press is mostly supportive of US policy toward the countries involved.
- (2) The presentations and interpretations of foreign policy affairs in the press are generally reflective of the views held by policy-makers; and
- (3) US policy goals and presidential initiatives have a significant impact on how foreign policy news is reported.

Regarding the relationship between the US-China policy and news coverage on the policy, studies by Chang (1992) and Chen (1983) agree with the argument that the press take an “ad hoc” approach that follows the US-China policy. Their studies show that the press not only transmitted American’s China policy and signaled the diplomatic change in the 1970s, but also commented on the changed diplomacy.

The Role of Editorials in Newspaper

The second part of the literature review deals with the role of editorials in newspapers.

In his book, *Prestige Paper*, Ithiel De Sola Pool (1952) states that the first criterion for judging whether a newspaper is “prestigious” is to examine the paper’s editorials.

Sevellon Brown, editor and publisher of the *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, also argues, “There has never been a great newspaper without a great editorial page. There will never be an outstanding newspaper without an outstanding page” (MacDougall 1983)

De Blowitz once said that “one good comment is worth ten information” (p35).

Because of their persuasive power, editorials were separated from news stories in the nineteenth century and started providing another form of interpretation of current issues.

From that time on, editorials have represented the official stance of the newspaper. Louis Myons, retired curator of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University, in a 1970 address to the National Conference of Editorial Writers, says:

“If one needed an excuse for an editorial page, or to try to define the primary role of the page, I think it would be to express the tone of the paper. This is even more than the policy of the paper. It’s a chance to represent the institution itself... The tone reflects the character of the paper.” (Rivers, McIntyre&Work, 1988 p61)

In the early days, an anonymous “we” was often used in editorials to represent the paper as an institution. Paul Larocque, former editorial page writer of the *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, explains, “‘we’ ...stands for the editorial policy-makers of the newspaper.

Editorials are the opinions of the paper. And that is why we are unsigned” (MacDougall, 1973) although “we” is seldom used today, editorials remain the voice of the paper as a whole. The anonymity still indicates that the paper endorses what is said.

Waldrop (1977) further points out three characteristics of editorials. First, they are source of personality, of “conscience, courage, and convictions.” Second, editorials are a means of demonstrating that “a paper is a citizen of its community.” Third, they are “a leaven and a guide to the whole newspaper operation.”

In his studies on the future of editorials, Hynds(1993) concludes that the editorial page remains an essential part of daily newspapers because of their influences on agenda setting and policy-making. Flint (1960) explains that the editorial writers’ responsibility to the public, their leadership to the community and their support to democracy have contributed to the persistence of the editorial page.

Editorials also serve as the bridge between newspapers and the public. The editorial page provides information, identifies issues, and sets agenda for public opinion. As Eugene Patterson, then editor of the Atlanta Constitution, pointed out, the purpose of editorials is to stimulate thought and to make readers think about a particular viewpoint. He states:

...The longer I live the more I believe the value of the editorial is not so much to carry the day, to convince everybody, or to confront the good and convert the evil. To achieve these goals the average editors would have to be a lot smarter than he is. The true and lasting value lies in getting people to think for themselves, to talk and to argue, and

finally to decide whatever they want to decide (MacDougall 1973)

Editorials are used as a “political vehicle” as well. Rottenberg(1997) of The Quill contends that because of the effectiveness and prestige of editorials, they can not only bring insight to their readers, but also have the ability to “get things done.” MacDougall (1973) argues that editorials often generate action and sway readers to their point of view. Kaufman (1993) echoes MacDougall’s argument, saying, “Editorials...have the power to make or break government policy.”(p21)

After viewing the relationship between the press and policy-making from different perspectives, this study attempts to use the Taiwan issue as a case study to observe the position of the American press in US-China policy making and to examine whether the press serves as a supporter, an adversary, or in any other roles.

Chapter Four: Methodology

In this study, a content analysis will be conducted to examine the similarities and dissimilarities in attitudes between the press and US-China policy on the Taiwan issue. Berelson (1952), a pioneer in communication research, defines content analysis as a research technique for the “objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (p18). Budd et al (1973) echo this view, saying that “content analysis is a systematic technique for analyzing overt communication behaviors of selected communicators” (p2) Krippendorff (2002) notes that the purpose of this research method is to “provide knowledge, new insights, a representation of ‘facts’ and a practical guide to action (p21)”. He suggests that this technique provides “replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorff 2002 p21). Content analysis provides knowledge and insights through both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This study, therefore, employs the two types of analysis to provide fact and insights on those facts of the Taiwan issue.

In examining the relationship between the press and foreign policy making, Chang (1992) points out that the result of content analysis shows the “interaction between components involved and the context in which the interaction takes place” (P85). To illustrate the interaction between the mass media and foreign policy making, this study contains two different content analyses: government documents concerning US-China policy and editorials in US national and regional newspapers.

Content analysis involves counting. This study counts the sentences or complete thoughts in compound sentences that are supportive, neutral toward, and oppose the administration's foreign policy. Every news article on the subject was included. Each sentence got equal weight on the reasonable assumption that longer stories would be more important than shorter ones. Thus, the more important stories would be naturally weighted.

In this study, "US policy" will be determined through an examination of presidential documents. The main reason for this concern is that the president usually has the final say on foreign policy-making. Shaw and Stevenson (1994) state that "Chief executives usually are charged with responsibility for foreign affairs and when they travel or speak, their words readily lend themselves to national stories. For the moment at least, they are their nation," (p138; emphasis in original). Therefore, what is said by the president in such context is often what is done in the United States. This study includes three government documents: Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, the State Department and the American Foreign Policy.

Because of the unsettled status of Taiwan, "China policy" has become a complicated concept to diplomats. In this study, "China" refers to both the People's Republic of China on the Chinese mainland and the "Republic of China" on Taiwan. The ROC government had been recognized as China in the United Nations before 1971 and in the United States until 1979. Over the years, both the PRC and ROC government have insisted that there is only one China, of which Taiwan is a part. In this study the general term "China"

includes both the PRC and the ROC regimes. Nevertheless, the two governments are treated separately in the analysis because the press as well as American “China policy” might support one and oppose the other. To avoid confusing the two Chinas, this study uses “Taiwan” or the “ROC” to refer to the government on the island and employs “Mainland China” or “PRC” to refer to the government on the mainland.

Policy is defined as a statement (i.e. treaties, joint communiqués, and speeches to the Congress or other political conferences) made by the President. “US-China policy,” therefore, is seen as the nature of statements by the US president concerning American’s relations with both the PRC and ROC governments. It should be noted that not all foreign policies made or adopted by the president directly relate to the proposed research.

Policies regarding human rights, trade, and some other matters are excluded. This study examines government documents dealing only with the solution of the Taiwan issue from 1995 to 2005. It involves editorials from three US national newspapers: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Wall Street Journal*. The editorials of these national newspapers were examined and a total of 90 articles have been identified. In addition, 10 regional newspapers also were examined. The US was divided into five regions and with two newspapers chosen from each region. The “Top One Hundred Daily Newspapers in the United States According to Circulation September 30, 2005,” in the 2005 Editor & Publisher International Year Book was the guide for choosing these regional newspapers. A total of 35 editorials from the regional newspapers have been located. These regional papers include:

The East Coast:

The Boston Globe (MA)

The Baltimore Sun (MD)

The Middle West: The Chicago Tribune (IL)

The Minneapolis Star Tribune (MN)

The South:

The Houston Chronicle (TX)

The Miami Herald (FL)

The Rocky Mountains:

The Salt Lake City Tribune (UT)

The Phoenix Arizona Republic (AZ)

The West Coast:

The San Francisco Chronicle (CA)

The Seattle Times (WA)

Coding Scheme

Based on the research questions proposed earlier, the coding sheets ask the following questions specifically:

- (1) Year: Was there change in US-China policy and reporting for the Taiwan issue between the years 1995 to 2005?
- (2) Concern: Which alternative of the Taiwan issue was supported: (1) the

- independence movement or (2) one China policy?
- (3) Publications: How different/similar were the national newspapers in relation to regional newspapers in reporting the Taiwan issue? Did the press agree with the US China policy in that period of time?
 - (4) Political Party of Taiwan: Which political parties were mentioned: the KMT, DDP, or CPC?
 - (5) Arms Sales: What did the mention of arms sales to Taiwan indicate about the question of the Taiwan issue? Was it supported by the White House and the press?
 - (6) Treatment: What are the attitudes of the press and the US president toward the Taiwan Independence Movement, the one China policy; the two political parties on the island, or the PRC government?

To assess the treatment of the articles toward the related issues and subjects in this study, three possible responses were provided: “Supportive,” “Neutral toward”, and “Oppose”. “Treatment” is defined as a statement or a position of a newspaper or a president toward a particular alternative in the Taiwan issue or political party in Taiwan. For example, if a government document or an editorial regards the PC as the only legitimate government of all of China or re-affirms the position of American in the 1982 US-china Shanghai Communiqués, that document or editorial is coded as consistent with the one China policy. However, if an article emphasizes the security of Taiwan, welcomes the island to join international organizations, sees Taiwan as a sovereignty and portrays

unification as unlikely, or suggests that a “greater China” might endanger the balance in the East Asia, that article is coded as Supportive to the independence of Taiwan. “Neutral toward” means that the statement is either vague or supports both alternative.

Regarding arms sales to Taiwan, an article is coded “supportive” if it contains messages that arms sales to Taiwan can increase job opportunity in the United States, help Taiwan to upgrade its defensive ability, contribute to regional stability, or punish the PRC for its abuse of human rights and developing nuclear weapons. An article is coded “opposed” to the arms sales issues if it suggests that arms sales to Taiwan might jeopardize the friendship between Beijing and Washington or violate the spirit of the US China Joint Communiqués.

Concerning the treatment of the article and government documents to the political parties in Taiwan, if an article described the economic miracle or peaceful political reform in Taiwan, the article is coded as supportive to the ruling party. However, if a statement praises the DPP for speeding up the political reform or sympathizes with the arrest of separatists by the KMT, the article is coded as supportive to the opposition party. “Neutral toward” indicates that the statement lacks clear evidence of favor toward either party.

Unit of Analysis

The whole text of an article or a government document is the unit of analysis of this study. One common technique for conducting a content analysis is to use words as units of analysis. However, the treatment of an article toward a certain issue sometimes is revealed not by a particular word, but by the total context. Focusing on the word alone might lead one to miss the general tone of the whole article.

Theme was also used as the unit of analysis. According to Berelson (1992), theme is “a simple sentence, i.e. subject and predicate... an assertion about subject mater.” He further suggests that the theme is a useful unit of analysis because it allows the coder to take the context into consideration. Peterson (1996), however, holds an opposite opinion, saying that theme is a difficult unite of analysis because of it low reliability--a complex sentence can be broken down into assertions of capsule statements that can vary with different coders. For instance, an editorial in the *Chicago Tribune*, the article uses supportive words (e.g “really quite official” contact) and themes (e.g. “Political difference... apparently would be mostly set aside in the name of increased commerce”) to describe the recent relationship between Taiwan and Mainland China. The conclusion of the editorial suggests that “a successful marriage” of the two sides “seems far-fetched.” (Gang Lin and Xiaobo Hu, *US-China Relations and the Taiwan Factor* 1999). If we determine the treatment of this article toward the one China policy by looking at the word and theme, we might think that the editorial supports the unification

of Taiwan and China. If we examine the whole text, we get a different picture about the issue. In this type of situation, it might not be fair to code the article as a supportive of the one China policy. The nature of the subject matter seems to suggest that the most reasonable unit would be the whole text of an article. Nevertheless, the words and themes of each paragraph serve as indicators in this study.

Chapter Five: Content analysis and discussion

China-Taiwan Policy (Clinton VS Bush)

Clinton's New Approach

Because of Clinton's subordination of foreign policy to domestic issues in his first term, members of the Congress gained leverage on the president on Taiwan issues in return for their support of him on domestic issues. (David Lampton, *The making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy 2001*). Under congressional pressure, the White House announced a number of policy adjustments on Taiwan in autumn of 1994: (1) a change in the name of Taiwan's office in the United States from the Coordination Council for North American Affairs to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office,(2) further relaxation of limitations on mutual visits of high ranking officials between the United States, and (3) support for Taiwan's legitimate role in appropriate international organizations that do not require statehood(Gang Lin and Xiaobo Hu *US-China Relations and the Taiwan Factor 1999*). In 1995, the White House made a decision to allow Lee Teng-hui to make private visits to Cornell University because a majority in Congress resolutely supported Lee's trip.

Taipei's diplomacy, unbounded by the one China doctrine and capped by Lee-Teng-Hui's 1995 Cornell trip, exposed the weakness of US dual track policies and promoted another round of US policy adjustment in the second half of the 1990s. While the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait crises aroused American sympathies toward Taiwan's security, it also reminded Washington of the continuing centrality of the Taiwan issue in

US-PRC relations and highlighted the priority of a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue. After a policy review and heated public debates in the immediate aftermath of the Taiwan Strait crisis, the second Clinton administration adopted a policy of comprehensive engagement—rather than antagonistic confrontation and containment-- to seek Beijing's cooperation in regional and global security affairs. Under this strategic framework, Washington subtly adjusted its position on Taiwan affairs, despite its oral iteration of policy continuity (David Lampton, *The making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy* 2001). Washington discouraged Taipei's pragmatic diplomacy by setting new limitations on Taiwanese leaders' activities in the US right after the Taiwan Strait crisis. A transit visa for Vice President Lien Chan in early 1997 carried a restriction of meetings with American officials and public events. Similar limitation applied to Lee Teng-hui's transit stopover in Hawaii en route to Central American countries in September 1997.

Clinton's new approach to Beijing and Taipei was informed by the assumption that China could be remolded, or could evolve into a more agreeable nation by a more realistic US policy. (Shen Li Jun *China and Taiwan: Relations under Chen Shui-bian* 2003 p96). It reflected the thinking of certain liberal elements in the American-China policy community, who believed China was already on its way toward being another capitalist and democratic country (David Lampton, *The making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy* 2001). During his 1998 trip to Beijing, President Clinton asserted that he believed Chinese president Jiang Zemin held a vision to bring China into democracy in the 21st century. Around the same time, Beijing news agencies gave live TV coverage of

political dialogue and debate between the two leaders. It is worth noting that Clinton made a verbal announcement of the “three Noes” (“The US giving no support to the independence of Taiwan; no support to "one China, one Taiwan" or " two Chinas"; and no support to Taiwan's entry into any international organization with membership of sovereign states”. (Swaine “Decision-Making Regarding Taiwan 2000)

Clinton’s announcement was the first time for an American president to announce that the United States opposition to Taiwan’s entry into world organizations while require statehood-- the third “no” in Clinton’s “three Noes” formula. The 1994 Taiwan Policy Review indicated that the United States would support Taiwan’s participation in international organizations for which statehood is not required. While these two statements do not necessarily contradict each other, the latter seems less irritating to Taiwan, despite the fact that the US Department of State has not provided much assistance for Taiwan’s participation in nongovernmental organizations. From Taipei’s perspective, Clinton’s open assertion of the “three Noes” commitment suggest that Taiwan has been clearly denied its statehood by the most powerful political leader in the world.

Bush’s Taiwan Diplomacy

During the early months of the George W Bush administration, Washington regarded the PRC as a strategic competitor-- rather than a strategic partner of the United States. With Such policy orientation, Taiwan was considered a traditional ally of the US. In the wake of the April 2001, airplane collision over the South China Sea, President Bush

announced that US would help defend Taiwan.

Since September 11, 2001, however, the US policy toward the PRC has changed from “congagement to engagement.” (Yeong Kuang Ger, *From Congagement to Engagement: The changing American China Policy and Its Impact on Regional Security*, 2004). China is now seen as a “strategic cooperator” with the United States. The increasing cooperation of these two countries on the global antiterrorist war as well as on regional security issues, highlighted by three summits between President Bush and Chinese President Jiang during October 2002, as well as then Vice President Hu Jintao’s trip to the United States in April 2002, have sent a warning signal to Taipei, where Taiwanese lawmaker feared that Washington might sacrifice Taiwan for the sake of the PRC. Washington has developed closer relations with both Beijing and Taipei simultaneously since late 2001. Taiwan’s defense minister and first lady visited the United States during 2002, and military exchange significantly increased between the two parties. Furthermore, Chen Shui-bian’s stopover in New York in early November 2003 was unprecedented since Taiwan’s diplomatic relations with the United States were cut off in 1979.

Although the Bush administration tries to maintain a balanced approach toward both Beijing and Taipei and to encourage a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue, Beijing and Taipei have different expectations of the possible role played by Washington. Taipei fears that peaceful separation of Taiwan from the mainland is out of the question due to Beijing’s steadfast position. (Harry Handing, *The United States and China: Cooperation or Confrontation?* 2004). On the other hand, Beijing would consider peaceful resolution a

nickname for long-lasting separation, as Taiwan would not accept unification with the mainland in the foreseeable future, and Washington would not push Taipei to accept Beijing's one-China precondition for opening the cross-Strait dialogue. Since Beijing strongly opposes Taiwan's de jure independence and Taipei refuses to be unified by the mainland under the current conditions, maintaining the status quo become the best choice for Washington.

The US dual-track policies and tactics of strategic ambiguity have helped to maintain the status quo across the Taiwan Strait. However, unstable cross-Strait relations have prompted the Bush administration to adopt a policy of "strategic clarity." This strategy can be interpreted in two ways.

First, the United States will do whatever it can to help Taiwan defend itself against the mainland, even if the war is provoked by Taiwan's independence movement. The advantage of such clarity is to deter Beijing from using military means, but it may encourage Taipei to push the envelope and eventually cause a war between China and the United States.

Second, the United States makes it clear to Taipei that Washington's commitment to Taiwan's security is not a blank check. In Harry Handing's words, Washington makes only a "conditional commitment" to Taiwan's security. (Harry Handing, *The United States and China: Cooperation or Confrontation?* 2004). The advantage of this "clarity" is that it deters Taipei from legally declaring independence, but it also may encourage Beijing to attack Taiwan. Taiwanese leaders have repeatedly stated that Taiwan is an

independent sovereign state, separated from the mainland since 1999. One senior expert defined conditional commitment as policy clarity with operational ambiguity, because it is difficult to define what Taiwan independence really meant in the eyes of Washington. Washington's definition might be very different from what Beijing or Taipei perceives. Because Washington is more concerned with Taipei's unilateral change of the status quo from two years ago, conditional commitment has gained much more support than other options in Washington. Strategic clarity, operational ambiguity, conditional commitment, and aggressive diplomacy against any unilateral change of the status quo across the Taiwan Strait have "become watchwords for many policy makers and advisors in Washington." (Harry Handing the United States and China: Cooperation or Confrontation? 2004).

Content Analysis Findings

This Section intends to answer the research questions proposed earlier in Chapter One. This study will compare the differences and similarities between US government policy and newspaper editorial position on three subjects: The Taiwan independence issue, the three main political parties on both sides of Taiwan Strait, and US arms sales to Taiwan.

US Government Position on the Taiwan Issue and the Political Parties

The results of this study underscore the concept that the press is more a supporter than adversary of the Washington's policy-makers. Specially speaking, the American editorials seemed to echo the US government's position on the Taiwan issue: they supported the one China policy while holding a neutral attitude toward the Taiwan.

RQ1: What was American foreign policy toward China regarding the status of Taiwan between the years 1995 to 2005? Table 5.1 suggests that the one China policy was the US government's major concern in government documents regarding the status of Taiwan from 1995 to 2005. The Taiwan independence movement, however, was barely mentioned. No single document was devoted only to the discussion of that movement. The independence movement appeared in only one document which referred to both alternatives for Taiwan's future. Table 5.2 further indicates that the US government strongly supported the one China policy and showed no opinion on the independence movement. Table 5.3 shows that more than two-thirds of the related editorials supported the KMT, while only one-fifth held position on the DPP. US editorials strongly supported Taiwan's government but neither supported nor opposed the separatists on the island. The editorials' attitudes toward the CPC were different. Five favored the government in China, while 25 percent of the related editorials opposed that regime.

RQ2: What was the attitude of the American press toward the Taiwan independence movement, the two major political parties in Taiwan, and the CPC in Mainland China

from 1995 to 2006? Twenty-five editorials were categorized into “other issues.” meaning that a greater number of editorials discussed political situations, such as elections and political reforms in Taiwan, rather than the Taiwan issue. 46 of the 120 editorials devoted the discussion to either the one China policy or the independence movement. Among the 120 editorials, 87 discussed either the two major political parties in Taiwan or the Communist Party in Mainland China. More than two thirds of the related editorials strongly supported Taiwan’s government but neither supported nor opposed the separatists on the island. The editorials’ attitudes toward the CPC were different. 10 favored the government in China, while 25 of the related editorials opposed the government in China.

RQ3: What was the relationship between the American press and US-China policy in the case of the Taiwan issue? Did the press support or oppose the policy? Table 5.4 shows that the US government took a strong position on the unification of Taiwan and China and showed no opinion on the Taiwan independence movement. The attitude within the editorials was not so clear. Although most related editorials supported the one China policy, more than 29 percent of the editorials opposed this alternative. On the other hand, more than half of the related editorials neither supported nor opposed the Taiwan independence movement, but 15 of the editorials backed the movement. In spite of these various attitudes, the press collectively took a supportive position on the one China policy and held a neutral attitude toward the independence movement. In other words, the American press generally supported the US-China policy in the case of the Taiwan issue.

RQ4: What was the difference, if any, between the comments of American national and regional newspapers on the Taiwan issue? Table 5.5 shows that the positions of regional editorials on the issue were varied. The majority of regional editorials supported both alternatives, while more than a third of regional editorials opposed the one China policy and none of them opposed the independence movement. The table also suggests that national newspapers tended to echo the US government on the Taiwan issue: They supported the one China policy and neither supported nor opposed the independence movement. This indicates that national editorials, in this case, were more supportive than regional newspapers of the US-China policy.

RQ5: Did U.S. national and regional newspaper agree with each other's stances on the two main political parties in Taiwan and the CPC in Mainland China? In general, editorials supported the KMT, opposed the CPC, and neither supported nor opposed the DPP. Table 5.6 further provides a close comparison of national and regional editorial positions on the three parties. The findings indicate that both national and regional editorials strongly supported the KMT party, while taking a neutral attitude toward the opposition DPP in Taiwan.

These results, however, do not mean that national and regional editorials totally agreed with each other about the DPP. The table shows that 10 related national editorials supported the opposition party in Taiwan but that none of the regional editorials took any position on the island's separatists.

Concerning newspapers' treatment toward the CPC, while national editorials

displayed a neutral attitude toward the party, regional editorials supported the CPC, while one third of them opposed and two thirds of them neither supported nor opposed the party. On the other hand, 18 (about 70 percent) of the regional editorials opposed the CPC, while 3 (about 12 percent) neither favored nor opposed, and 4 (about 13 percent) of them favored the government on the mainland.

RQ6: Based on regional newspapers, which regions tended to support US government policy? Table 5.7 and Table 5.8 show that the newspapers in the five regions seemed to take a neutral position in writing about the Taiwan issue. Among them, newspapers on the East Coast tended to support US government policy more than those in other regions. In a manner similar to the government policy more than those in other regions. In a manner similar to the government documents (see Table 5.2), the editorials from the East Coast showed strong support for the one China policy and made no comment on the independent movement. Half the editorials from newspapers in the South opposed the one China policy and, simultaneously, supported the idea of an independent Taiwan. Moreover, newspapers on the East and West Coasts did not agree with each other on the Taiwan issue. While the newspapers on the East Coast supported the unification of Taiwan and China, the newspapers on the West Coast supported the unification of Taiwan and China, the newspapers on the West Coast seemed to remain neutral.

US Government and Editorial Position on Arms Sales to Taiwan

RQ7: What were the positions of the American press and the US government on arms sales to Taiwan? Was the issue of arms sales related to views on the status of Taiwan? Although both Beijing and Taipei think that arms sales to Taiwan serve as an important indicator for interpreting the US government, both the American press and the policy-makers seem to treat these two topics separately. From the previously mentioned findings, we found that the US government strongly supported the one China policy while the press held a neutral attitude toward the Taiwan issue.

If arms sales to the island are closely related to the Taiwan issue, the US government should oppose the arms sales issue and the press should also show little preference on that issue. Table 5.9 However, suggests that both the US government and the press exhibited strong support for arms sales to Taiwan. It is also interesting to note that regional newspapers actually had many more opinions than national newspapers on arms sales to Taiwan. Even though the PRC government sees arms sales to Taiwan as a violation of US China joint communiqués intended to make “two Chinas” or “one China, one Taiwan,” this study indicates that the US newspaper agrees with the government in the arms sale issue.

Summary

To conclude this chapter, the major findings are summarized as follows:

A: Both the US government and American editorials supported the one China policy, while hold no position on the Taiwan independence movement.

B: Both the US government and American editorials supported the KMT, while they neither supported nor opposed the DPP.

C: The US government supported the CPC, while American editorials opposed the CPC.

D: Both the US government and American editorials supported arms sales to Taiwan.

E. National newspaper tended to be more supportive than regional newspaper to the US-China policy on the Taiwan issue.

F. Among regional newspapers, editorials on the East Coast tended to support US government policy more than those in other regions.

Table 5.1 The Interpretation of the Treatment of government documents and editorials toward the Taiwan issue and the three political parties in Taiwan and China

Key: Govt Doc=government document

S=Support

O=Oppose

N= neither support or oppose

	One China Policy	Independence Movement	KMT	DPP	CPC
Govt Doc	S	N	S&N	N	S&N
Editorials	S	N	S	N	O

Table 5.2 Number of US Government Documents from 1995 to 2005 Holding various position on the Taiwan issue Key: One China= The One China policy Independence=the Taiwan Independence Movement

Taiwan Issue (N=15)		
Positions	One China	Independence
Support	13	0
Oppose	0	0
Neither	2	15

Table 5.3 Number of US government documents from 1995 to 2005 Holding various positions on Taiwan two major political parties and mainland China's CPC

Key: KMT=The Kuomintang, the nationalist or the ruling party in Taiwan; which supports the one China policy; DPP=The Democratic Progressive Party or the opposition party in Taiwan, support an Independent Taiwan CPC=Chinese Communist Party, which supports one China Policy

Political Parties N=9			
Positions	KMT	DPP	CPC
Support	4	0	5
Oppose	0	0	0
Neither	5	9	4

Table 5.4 Percentage of US government documents and US newspaper editorials from 1995 to 2005 holding various positions on the Taiwan Issue

Key: One= One China Policy

Indep= Taiwan Independence Movement

Taiwan Issue				
	Government Document N=15		Editorials N=102	
Positions	One	Indep	One	Indep
Support	12	0	89	15
Oppose	0	0	8	12
Neither	3	15	5	75

Table 5.5 Percentage of US national and Regional Newspaper Editorials from 1995 to 2005 holding various positions on Taiwan Issue

One=One China Policy, Indep=The Taiwan independence movement

Taiwan Issue				
Position	National Newspaper N=15		Regional Newspaper N=13	
	One	Indep	One	Indep
Support	7	3	6	7
Oppose	3	4	5	0
Neither	5	8	2	6

Table 5.6 Percentage of US National and Regional Newspaper Editorials from 1995 to 2005 Holding various positions on Taiwan's Two major Political Parties and Mainland China's CPC

Key: KMT=The Koumingtang, the nationalist or the ruling party in Taiwan, which supports the one China policy, or the unification of the Taiwan and China.

DPP= The Democratic Progressive Party, or the opposition party in Taiwan, which advocates an independent Taiwan

CPC=The Chinese Communist Party which support the one China policy

	Political Parties					
	National Newspapers N=32			Regional Newspapers N=25		
Positions	KMT	DPP	CPC	KMT	DPP	CPC
Support	19	8	0	18	0	4
Oppose	6	10	6	2	0	18
Neither	7	14	26	5	25	3

Table 5.7 Percentage of US Regional Newspaper Editorials from 1995 to 2005
Holding various positions on the One China Policy

One China Policy					
Newspaper Editorials by Region					
Positions	East (N=9)	Midwest (N=11)	South (N=4)	Rocky Mt. (N=2)	West (N=8)
Support	5	3	0	1	2
Oppose	0	2	2	0	1
Neither	4	6	2	1	5

Table 5.8 Percentage of US Regional Newspaper Editorials from 1995 to 2005
Holding various positions on the Taiwan Independence Movement

Taiwan Independence Movement					
Newspaper Editorials by Region					
Positions	East (N=9)	Midwest (N=11)	South (N=4)	Rocky Mt. (N=2)	West (N=8)
Support	0	3	2	1	2
Oppose	0	0	0	0	0
Neither	9	8	2	1	6

Table 5.9 Number of US government documents and US national and regional newspaper editorials from 1995 to 2005 holding various positions on US arms sales to Taiwan

Arms sales to Taiwan				
Position	Government document	National Newspaper	Regional Newspaper	
Support	3	2	7	
Oppose	0	1	0	
Neither	0	0	2	

Chapter Six: Textual Analysis and Discussion

The numerical analysis from previous chapter provides an overall picture of how US government documents and newspaper editorials treated the Taiwan issue, the three main political parties on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, and arms sales to Taiwan between 1995 and 2005. Numerical data alone, however, cannot fully provide answers to the research questions. This chapter, as a supplement to the last chapter, reports on a textual analysis meant to provide further insight into how these issues were treated and to compare the attitudes of the US-China policy maker and the American press on the Taiwan issue. This textual analysis seeks to examine the positions of US government documents and newspaper editorials on the following three topics: the Taiwan independence issue, the three political parties, and arms sales to Taiwan.

US Government and Editorial Position on the Taiwan Issue

Concerning the attitude of US government documents toward the Taiwan issue, the results from Chapter Five suggest that the US government supported the one China policy and held no position on the Taiwan independence movement between 1995 and 2005. The content of these documents supports this finding, showing that the one China policy had been the guideline of US foreign policy toward China during that period of time. During the Clinton presidency, Clinton Administration pointed out that the 1972 Shanghai communiqué, the 1979 Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations with the PRC, and the 1982 joint communiqué with Beijing are “three key documents” which framed US-China relations. These agreements “set forth fundamental

principles which have guided, and continue to guide, US-China relation. Our support for these principles has not diminished.” (American Foreign Policy, 1996 Document #304 “US Relations with China.” P153). The significance of the Shanghai Communiqués is that the United States asserts that there is but one China, that the government of the People’s Republic of China is the sole legal government of China, and that Taiwan is a province of China. The government in Washington “made clear that... we have no intention of pursuing a policy of ‘two Chinas,’ or ‘one China, one Taiwan,’... These principles of one China and a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question remain the core of our China policy” (American Foreign Policy, 1996 Document #304 “US Relations with China.” P154).

The Bush administration took the same position on the Taiwan issue. When Bush visited the PRC in 2002, he said, “The United States remains firmly committed to the principles set forth in those three joint communiqués that form the basis of our US-China relationship”(<http://www.china.org.cn/english/FR/25354.htm>). President Bush was also “pleased” by the increased contact between China and Taiwan. Bush said that this situation had “contribute to a climate of relaxed tensions,” and might further contribute to a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question. (Public Papers of the Presidents Administration of George Bush 2002 Feb “China-US Relations.” p131). In sum, three main themes stand out in US government documents from 1995 to 2002: (A) there is only one China of which Taiwan is a part; (B) the future of Taiwan should be decided by the

Chinese living on both sides of the Taiwan Strait and (C) the resolution should be peaceful.

Questions about Taiwan independence did come out in the President's 113th news conference on December 19th, 1991, when President Bush was asked whether the one China policy would be changed if Taiwan becomes independent, he responded that the question was too hypothetical. Then he restated the United States' position on the Shanghai Communiqué and said that the Taiwan issue was "for them Taiwan and China to decide over there and then we will see <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/74899.pdf>". Although the independence movement had become the major issue in Taiwanese politics and elections, the White House still kept a wait-and-see attitude in making a public endorsement or rejection the issue.

Findings from the previous chapter also suggest that US newspaper editorials generally supported the US government's one China policy from 1995 to 2005. Three main arguments for supporting the policy were found in these editorials:

(A) Both governments on Mainland China and Taiwan insisted on the one China policy. *The Chicago Tribune* asserted that "two Chinas will be reunited" because "Each [the KMT and the CPC] denies that there are 'two Chinas,' and each agrees that Taiwan is Chinese. The dispute is over who rules them, and as the generations that fought each in the 30s and 40s die off, that will become a pragmatic issue rather than the ideological and emotional one it is now" (May 5 1996).

(B) The recent contacts between both sides might speed up the pace of eventual unification after the first quasi-governmental negotiation, in early March 1996; the media started reporting the aftermath of that meeting and predicting the future relationships between the mainland and the island. The *Baltimore Sun* reasoned: “How far the present dialogue will lead is uncertain but the promotion of economic bonds between Taiwan and the mainland could create conditions that eventually would be favorable for the reunification of the acrimonious rivals in the next century.” (May 1 1996)

(C) A united China is for the benefit of both sides. *The Boston Globe* called unification “a move in the right direction,” writing: “The world will be a better place when Beijing and Taiwan make a reality of their long-standing assertion, in the face of deep conflict, that there is but one China. Necessity alone may drive them into it.” (Sep 1 1996)

An editorial in *The Seattle Times* titled “Two Chinas, One Interest?” reflected the same view: “If Big China and Little China each refrains from believing it alone has the answer for all who call themselves Chinese, what harm could that (unification) cause? It might even bring a bit of greater peace and prosperity to all.” (*The Seattle Times* Sep 26 1997)

While about 31 percent of the editorials supported the unification of China and Taiwan, nearly 26 percent expressed pessimism toward this alternative. The *Houston Chronicle* considered this unification to be an “unlikely marriage”. The article said, “It is difficult to see how the rigidity of the communist political system can ever truly foster the

needs of a capitalistic entrepreneurial system... A successful marriage of communism and authoritarianism even in the good cause of entrepreneurialism seems far-fetched.” (May 6th 1997)

The Boston Globe suggested that the panic in Hong Kong caused by the reversions to Maoist methods in Beijing had convinced “people on Taiwan that unification with the mainland would be a tragic error.” (Sep 19th 1996) Although the US newspapers’ stance tended to lean toward the one China policy, editorials did not oppose the independence movement. In fact, half of the related editorials took a neutral position on the movement, providing both positive and negative outcomes of the movement or suggestions for coexistence. *The Chicago Tribune* noted that in international affairs, Taiwan “operates like an independent country: “Beijing alone enjoys almost universal diplomatic recognition as the true government of China. But Taiwan, for all its diplomatic isolation, has plenty of trade partners and political allies, the most important being the United States.” (June 15, 1999).

The National Inquirer wrote that “most people in Taiwan may not want reunification, but they doubtless would like to remove the threat of military action.” Therefore, the historical Ku-Won Meeting might not be for unification but “a long-term arrangement both can live with.” (Nov 22, 1996). The Washington Post expressed the view that Beijing’s threats were not what they used to be. The paper, therefore, provided a “peace by piece” formula to solve the dilemma. (Jan 12, 1996). It said, “Twenty million people

to the mainland's billion-plus, Taiwan has drawn China into a web of personal contacts measured in the millions of visits and of business transactions measured in the billions of dollars...[Taiwan's economic power and political reform]expose China to a way of life prosperous and democratic beyond imaging now on the mainland. In this way does Taiwan's progress serve China's people as well as its own" (Jan 12, 1996).

Other newspapers, such as *The Wall Street Journal* held the similar attitudes on the China-Taiwan relationship. For example, it stated, "If Taiwan can maintain its delicately balanced separateness, it could actually find the mainland copying some of its practices without having fired a shot" (Feb 26, 1999).

Among the 120 editorials, 30 (about 40 percent) supported the independence movement. Arguments that these articles indicted that the separation of both sides was a matter of Taiwan's international status "deserves respect," as the Washington Post put it. Actually, many editorials used "two Chinas," "two nations," or "two countries" to describe the governments on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Many editorials even referred to the island as the "Free China" or "the Republic of China," the official title of Taiwan. This might indicate that the US press treated the two governments as equal entities rather than as one being subordinate to the other.

US Government and Editorial Positions on the Three Political Parties

Regarding the position of the US government on the main three political parties on both sides of the Taiwan Strait between 1995 to 2005, the finding from the previous chapter showed that the US government generally supported the CPC and the KMT and made little comment on the DPP. Both the Clinton and Bush Administrations viewed the US-China relationship as “healthy” and optimistic. Washington claimed that “although we [the US and the PRC] do not always agree on international issues, our dialogue has increased understanding of our respective positions and, we believe, reduced potential areas of disagreement between us.”(American Foreign Policy 2002) The Bush Administration praised what he called the PRC’s recent economic modernization and international openness. In the Welcoming Banquet in Beijing in 2002, Bush commented to the people of China: “Your new generation is to come. The expansion of your international relationships is also creating new possibilities for peace, prosperity, and world leadership, and the United States welcomes the enlarged role that China has taken in the world.” (Public Papers of the presidents, Administrations of George W Bush 2002 Feb 25, “Toast at the Welcoming Banquet in Beijing”. P139).

The White House, however, did not express a clear attitude toward the opposition DPP in Taiwan. Although the controversy surrounding the Taiwan independence movement had been acknowledged by the US government, the initiator of that movement, the DPP, was not mentioned in any US government document between 1995 to 2005.

As the previous chapter’s results showed, US editorials attitudes toward the three

political parties seemed to be more complex than attitude expressed in US government documents. The economic prosperity and the peaceful political reform in Taiwan resulted in US national newspapers supporting the KMT government on the island. On the other hand, the human-rights and political corruption in China brought no support from US national newspapers and many negative comments from regional editorials on the CPC government. *The New York Times* applauded Taiwan: “a distinctive Chinese society has emerged there, far richer and freer than its mainland counterpart”. (Jan 24, 1999). *The Wall Street Journal* expressed a similar viewpoint: “While the communist Chinese count it as an achievement to fill their roads with rusty bicycles, the Nationalists on Taiwan have made motor scooters and cars common-place. Per capita gross national product of more than \$3,500 on Taiwan is more than eight times that of communist China.” The Journal also noted Taiwan’s progress in politics: “It [Taiwan] is now legal to form opposition parties. Taiwan’s people are increasingly free to criticize their rulers and campaign for change...In sum, the KMT shows every sign of taking the track of democratic capitalism, which can only integrate Taiwan further with the developed world.”(Jan 24, 1999). Taiwan, hence, became “one of the liveliest, most rapidly liberalizing societies in Asia” and “one of the most powerful forces engendering liberal change in Mainland China.” As a result, “Taiwan’s place in world affairs can hardly be ignored.” (<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2000/05/20/36770>)

The portrayals of the CPC government on the mainland, however, were mostly negative. *The Seattle Times* stated “The Communists covet Taiwan. They envy its

productivity, which shows up the failures of their own system, and consider it a rebel province.” *The Boston Globe* echoed this view, describing the PRC as “a country that treats its people that treats its people so harshly.” *The Boston Globe* writes: “The [CPC] regime controlling mainland China is as bizarrely corrupt as any dictatorship in the world. It keeps its authority through the power of the gun. China’s human-rights abuses, mischievous arms trading and building of Hong Kong are cynically manipulative. Its desecration of Tibet is shameful”. (The Boston Globe May 14, 2003).

US editorials’ treatment of the opposition DPP in Taiwan was generally neither supportive nor in opposition. In fact, regional newspapers paid little attention to the DPP between 1995 and 2005. Only a few regional editorials contained information about this political party, although they did show their opinions about the independence movement. Most related US national editorials, on the other hand, showed a mixed attitude. The article “PAC Rim Watch; Taidu Power” in *Los Angeles Times*, for example, predicted the failure of the DPP in the 2000 elections, and praised the party’s contributions to Taiwan’s political freedom, it said: “The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the main opposition party, has been campaigning on an independence platform, but it lacks the resources and clout of the ruling party. The Kuomintang Party (KMT) is expected to win 60% of the 225 assembly seats... Whatever the outcome, the DPP’s bold decision to take up the independence theme has encouraged free speech, as well as openly challenged Taiwan’s sedition laws.” (Los Angeles Times, Dec20th, 2000).

The Wall Street Journal also had differing views about the DPP. In one editorial, the

Journal seemed to paint a positive picture: “DPP rallies have proven to be lively affairs, featuring peddlers of sausages that are legal and books that aren’t and speeches criticizing the president and attacking corruption in the KMT” (June 7th, 2000).

In another editorial, however, the Journal saw oppositionists to be unrealistic on pursuing independence rather than building a better Taiwan: “They [DPP members] think Taipei traffic will be improved only if Taiwan declares independence.” For most voters, this election, the crucial issues are such drab but immediate matters as housing development, pollution and education... For Taiwan’s sake, it’s time the DPP quit tinkering with ideology and started bidding for power” (June 7th, 2000).

The results of the 2000 elections in Taiwan seem to have had some influence on how the US press viewed the DPP and Taiwan issue. In the election, the oppositionists, with their pro-independence agenda, garnered 28.2 percent of the popular vote and won 19 country magistrate positions. The KMT retained the majority, but results were enough to precipitate the squabble with the KMT. According to *The Wall Street Journal*: “The opposition Democratic Progress Party overcome a stacked deck and scored impressive victories... The DPP on Saturday proved that it can compete and win, even in an election system designed to perpetuate the ruling party’s dominance. Now the opposition’s elected officials have to prove they can govern the countries they won present fresh policy initiative in the legislature... So DPP politicians in these powerful posts not will have a big say in the lives of... Taiwan’s 20 million citizen”(August 2, 2000).

In the 2000 elections, however, the DPP received only 23.9 percent of the popular vote. These results were seen as a failure of the separatists. This meant, as *The Wall Street Journal* pointed out, “the KMT has more than enough seats show a mandate for the Nationalists’ old hopes of eventual reunification on Taipei’s term—with Mainland China... This is enough to scotch a move for independence anytime soon.”

(http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/wsj/access/36540559.html?dids=36540559:36540559&FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:FT&date=Dec+7%2C+1998&author=By+Russell+Flannery&pub=Wall+Street+Journal&edition=Eastern+edition&startpage=1&type=8_1984&desc=Nationalists+Gain+In+Taiwan+Vote+China+Row+Delayed) In an editorial titled “A strong Vote for One China.” The New York Times held the similar attitude. It said, “The vote itself makes clear, that attention is best based on the premise of eventual reunification between Taiwan and the mainland... the Kuomintang won more than 70 percent of the vote. That margin testifies to public support for the Kuomintang’s “one China” doctrine, holding that eventual reunification with the mainland is inevitable and that Taiwan’s independence is inconceivable. The main opposition party, the Democratic Progressive, openly backed independence, and lost support” (May 20th 2003).

Although we do not have enough evidence to support the argument that US newspaper editorials were affected by the outcomes of the elections in Taiwan, we certainly cannot overlook the influence of the vicissitudes of politics on the press.

US Government and Editorial Positions on Arms Sales to Taiwan

This third part of this chapter deals with US government and editorial positions on arms sales to Taiwan. Table 5.8 in Chapter Five suggested that the US government fully supported such sales. While Beijing was criticizing arms sales to Taiwan the one China policy the Clinton Administration argued that US arms sales to Taiwan are: “Conducted within the framework of the August 17, 1982 communiqué, do not block and are not intended to block, evolution process toward a peaceful resolution of Taiwan question.”(American Foreign Policy 1998 Document #318 Issues in US-China Relations).

During the controversy of selling F16s to Taiwan, Clinton pointed out two political goals for these sales: peace and stability in the area through mutual restraint. He claimed that arms sales to Taiwan “will help maintain peace and stability in an area of great concern to us, the Asia-Pacific region, in conformity with our law.” He further stated, “The US has provided Taiwan with sufficient defensive capabilities to sustain the confidence it needs to reduce these tensions. That same sense of security has underpinned Taiwan’s dramatic evolution toward democracy.”

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2000/10/15/57373>)

Like U.S. government documents, American editorials support arms sales to Taiwan. The F16 deal was expected to bring about \$6 billion and 10,000 job opportunities to the United States. *The Wall Street Journal* analyzed the issue: “Selling F-16s to Taiwan is not just a good deal for General Dynamics; it makes good sense for

regional stability and enhances Taiwan's chances of consolidating a Chinese democracy that could one day be a model for the mainland... It never made sense that the West was happy to sell arms to totalitarian China but wouldn't take orders from democratizing Taiwan" (The Wall Street Journal, Sep 9, 1998).

The Los Angeles Times also agreed that arms sales to Taiwan should be encouraged, it said: "Taiwan wants the new aircraft to replace its aging air Force fleet of F-5Es and F-104s to help maintain stability in the Taiwan Strait... Beijing has repeatedly said it will never renounce the use of force against relatively tiny Taiwan. Even so, it has acquired Russian-made SU27s and MiG31s and plans to co-produce Mig31s in China. The threat is always there" (August 22, 2002).

Although arms sales to Taiwan "have elicited howls from Beijing," as The Chicago Tribune described, for violating the 1982 Shanghai Communiqué, most editorials supported Clinton's arms sales decision. *The Wall Street Journal* noted that "outraging China is something Mr. Clinton has always reluctant to do, and it is good he's tweaking Beijing's tail over something worthwhile"(The Wall Street Journal, Sep 9, 1998). *The Providence Journal* echoed this viewpoint: "Taiwan has long sought to bolster its force of 1960s-era F-104 Star fighters, but the Clinton and Bush administration mistakenly hesitated to supply the F16s for fear of upsetting the mainland Chinese and heightening tension in the area... We are pleased that President Bush has responded appropriately. It would be foolish for us to continue placating the Chinese government by denying F-16s to Taipei, while Beijing proceeds with Beijing proceeds with the buildup

and modernization of its own forces” (The Providence Journal, Sep5th 2002 Editorials on File P1078-General Dynamics).

The Miami Herald and *Chicago Tribune*, however, suggested using arms sales to Taiwan as a punishment for the PRC’s buying weapons from the former Soviet Union and for its human-rights abuses. *The Chicago Tribune* noted, “Perhaps the US will have to make more gestures toward Taiwan similar to the former President Bush’s approval of the sale of military jets to Taipei” (The Chicago Tribune, Sep 16, 2002).

Summary

If we think of the quantitative approach as a way of presenting facts to readers, qualitative analysis should be a way of presenting insights about those facts. A content analysis should encompass both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Numerical data in this study gave us the “facts” of US government and newspaper editorials’ attitudes toward the Taiwan issue, the three main political parties, and arms sales to Taiwan. The textual analysis in this chapter provided us a better understanding of what those numerical data really mean and the strength of arguments and opinions in the documents and editorials. The findings from Chapter Five suggested that the treatments of US government documents and editorials neither supported nor opposed the independence movement and the DPP. The textual interpretation suggests that this neutral treatment not only implies “no opinions” or “neutral description” about the movement or the DPP, but also represents a position of both strongly supportive and strongly opposed arguments.

This analysis shows, similarly to the results of the numerical approach, that the

US government and American editorials agreed with each other on the Taiwan issue from 1995 to 2005. Both supported the one China policy and neither supported or opposed the Taiwan independence movement. Regarding the position of the White House and the US press on the three political parties, the analysis shows that these two entities favored the KMT and held neutral position on the DPP. However, the US government and press disagreed with each other on their treatment of the CPC. While Washington supported the CPC, most American editorials opposed the regime in Mainland China.

Chapter Seven: Summary and Conclusion

The Issue and the Question

The Taiwan issue was an unexpected byproduct of World War II and the subsequent victory of Communist forces on mainland China. Pearl Harbor in 1941 brought the United States into the war in Asia as an ally of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's China against Japan. Although the KMT defeated the Japanese at the conclusion of World War II, the rapid growth of the Communists forced the Nationalists flight inland. This diminishing of Nationalist power made the US government gradually shift its support from Chiang's China. The end of the Chinese civil war in 1949 then divided China into two parts: the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland and the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan.

The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, however, changed the situation in East Asia. In order to link an anti-communist chain from Japan to the Philippines, Washington suddenly valued the geopolitical importance of Taiwan and built up a long-term and full-support relationship with the KMT as a fundamental principle of US China policy.

This US-ROC relationship lasted for 20 years-- until Nixon and Kissinger visited China in 1971. To normalize Sino-American relations, Nixon signed the Shanghai Communiqué in the next year, acknowledging that there was only one China of which Taiwan was a part. This action served as the beginning of the new one China policy. From that time, the one China policy has been used by the White House as the guideline of the US-China relationship.

The KMT government on Taiwan also has insisted on the one China policy, expecting that someday the Nationalists would, recover the lost territory and “save their compatriots in the mainland from communists’ rule.”

(<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2000/09/15/53391>). A movement for Taiwan’s independence has been nurtured since the 1950s. Advocates and supporters were often jailed or killed for sedition. This forced the movement to go underground. In September of 1986, 112 oppositionists illegally organized the Democratic Progressive Party, openly proposing an independent Taiwan. This action brought the Taiwan question to the surface and called people’s attention to the issue.

Concerning Taiwan future, three alternatives present themselves. First, Taiwan might retain its status quo as in a de facto independent situation, or, it might merge with Mainland China. It also is possible that the island might become an independent country. In solving the problem, both sides of the Taiwan Strait paid much attention to the responses of the US government. If the United States strongly supported the one China policy, the KMT and the CPC might speed up the pace of unification. If the White House supported an independent Taiwan or held an ambiguous attitude toward the issue, that might encourage the separatists in Taiwan to declare independence. Therefore, the position of the US government on the Taiwan issue became an important factor in resolving the Taiwan issue.

Regarding the relationship between the press and policy-makers, several theoretical notions have been posited by scholars to explain the relationship. Among

these notions are ad hoc, watchdog, adversary, and mutual exploitive, were discussed in the literature review.

Chang (1992) defines the “ad hoc” role of the press as when the media acts as a supporter of government decisions. Bullion (1993) further points out the “lapdog” concept of the news media in authoritarian societies. Both argue that in authoritarian societies, for political stability and economic development, the press must not interfere with the operations of the government nor endanger its survival, but has the responsibility of firmly supporting government policies. Such strict government censorship eventually makes journalists become passive instruments of the state. Cohen (1973) and Lederman (1992), however, propose an opposite notion. They argue that in non-authoritarian societies, the mass media serve as a “watchdog” of government. Journalists, thus, actively and autonomously represent the public’s right to know and monitor the government’s behavior. Some believe in the media’s “adversary” role. Cohen describes the press and policy-makers as “natural enemies” because each side wants the other side to accept its own position. Recent research upholds a “mutual exploitation” model of the press and the foreign policy-makers. Alger (1998) and O’Heferrnan (1993) argue that the two entities are locked in an interdependent and “mutually exploitive relationship,” in which “both need each other to function, both use one another to succeed, and both change one another’s outputs in the process” (O’Heffernan 1993 p188)

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the US-China policy-maker (mainly the president) and American newspaper editorials on the Taiwan

issue. As the President of the United States is charged with responsibility for foreign affairs, presidential documents from the American Foreign Policy and State Department were examined, as well as nine documents dealing with the Taiwan issue to see what mixture of press roles-- ad hoc, watchdog, adversary and mutual exploitative--apply to this situation.

To compare differing opinions, between the national media and government positions on the Taiwan issue, three national newspapers were selected for study and a total of 28 related editorials written during that time period were located. Based on the research questions, a coding sheet was designed. Attitudinal questions encompassed the positions of US government documents and American editorials on the one China policy, the Taiwan independence movement, the three major political parties in Taiwan and Mainland China, and US arms sales to Taiwan. The unit of analysis was the whole text of a government document or an editorial.

The Findings

To examine the relationship between the mass media and the US-China policymaking, editorials from three US national newspapers were analyzed in this study. The results of this study suggest that the US government strongly supported the one China policy. Concerning Washington's attitude toward the three main political parties on both sides of Taiwan Strait, the White House tended to support both the KMT and CPC regimes while

taking no position on the opposition DPP in Taiwan. In dealing with arms sales to Taiwan, the US government strongly supported this issue.

As for the newspaper editorials, the findings also show that, in general, US editorials supported the one China policy and held a neutral position on the Taiwan independence. However, the attitudes of national editorials were not quite the same. About half of the related national editorials supported the one China policy, while over half of the national editorials neither supported nor opposed the independence movement.

Regarding editorials attitudes toward the political parties, both national and regional newspapers were supportive of the KMT and, in general, neither supported nor opposed the DPP. Their positions on the CPC, however, differed. About 71 percent of the national editorials held a neutral attitude toward the CPC, while about half of the regional editorials were opposed to that party. Similar to the position of the White House, both national and regional editorials were strongly supportive of arms sales to Taiwan.

Conclusion

American policy towards the China-Taiwan issue is, along with its divided allegiance to Israel and its oil-rich Islamic neighbors in the Middle-East, one of the most sensitive, potentially volatile, and yet also stubbornly insoluble problems that has plagued Washington since World War II, surviving even the rise and the fall of the Cold War. In their policies toward Taiwan, both Washington and Beijing have been faced with a dilemma over the last three decades. For the United States, the dilemma is that it cannot

recognize diplomatically both China and Taiwan and has to make a reluctant choice between the two parties. For China, the dilemma is that it cannot use force to liberate Taiwan without jeopardizing its existing relations with the US. As a compromise, the United States switched its diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the PRC while maintaining substantial unofficial relations with Taipei and adhering to the principle of peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. At the same time, Beijing advocated peaceful reunification of China while retaining military means as the last resort to prevent Taiwan from moving toward *de jure independence*, particularly in the wake of the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis.

Early research on the press and foreign policy primarily concerned the press's role in the foreign policymaking and administration. Bernard Cohen's path breaking study, "The Press and Foreign Policy, explores "the consequences, for the foreign policy making environment, of the way that the press defines and performs its job, and of the way that its output is assimilated by the participants in the process. As recorders of events, reporters inform, interpret, and explain foreign policy largely as a "neutral transmission belt." As participants in foreign policy, reporters question officials and criticize the government as representative of the public. While recognizing the power of government, Cohen views the press as "a political actor of tremendous consequence." (Bernard Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy*, 1963 P4)

Other studies reverse the direction. They focus more on how the Washington foreign policy establishment influences, even controls, what the press points on the paper. One

case study on foreign policy, “The US Press and Iran” by William Dorman and Mansour Farhang, raises a series of questions asking why the press confronted to official Washington in its reporting on Iran. Their answer identifies a shared ideology as the principal culprit. In essence, the press bought Washington’s foreign policy because it was too uninformed about Iran to envision alternatives.

Comparing the above results, we find that the attitudes of the US government and the editorials on the Taiwan issue generally agree with each other. This challenges the adversary concept of the press and policy makers. Although we do not have evidence to conclude a cause and effect relationship of the two entities from this study, the findings seems to lean toward the notion of the press as supporter or, a mutual exploiter of foreign policy-making in this one case.

Because both the KMT and the CPC are campaigning for a united China while the DPP is working toward an independent Taiwan, this study assumed that if an organization supports the one China policy, it might also support the KMT and the CPC and oppose the DPP. On the other hand, if an organization supported the Taiwan independence movement, it might also have supported the DPP and oppose the KMT and the CPC. The results of this study show that the US government’s position echoes this assumption but the American press does not. From the above summary, the US government is supportive of the one China policy and generally so toward both the KMT and the CPC regimes while taking no stance on the independence movement and the DPP.

The positions of the American press on the one China policy and the three political

parties, however, differed from that assumption. Although US newspaper editorials took a neutral attitude on the one China policy, the editorials were supportive of the KMT government but opposed to CPC rule. This might suggest that, in this case, the White House maintained friendly relations with the CPC and supported its one China policy. US newspaper editorials, however, took their positions depending on the individual issue. Therefore, the press's editorial treatment of the US-China policy appears to be unrelated to its positions about the governments on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

In dealing with the relationship between arms sales to Taiwan and the one China policy, we examined another of the assumption: because arms sales to Taiwan are seen by the CPC as a violation of the Shanghai Communiqués and by the KMT as support of Taiwan's sovereignty, if the US government or the American press supports the one China policy, it might oppose arms sales to Taiwan and the Taiwan issue are two separate things, at least from the viewpoints of the American press and foreign policy-makers.

Limitations and Suggestion for further Study

Some limitations in this study need to be noted. The Taiwan independence movement was initiated in the 50s. However, because of the authoritarian rule on the island, the Taiwan issue was suppressed until the DPP made it a political issue in recent years. Moreover, because the Taiwan and Taiwan independence movement has not yet caught much attention from the US government and the American press, the collected government documents and editorials were relatively small.

This study simply questioned the role that the American press played in US-China policy-making between 1995 and 2005. Was the American press a supporter or an adversary of the American policy-makers? To explore this relationship, it would be interesting to examine how the three major political parties on both sides of the Taiwan Strait use the press, if they do, lobbying for a change or for the maintenance of the one China policy, or how the US government uses the press to deliver its position on the Taiwan issue. Even if the research hypothesis can be proven, a number of questions still remain. Why is the press a sun and not a moon in reporting foreign policy, even though it does illustrate the dark outcomes of policy? In other words, why does it accept the assumptions and policies of the government? How does the reporting of domestic policies differ from that of international politics? Therefore, further study is also needed in understanding the press's role in foreign policymaking and administration.

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Appendix One: Important events related to Taiwan-US-China (1995-2005)

- June 1995 Taiwan's president visits U.S
- March 1996 Tensions mount in the Taiwan Strait.
- March 1996 Taiwan holds first direct presidential election.
- June 1998 President Clinton outlines "three no's" policy on Taiwan.
- January 1999 Furor over allegations of Chinese espionage.
- November 1999 U.S. and China reach trade agreement.
- March 2000 Opposition candidate wins Taiwan's presidency.
- March 2001 Bush administration drops "three no's" policy on Taiwan.
- April 1, 2001 U.S. Navy surveillance plane collides with Chinese fighter jet.
- April 24, 2001 Bush approves arms sales to Taiwan.
- May 2001 U.S. visits anger Chinese.
- April 1, 2001 U.S. Navy surveillance plane collides with Chinese fighter jet.
- April 24, 2001 Bush approves arms sales to Taiwan.
- September 2001 China and Taiwan cleared to join WTO.
- March 2003 Change in Chinese leadership.
- March 2004 President Chen Shui-bian wins a second term by a slender margin.
- November 2004 Court rejects opposition challenge that President Chen Shui-bian won March's presidential election unfairly.
- January 2005 Aircraft chartered for the Lunar New Year holiday make the first direct flights between Taiwan and China since 1949.
- March 2005 Taiwan condemns a new Chinese law giving Beijing the legal right to use force should Taipei declare formal independence.
- April 2005 National Party (KMT) leader Lien Chan visits China for the first meeting between Nationalist and Communist Party leaders since 1949.
- June 2005 Reform requiring future constitutional amendments to be put to a referendum arouses China's concern that it will be easier for activists to promote moves towards independence.
- July 2005 National Party (KMT) elects mayor of Taipei Ma Ying Jeou as its new leader.
- December 2005 - Opposition KMT triumphs in municipal elections. The result is interpreted as a mid-term vote of no confidence in President Chen Shui-bian.
- February 2006 Taiwan scraps the National Unification Council, a body set up to deal with reunification with the mainland. China says the decision could bring "disaster".
- June 2006 Under pressure over corruption allegations against a family member, President Chen cedes some of his powers to the prime minister.
- October 2006 President Chen survives an attempt by parliament to force a referendum on his rule - the second in four months. His opponents and supporters take to the streets.

Appendix Two: The List of the selected newspaper article

New York Times

1. U.S. Says No to Overnight Stay for Taiwanese Leader May 4, 2006, Thursday
By JOSEPH KAHN
2. Taiwan Moves Closer to Mainland, Pulled by Forces That Molded Its Mountains
April 18, 2006, Tuesday By INGFEI CHEN
3. Taiwan's Leader Defies Beijing's Warnings February 28, 2006, Tuesday
By KEITH BRADSHER
4. Taiwan Chief Seeks More Arms, Not Better Ties to China January 2, 2006,
Monday By KEITH BRADSHER
5. Taiwan Leader's Agreement on Recount Seen as Shrewd Politics March 24, 2004,
Wednesday By KEITH BRADSHER
6. Support for Chen Muted Among Taiwanese on Mainland March 20, 2004, Saturday
By HOWARD W. FRENCH
7. Taiwan Voters Weighing How Far to Push China March 18, 2004, Thursday By
JOSEPH KAHN
8. U.S. Asks China to Trim Threat to Taiwan February 12, 2004, Thursday By
JOSEPH KAHN
9. OBSERVATORY February 10, 2004, Tuesday By HENRY FOUNTAIN
10. U.S. Official, in Beijing, Questions Taiwan's Referendum Plan
January 31, 2004, Saturday By CHRIS BUCKLEY
11. Taiwan Close to Reaching a Lofty Goal January 11, 2004, Sunday
By KEITH BRADSHER
12. Taiwan's Strategic Miscalculation December 10, 2003, Wednesday By
JOSEPH KAHN
13. Beijing Softens Stance Against Taiwanese Law November 29, 2003, Saturday
By KEITH BRADSHER
14. Taiwan's Leader Campaigns, With a Stop in U.S. October 31, 2003, Friday
By KEITH BRADSHER
15. Still Wary, Taiwan Split Over Change On Mainland November 16, 2002,
Saturday By KEITH BRADSHER
16. Has China Become an Ally? October 25, 2002, Friday By KENNETH
LIEBERTHAL
17. A Tale of Two Chinas August 12, 2002, Monday By BEI LING
18. A Distracted China Issues Censure of Taiwan Chief's Remarks August 6, 2002,
Tuesday By CRAIG S. SMITH
19. New Pentagon Report Sees Rapid Buildup by China By JAMES DAO July 13,
2002
20. China Breaks the Ice to Offer Political Talks With Taiwan February 25, 1998,
Wednesday By EDWARD A. GARGAN

21. Taiwan Vows It Won't Be Absorbed July 1, 1997, Tuesday LESLIE WAYNE
22. China Asserts Taiwan's Ties To Guatemala Led to Veto January 12, 1997,
Sunday By PATRICK E. TYLER
23. Taiwan's Overtures to U.S. Backfire November 9, 1996, Saturday
By EDWARD A. GARGAN
24. Beijing Now Sees Stronger Trade, Not Intimidation, as the Key to Quelling
Taiwan Separatism October 12, 1996, Saturday By PATRICK E. TYLER
25. Taiwanese Are Champions Of Little League a 17th Time August 25, 1996,
Sunday By TARIK EL-BASHIR
26. On Each Palette, a Choice of Political Colors August 4, 1996, Sunday
By ANDREW SOLOMON
27. On My Mind; Washington Confronts China February 6, 1996, Tuesday
By A. M. ROSENTHAL
28. On My Mind; The Words Not Spoken February 2, 1996, Friday
By A.M. ROSENTHAL
29. China-U.S. Ties Warm a Bit as China-Taiwan Relations Chill November 18, 1995,
Saturday By PATRICK E. TYLER
30. On My Mind; Yes, There Is A Taiwan November 28, 1995, Tuesday By A. M.
ROSENTHAL

Washington Post

1. Secret Taiwan Fund Sought Friends, Influence Abroad
John Pomfret Apr 5, 2002
2. Taiwan Sets Self-Defense Objectives Edward Cody May 21, 2005
3. U.S. Aims to Improve Military Ties With China Edward Cody May 16, 2005
4. Hi, I'm in Bangalore March 21, 2001, Wednesday By MARK LANDLER
5. White House Reveals Plans For New Taiwan Arms Sale March 17, 2001, Saturday
By JANE PERLEZ
6. Backing Beijing Into a Corner March 12, 2001, Monday By TREVOR CORSON
7. CHINA'S LEADERSHIP PUSHES FOR UNITY March 9, 2001, Friday By
ERIK ECKHOLM
8. Taiwan's Top Court Decides Halting A-Plant Was Improper January 16, 2001,
Tuesday By MARK LANDLER
9. For Mainlanders, Taiwan's Lure Proves Powerful but Often Elusive November 25,
2000, Saturday By ERIK ECKHOLM
10. Taiwan's Leader Under Fire, With Some Out to Unseat Him November 6, 2000,
Monday By ERIK ECKHOLM
11. China Blames Taiwan and U.S. For Military Tension in Region October 17,
2000, Tuesday By ERIK ECKHOLM
12. China Objects to Taiwan Leader's U.S. Visa August 5, 2000, Saturday By CRAIG

S. SMITH

13. Taiwan Again Seeks Talks With China August 1, 2000, Tuesday By MARK LANDLER
14. She's Fond of Independence for Herself and Taiwan Too May 19, 2000, Friday By MARK LANDLER
15. Taiwan's Real Bind April 20, 2000, Thursday By MICHAEL O'HANLON
16. Ally Vs. Customer April 6, 2000, Thursday By WILLIAM SAFIRE
17. Taiwan and Beijing Duel for Recognition in Central America August 5, 1997, Tuesday By LARRY ROHTER
18. Taiwan Ends Its Status as a 'Province' of China July 20, 1997, Sunday By SHERYL WUDUNN
19. China, Chiding Gingrich, Urges U.S. to Follow Single Policy April 4, 1997, Friday By PATRICK E. TYLER
20. Gingrich Warns China That U.S. Would Step In to Defend Taiwan March 31, 1997, Monday By SETH FAISON
21. Now, Beijing Hears Another U.S. Voice: Gingrich's March 29, 1997, Saturday By PATRICK E. TYLER
22. Taiwan Keeps a Step Ahead of China in U.S. Lobbying March 14, 1997, Friday By LAURENCE ZUCKERMAN
23. Writing a Crime December 6, 1996, Friday By ANTHONY LEWIS
24. Taiwan Denies Offering Donation to Democrats October 31, 1996, Thursday By EDWARD A. GARGAN
25. Vice President of Taiwan To Get U.S. Transit Visa August 8, 1996, Thursday Foreign Desk
26. Did a Taiwan Ship Hurl Stowaways Overboard? May 29, 1996, Wednesday Foreign Desk
27. Taiwan's Lobbying in U.S.: Mixing Friendship and Hardball April 9, 1996, Tuesday By ELAINE SCIOLINO
28. In Taiwan, a Mandate, but for What? March 29, 1996, Friday By PATRICK E. TYLER

Wall Street Journal

1. Bonds May Be at a Turning Point By Agnes Crane, Mar 24, 2005
2. Danger Strait Ahead By Jaushieh Joseph Wu, Mar 24, 2005
3. U.S. and China Bridge Divisions To Fight Crime By Matt Pottinger, Mar 3, 2005
4. Danger Strait Ahead By Jaushieh Joseph Wu, Mar 24, 2005
5. U.S.-China Tensions Resurface By Murray Hiebert Feb 25, 2005
6. Don't Sell Arms to China By Henry J. Hyde, Feb 23, 2005
7. Taiwan Election Is All About China By Jason Dean, Dec 7, 2004
8. China critic tempers tone as U.S. envoy By Greenberger, Robert S, Dec 20, 2002
9. It changed my life By Waldron, Arthur Dec 15, 2002

10. China thumbs its nose By Hardy, Quentin Dec 13, 2001
11. Taiwan firm sets China venture By Richard L. Holman June 20, 2000
12. Taiwan's metamorphosis By Hickey, Dennis V, The Wall Street Journal, Nov 30, 2000
13. Taiwan sends Imperial Art on U.S. tour By Cheng, Scarlet, The Wall Street Journal, Nov 29, 2000
14. The pursuit of poverty By Brenner, Reuven, The Wall Street Journal, Nov 14, 1999
15. In Taiwan, unofficial postal services often deliver the goods By Chang, Leslie, Nov 8, 1995
16. U.S.-China Relations Seem Back on Track --- But Fireworks Could Flare Anew at Almost Anytime By Craig S. Smith Nov 6, 1999
17. In China, investors flock inland from costly coast By Kalathil, Shanthi, The Wall Street Journal, 857 words Oct 25, 1999
18. They May Be Annoying, But Bugs Bring in Bucks By Robert Johnson, Oct 25, 1999
19. Taiwan issue is likely to be key topic in Clinton's meeting with China's Jiang By Greenberger, Robert SOct 24, 1999
20. Taiwan Looms Over U.S.-China Summit --- Beijing's Hard Line Could Keep Tensions High By Kathy Chen, Oct 11, 1998
21. Taiwan's China Air Drops Flag Logo, Stresses Safety in Recasting Its Image By Diane Brady, Oct 9, 1995
22. Clinton agrees to meet China's Jiang in New York session later this month By Greenberger, Robert, Oct 2, 1996
23. Money pros look to East for growth By Sesit, Michael R, Oct 2, 1996
24. Clinton offers optimistic view of ties to China By Seib, Gerald F, Greenberger, Robert S Sep 28, 1996
25. McDonnell sees Chinese as ally for new jetliner By Cole, Jeff Sep 19, 1995
26. One China? By Dan Biers Sep 19, 1995
27. Beijing Puts Pressure on U.S. to Restate Position That Taiwan Is Part of China By Marcus W. Brauchli, Sep 14, 1995
28. Hillary Clinton Uses Beijing Speech To Slam China, Though Not by Name By Hilary Stout and Marcus W. Brauchli, Sep 6, 1995
29. For Beijing, Taiwanese Money Is a Lever --- While Slamming Lee, China Courts Business Allies By Leslie Chang, Sep 5, 1995
30. Sino-U.S. relations back to square one By Chen, Kathy, Sep 1, 1995

The Baltimore Sun

1. Big Issues, Petty Debate in Taiwan November 25, 2001, Sunday By Dan Rodricks
2. From Taiwan, a Fear of China Technology October 3, 2001, Paul Moore

3. Asia Casts a Wary Eye to the West September 28, 2001, Frederick N. Rasmussen
4. Nationalist Party Expels Taiwan's Ex-President September 22, 2001 By Dan Rodricks
5. Taiwan Is Cleared for Membership in W.T.O. September 19, 2001, Wednesday By ELIZABETH OLSON
6. CHINA'S LEADERS: JIANG'S VIEWS; Chinese President Is Optimistic About Relations With the U.S. August 10, 2001, Friday By ELIZABETH OLSON

The Chicago Tribune

1. Pentagon: China's military planning beyond Taiwan Jul 20, 2005 By Robert Burns
2. China miscalculates Apr 14, 2005 By Howard Witt
3. Ex-Taiwan leader riles China on trip Dec 28, 2004 By Gary Marx
4. Taiwan leader pushes the envelope on identity Dec 12, 2004 By Michael A Lev
5. Taiwan's pro-independence forces lose at polls Dec 12, 2004 By Michael A Lev
6. Taiwan talks a possibility Lara Weber By Mar 5, 2001
7. The rethinking of America Examining the U.S. role in the post-post-Cold War world Joe McDonald Jul 25, 2000
8. Moves by Taiwan stir U.S. criticism By Mark Matthews Dec 9, 1999
9. China's leader: Taiwan vote 'cover' to get independence By Theresa Walla Dec 7, 1998
10. Espionage and diplomacy in China Gavin Scott Jun 20, 1997

Seattle Times

1. Taiwan leader on visit to China By Edward Cody Wednesday April 27, 2005
2. Taiwan-based planes to fly directly to China By Tyler Marshall December 24, 2002
3. Taiwan: Get pelted by rockets, on purpose, at festival By William Foreman November 03, 2000
4. Taiwan relaxes shipping ban with China By William Foreman January 01, 1999
5. Trade, not boycotts, best for U.S.-China relations By Bruce Ramsey Wednesday, May 10, 1998