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Preface

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# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter One</th>
<th>American Policy and Attitudes Towards China, 1898-1942.</th>
<th>page 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two</td>
<td>1943: The Seeds of Dissent.</td>
<td>page 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three</td>
<td>1944: The Crisis in China.</td>
<td>page 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four</td>
<td>1945: The Public Debate over China Policy.</td>
<td>page 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five</td>
<td>Could China Have Been Saved?</td>
<td>page 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td>page 85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One

American Policy and Attitudes Towards China, 1898-1942.
America's so-called failure in China in the nineteen forties arose not only from circumstances in China but also from wrong assumptions and expectations in America. The critical years of World War II were vitally important in crystallizing these perceptions. Images of China were to some extent affected by the position of the viewer, those held by military and civilian officials differing from private individuals with less reliable sources. This thesis will deal with both these governmental and public images, in the latter case emphasizing informed opinion, those Americans with special experience in China, scholars, and journalists. Furthermore, images, whether public or private, often contradicted each other, and this thesis will also focus upon the resulting dialogue and debate in government and outside on the future of China and Sino-American relations.

Part I: American Traditional Images of China

Americans have always had great hopes for trade with China. Even more than the rest of the world, Americans viewed China as a great potential market. Public concern over markets outside the American continent and Europe did not emerge strongly until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Between the Panic of 1873 and the War of 1898, rapid industrial growth resulted

My understanding of American economic interest in China has been particularly helped by the following works: Walter La Feber, The New Empire; Thomas McCormick, China Market; and William Appleman Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy. Akira Iriye's Across the Pacific has also been helpful, as it has been for the thesis as a whole.
in surplus production and falling prices. The China Market was particularly seen as a key to absorbing this overproduction and restoring prosperity. Despite the fact that these high hopes for trade with China never materialized, the myth of the China Market continued to influence American thinking in regard to China in the twentieth century. Thus one persistent American image of China was economically defined.

The United States was not interested in imperialism in China in the sense of territorial acquisition, but just in equal commercial opportunity with European powers and Japan. The Open Door notes of John Hay were seen by Americans as a means of encouraging and protecting legitimate commercial rights. Americans traditionally attached the highest value to free trade. This policy in itself was peaceful; indeed to many Americans it was the natural corollary to world peace. The open door did not require force so long as the United States acquired trading privileges extorted by force from China by other nations on the most-favored nation principle. Potential complications existed, however, in the American reluctance to acknowledge this fact and their insistence that American diplomacy had won international acceptance of equality of trade in China. This American belief was manifested in the internationalization of the open door in the Nine-Power Treaty of the Washington Conference. Japanese infringements in the 1930's upon this international guarantee reinforced an American sense of legal and moral righteousness in dealing with China. Therefore, Americans by 1942 had a long tradition of perceiving China in economic terms and viewing the advancement
of these commercial interests through a policy of equality of trade as a matter of established international legality. It seemed only natural and fair that post-war China would protect these interests and expand the opportunity for trade.

America's image of China was not limited to that of a future market. There also emerged in American minds the popular notion of American assistance in the regeneration of China. The idea of an American mission in China was part of America's conception of itself as a model for the development of all political states, an idea as old as the country itself. By the 1840's, China was especially appealing to the American missionary. For here was the challenge to bring Western institutions, technology, customs, and religion to the heathen. In the idealism of the Wilsonian era, such feelings of concern over China became part of a broader public image. A new view of the Hay Open Door notes, that the United States had never been involved in the imperialist exploitation of China and had always supported Chinese administrative and territorial integrity, was part of this new image. Americans consequently perceived themselves as friends the Chinese could trust. Americans began to feel that China's problems were caused by imperialism and once this burden was removed China would move quickly to establish herself as a democratic power in East Asia. American policy was

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2My study of mission in American diplomacy has been aided by the following works: Felix Gilbert, The Beginnings of American Foreign Policy: To The Farewell Address; Frederick Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History; and again Akira Iriye, Across the Pacific.
more and more based on these ideological considerations—to create a "Westernized" democratic China. This notion was reinforced in the aftermath of the Revolution of 1911 and the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty and the establishment of a republican regime in China. China was now America's "sister republic" led by the Christian Chinese George Washington, Sun Yat-sen.

This sense of mission was to play an essential role in Sino-American relations. Involving an American search for a democratic and liberal order in China, the idea of mission placed restraints upon what Americans were willing to accept in China. Many Americans thus continued to look for the evolution of a strong, liberal, middle-class alternative to Chinese Communism or Kuomintang fascism. This American brand of mission was seen to be in the Chinese interest but it is important to note that it also served American interests in the Far East. A democratic Chinese state would serve as a force for stability and protection of American business and missionary interests in China. That this state would follow an equal trade policy was an important element in American thinking. Therefore, mission as applied to China gave the United States the protection of its interests in China without the need for military involvement.

Thus the moralism in American relations with China placed no real responsibility upon Americans. This indeed stands out as another factor in American images of China. The United States was morally concerned with Chinese affairs but she refused to become involved in Chinese internal developments in order to
build a new China. Rather, Americans would urge the use of diplomacy upon their government to remove imperialist obstacles to Chinese unification. Once the imperialists were thrown out of China, the Chinese would only have to follow the American model of republicanism and modernization to achieve greatness. Thus, in the 1920's and 1930's, Americans were frustrated when the Chinese government failed to evolve into a stable, centralized, unified, and democratic regime. Yet this did not result in a re-evaluation of American images. Rather the blame was placed upon shortcomings in the Chinese people, as Americans continued to assume that American mission remained the best model for China's future development. This heritage of failing to understand China's problems in creating a modern state was to re-emerge during World War Two.

Americans thus viewed China primarily in terms of moral and economic interests. She was not considered relevant to American security. However, the United States was concerned about the security of her possessions in the Pacific, the Philippines and Hawaii. This meant that new attention would have to be paid to international developments in East Asia. Americans were interested in events in China as they related to the security of the Philippines, but not as they might affect the security of China. Japanese actions might impede the creation of a unified Chinese state but as long as such aggression was limited to China and remained outside American security interests, Americans would not aid the Chinese. In fact, such assistance was viewed as only
making it more likely that the Japanese would attack the Philippines. Military strategy, by focusing on the need to defend the Philippines by not provoking the Japanese, mixed well with a moral and economic policy not requiring American involvement in Chinese internal affairs. Rather, in the 1930's, the public and government hoped to discourage Japanese aggression through a policy of non-recognition of Japanese conquests in China.

American images of Japanese aggression changed only as it began to be viewed as part of a global crisis. As Americans perceived or thought they perceived the possibility of a link between fascism in Europe and Asia, a threat of world-wide aggression seemed to appear. With international tension on the rise, the United States consequently began to picture the world as being divided into two camps—fascist aggressor states and peace-loving democratic nations. This image of two camps led to a shift of attitude in regard to China by 1941. Now, since Japan was grouped with the fascist powers in Europe, the crisis in China was related to the security interests of America.

This immediate crisis with Japan came over her move into southeast Asia. American policy-makers saw this as detrimental to British interests in the Far East, which by now were being

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*Especially helpful to me in understanding this new American response to Japanese aggression were the following: Herbert Feis, The Road To Pearl Harbor; Paul Schroeder, The Axis Alliance and Japanese-American Relations, 1941; and chapter one of Tang Tsou, America's Failure In China, 1941-50.
perceived as identical to American world interests. Diplomatic efforts were begun to stop this southward advance in an attempt to avoid the probable consequence of this action, war between Japan and the United States. Due to the American embargo, Japanese diplomacy turned to the defensive as she appeared to be willing to loosen her ties with the Axis powers in Europe and to stop her southward advance. However, negotiations floundered as the United States also pressed for the withdrawal of Japanese troops from China. Paul Schroeder writes of this action, "At this very moment, on the verge of a major diplomatic victory, the United States abandoned her original goals and concentrated on a third, the liberation of China. This last aim was not in accord with American strategic interests, was not a limited objective, and, most important, was completely incapable of being achieved by peaceful means and doubtful of attainment by war." Now, due to a global image of China, Americans were psychologically unwilling to reach a negotiated settlement with Japan if it meant sacrificing a fellow democratic nation. In the final analysis, it was moral principles and a concern for British security in southeast Asia that were the basis of American policy as the threat of war became a tragic reality. The traditional policy of Americans never to go to war to protect American interests in China was reversed as American images of the world at large moved from political isolation to moral globalism. In this respect, American public opinion in 1940-1941 was different from traditional attitudes towards China.

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Part II: The Initial War Images, 1942

Once Americans entered the war, they were determined that its end would come only with the crushing victory of the democratic forces over the totalitarian fascist powers. Once Germany was defeated, Japanese resistance would soon collapse under the pressure of Allied military power. Democratic China would emerge as the strongest power in Asia and form the basis for cooperation between East and West. The image of a democratic and heroic China at war was being colorfully portrayed in 1942 in American magazines and books. Periodicals were clamoring for more military and economic aid to maintain Chinese resistance, within the confines of the top priority of European operations. There was a popular conception that all the Chinese lacked to reverse decisively their military fortunes was military aid from America. Realizing the difficulties of supplying China, the public felt that once this handicap was overcome Japan would be a relatively easy foe to defeat.

However, among military and diplomatic officials, there was a growing feeling that the true state of affairs in China was being seriously distorted and China's military successes greatly exaggerated. General John Magruder, then head of the Military Mission in China, wrote on February 10, 1942,

The brunt of any offensive warfare in China must be borne by foreign troops sent there by Allied powers, and the only thing which we can with any confidence expect from the large resources of Chinese manpower is that they occupy areas evacuated by the enemy and consolidate advances won by others.

Captain R. E. Schuirmann of the Office of Chief of Naval Operations similarly warned, "The simple truth is that we will be well on the way toward defeating Japan by the time lines can be opened for delivery in real quantity." ²

Similar attitudes were being expressed in Chungking by Ambassador Clarence Gauss and Foreign Service officers. Gauss constantly warned that at present China was only a minor asset to the Allied war effort and that American policy should be designed only to prevent her from becoming a major liability. This to him meant minimum measures of air support and munitions to keep China in the war. In a July 9, 1942 memorandum to Secretary Hull, Gauss repeated that "The Embassy has long been of the opinion that little more could be expected from China in the present war than continued resistance with the object of containing in this country a substantial Japanese military force which might otherwise be used elsewhere against the United Nations." ³ The Embassy felt that Chiang's threats to make a compromise peace with the Japanese were only a bluff aimed at securing more American aid. Diplomatic officials concluded that China should not be given aid out of a fear that failure to do so would result in an end to resistance against the Japanese. The Embassy suspected Chiang also of conserving his forces in preparation for civil war with the Chinese Communists. That these reports were influencing at least some people in the lower echelons of the State Department was indicated in a

² Ibid., p. 31.
³ Ibid., p. 104.
December 8, 1942 memorandum by George Atcheson Jr., Assistant Chief of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs, in which he stated that "It will probably be many years, even under favorable conditions, before political democracy in our sense can be made an actuality in China."4

Thus, by the end of 1942, there were indications of future obstacles to the two-fold American policy of maximizing Chinese resistance against Japan and carving a spot for China among the post-war powers. Government decision-makers in 1942, however, continued to follow these policy assumptions. Military planners conceived of an Asiatic land approach as the best means of defeating Japan. China was seen as an important future war theater, especially as a potential base for massive air assaults upon the Japanese homelands. General Joseph Stilwell was sent to China to train, organize, and equip China's armies to fight the Japanese. The first step in this process would be the reopening of the Burma Road. Here, however, Stilwell faced the reality of a shortage of supplies and trained personnel. Due to the needs of other theaters, it was difficult to allocate necessary forces and equipment for the China-Burma-India theater. Logistics problems and low priority of C-B-I, due to the emphasis upon first defeating Germany, were thus the first obstacles faced in the efforts to make use of China's war potential.

4Ibid., p. 259.
Despite the indications that China was not the democratic and heroic state popularly envisioned in America and the logistics problems in supplying the low-priority Chinese theater, in 1942 decision-makers at the highest echelons of American government continued to base their policies on the assumptions of Chinese massive assistance against Japan and Chinese postwar power. These images of China were to be further challenged as the war progressed and serve as the basis for differences over China policy in both public and private circles.
Chapter Two

1943: The Seeds of Dissent
The year 1943 marked the appearance of a new questioning of America's pre-war images of China. American liberal periodicals began to perceive the inactivity of the Chinese armies as due to more than lack of military supplies. Within the American military, the debate on whether an air power increase or army reform should be the first priority in China came to a head in the Chennault-Stilwell controversy. Even more foreboding for the future of the C-B-I theater was a new emphasis among military planners upon different and quicker routes to the defeat of Japan. Pessimistic reports upon the future of the Chinese theater and postwar Chinese unity and democracy continued to dominate Embassy and Foreign Service reports from Chungking. Meanwhile, despite gloomy reports and controversy, President Roosevelt maintained his policy of promising China greater postwar power.

Part I: The Periodicals

By 1943, concern over American misconceptions of China and her role in the war were reflected in American magazines. No less than Pearl Buck warned that "The Chinese are being exalted into persons such as cannot exist in our fallible human race." She went on to argue that, if Americans did not take a more realistic view, they would wake up one morning condemning China and all Chinese.

American journals differed over what was causing China's problems. Some continued to feel that China needed only supplies

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and modern equipment to crush the Japanese. Pearl Buck described the situation in China as "primarily a military problem and the military men must solve it." This dilemma, all agreed, could best be solved by recapturing Burma and thus opening a route for supplies into China. Such aid was essential to keep America's faith with the Chinese people and prevent their demoralization. Writers emphasized the harmful effects of China's military isolation upon her political and economic institutions. Pearl Buck saw the anti-democratic forces within the Kuomintang as being strengthened by China's isolation and lack of military aid. Others stressed the deterioration of China's economy. Wendell Willkie in his best-selling work, One World, similarly predicted non-military benefits from solving China's military problems. He wrote,

... an offensive here would have more than military consequences. It would give new confidence to the Chinese armies, and it would give heart to the Chinese people. I came home from China convinced that we must avoid at all costs giving the Chinese the idea that we are going to disregard them for another year and concentrate our fighting in other theaters of war. Regardless of what this might do to Chinese resistance, it would complicate a morale problem already made dangerous by inflation, and it would imperil all our chances of a solid basis of understanding with China on which to build the peace and the postwar world.

China's problems were seen as more than military in nature by other writers. The New Republic, in a February 8th article,

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2 Ibid., p. 56.
3 Ibid.
argued that not only should Burma be retaken but the campaign there should be supplemented by forces striking from Yunnan.\(^5\) Increasingly, the periodicals focused not only on Chiang Kai-shek's failure to utilize Communist troops but also his use of Kuomintang regulars to blockade Communist strongholds. *Amerasia* was one of the first especially to emphasize Chinese political barriers to military success and to great power status.

In April, 1943, the editors wrote:

> We repeat once more what Amerasia has consistently maintained: namely, that there are no insuperable barriers to full cooperation among all political parties in China, and that once the Chinese Government rests securely on the support of a united people, it can show strength, not weakness, as the basis of its claim to a full voice in the determination of Allied strategy in Asia, and to a position of freedom and complete equality with other great powers in the organization of the post-war world.\(^6\)

In the May, 1943 issue, they again stressed that political democracy would heighten the Chinese people's incentive to sacrifice for a greater war effort and that economic democracy was essential to solve the problems of modern industrialization in the midst of war.\(^7\)

This perception of China's problems as both political and military received new emphasis with the publication of "China's Part in a Coalition War" an article by T. A. Bisson. Bisson saw two China's, one feudal as represented by the Kuomintang, and the other democratic as seen in communist China.\(^8\) He argued

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that the Chinese communists were more actively engaged in fighting the Japanese than Kuomintang armies and were seeking to democratize China through economic and political reforms as a means of throwing off China's "feudal shackles." On the other hand, he claimed that the military achievements of Kuomintang armies had declined and the economic strength of Kuomintang China had decreased. A landlord-bureaucrat coalition dominated the Kuomintang and was portrayed by Bisson "as putting new props under the tottering structure of Chinese feudalism." He concluded that the goal of American diplomacy should be to merge these two Chinas into one. It was also essential to place such unification upon the basis of social and democratic reform. Bisson's article served as a spark for an increasing recognition that two Chinas existed, one reactionary, the other progressive. This was to be an item of controversy for the remaining war years.

The varying reaction of magazines reflects diverse opinions over the future fate of democracy under Chiang Kai-shek. Americans might criticize Chinese leaders for their undemocratic traits, yet, in the final analysis, most in 1943 continued to be optimistic about the fate of democracy and unity in China. The New Republic called for great faith in China and Chiang Kai-shek, describing the discrepancy between Chiang's rhetoric and action in China as a gap no wider than that between promise and performance in some Western democracies. In a September

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9Ibid., p. 140.

editorial, they again emphasized that the Communist problem was soon to be solved by political means. As the editors wrote,

"China is almost ready, then, to close the transitional period of "political tutelage" and to enter that of constitutional government. Let none of us in the West, being skeptical or unsure of where we stand ourselves, cast doubts upon the sincerity of Chiang Kai-shek and his party. This is a time not only for great deeds in China but also for great faith in China."

The Nation similarly expressed hope in a China soon united in warfare against Japan. A September 25th editorial saw the decision of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang to summon a National Assembly to ratify a constitution no more than one year after the end of the war as an important step towards democracy. Associate Editor Maxwell Stewart in the same issue explained Chiang's strength as due to his ability to play one interest group off against the other in the Kuomintang. He concluded, however, that "Chiang is allied with the progressive wing of the party, men like T. V. Soong and Sun Fo among numerous others." Most magazines shared this view of successful democracy under the guidance of Chaing Kai-shek.

Amerasia, however, was an exception to this general trust in the Generalissimo. In the July 25th issue, Philip Jaffe described the majority of the Kuomintang as opposing the political participation of the Chinese people in their government


and as intent upon destroying all political parties, both reactionary and progressive, that would attempt to challenge the Kuomintang dictatorship. Doubts were also raised as to whether Chaing Kai-shek actually desired true democracy in China with the publication in China of the Generalissimo's *China's Destiny*. Philip Jaffe and Kate Mitchell in reviewing the book emphasized Chiang's anti-foreignism, his opposition to reform, and his belief that the destiny of China lay only with the one-party system of the Kuomintang. They stressed that, even if Chaing felt differently about reforming China in the future, he would be powerless to institute such reforms since his power was derived from the landlords, military, and bureaucracy, which all opposed reforms. Similarly, *Amerasia* in contrast to *The Nation* criticized the post-war constitutional assembly as an attempt to establish democracy by Kuomintang decree. Instead, they argued that democracy could only become reality when the people were allowed to participate in the process of establishing it and that in Kuomintang China the people's participation in the conduct of their government was diminishing rather than increasing.

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Differences might exist among Americans over the chances for postwar democracy in Kuomintang China. However, they all held that China must emerge as a progressive stable power in Asia. Postwar peace could only be guaranteed through cooperation with democratic China, the strongest power in East Asia. Wendell Willkie expressed this well when he wrote:

The Chinese outlook on the future is almost the opposite of that of the Japanese. They do not seek empire. They seek merely to hold and to develop their own vast and lovely homeland. They want to see the new forces that are stirring in the East used for their own freedom and for the freedom of other peoples.\(^1^7\)

Americans expected liberal forces within China to lead this new China. By 1943, many magazines were expressing concern at the decline of these forces in wartime China, as already indicated. Most still continued to believe in the re-emergence of liberal democracy through the leadership of Chaing Kai-shek. The exception to this, Amerasia, was the first to point to the smaller liberal political parties in China as a means of preserving national unity and extending political democracy. Forming a federation of smaller parties within China during 1943, these liberals were perceived by Amerasia as an alternative to the fascist Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists. American magazines were also unanimous in their belief that the solution to China's problems was a matter for her alone to discover. Americans felt their nation should be involved in Chinese political affairs only to the extent of reaching a settlement which would hasten the defeat of Japan. The Nation was thus able to suggest the setting up of American military posts to

\(^1^7\)Willkie, One World, p. 108.
avoid incidents between the Kuomintang and Communists without a concern for unethical American infringement in Chinese affairs. In 1943, both trends were not that emphasized but were to reappear in the following years as matters of great importance and controversy.

Part II: The Military

The Joint Chief of Staffs at the start of 1943 continued to view China as a major base for the defeat of Japan. As Admiral Ernest King of the Joint Chiefs of Staff commented on January 16, 1943,

In the European theater, Russia was most advantageously placed for dealing with Germany in view of her geographical position and manpower; in the Pacific, China bore a similar relation to the Japanese. It should be our basic policy to provide the manpower resources of Russia and China with the necessary equipment to enable them to fight. Chinese manpower backed by American resources would defeat Japan on the Chinese mainland and protect American air bases in China. The major dilemma remained how to get needed supplies to a virtually isolated China and her massive army.

Flights over the "Hump" could not meet Chinese needs. Americans also sought effective means to maintain pressure upon Japanese forces in the Pacific and to keep China in the war. However, differences arose among military leaders over which tactic,

18 "China's Role in the War," The Nation, CLVII (November 20, 1943), p. 574.

air power or the Burma campaign, should be emphasized to achieve these goals, given the limited supplies that could reach China. This difference was symbolized in the Chennault-Stilwell controversy.

Major General Claire Chennault, commander of the famous Flying Tigers, felt Japan could be defeated in China by his small air force. In a letter given to Wendell Willkie for President Roosevelt in October 1942, Chennault argued that he needed 105 fighter aircraft of modern design, 30 medium bombers, and, some months from then, 12 heavy bombers. With losses being constantly replaced, he predicted that this force could destroy the effectiveness of the Japanese Air Force in China probably within six months, within one year at the most. With the Japanese Air Force destroyed, American naval and army units could operate with freedom in East Asia and, from their bases in China, Chennault's air force would destroy the principal industrial centers of Japan.\(^2\) Chennault thus argued that his supply needs should receive top priority over the Hump. He saw the issue between Stilwell and himself as being whether the war should be fought in Burma, where the Japanese were prepared and ready to fight, or in China, where the enemy was neither prepared nor willing to fight.\(^3\) Chiang Kai-shek also adopted this line of reasoning, for he realized that it


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 220.
meant Chennault's air force would do the fighting for China. Chennault had other influential allies. Lieutenant-Colonel James M. McHugh, the American Naval Attache in Chungking, agreed that Japan could be defeated by a small China-based air force and recommended that Stilwell be replaced by Chennault. Chennault made another convert when Willkie visited China in October 1942. Harry Hopkins backed Chennault in the highest administration circles, which, thanks to Hopkins, Willkie, McHugh, and Captain Joseph Alsop, Roosevelt's cousin and aide to Chennault, were kept aware of Chennault's claims and grievances.

General Joseph Stilwell disagreed with Chennault not over the use of air power in China but only over the question of the timing of its use. Stilwell felt that Chinese armies first had to be trained to defend these bases. For any successful air offensive would only bring a strong Japanese reaction and attempt to capture the air sites. Such an action, if successful, might drive China out of the war. First, the Burma Road should be reopened to get supplies needed to defend China against this Japanese reaction. Stilwell planned to regroup and train Chiang Kai-shek's soldiers into thirty top-notch divisions. This plan was opposed by the Generalissimo, however, who preferred easy victory with airplanes, thus saving his

4 Romanus and Sunderland, p. 248.

troops for use against the Communists and preserving his
delicate relationships with his army commanders.

Stilwell increasingly viewed the Chinese Government and
the Generalissimo as obstacles to a successful land campaign.
He had no doubts about the ability of Chinese soldiers. As
he wrote, "To me the Chinese soldier best exemplifies the
greatness of the Chinese people—their indomitable spirit,
their uncomplaining loyalty, their honesty of purpose, their
steadfast perseverance." In order to persuade the Generalissi-
mo actively to oppose the Japanese, Stilwell and his staff
in Chungking began to advocate a policy of American pressure
on Chiang. This attitude was well-expressed in a personal
note from Colonel Frank Dorn, an artillery officer under
Stilwell, to General Thomas Handy of the Operation Division
of the War Department:

We all believe that the Generalissimo must be handled on
an "ultimatum basis"; be told in plain language what he
must do and be given a very short time in which to decide
and reply. If he threatens to make peace with Japan,
tell him to go ahead. In all probability the Japanese
would laugh at him now. Besides there exists what
amounts to an undeclared peace anyway, with mail and a
considerable trade going back and forth between occupied
and unoccupied China. That is why tungsten shipments
have not been as large as had been expected. The Japs
pay a little better price . . .

Until we re-take Burma, and re-open the port of Rangoon,
all aid to China are utterly meaningless. But, all aid to China must have a string which demands
action from them, or Rangoon or not, the present regime will
do nothing but hoard the material in order to perpetuate
itself after the war. It is short-sighted, but the regime
itself is short-sighted or it would not need to worry about

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6 Ibid., p. 124.
its own position in China after the war. In other words they expect an upheaval or revolution of some kind. In fact T. V. Soong in Washington expressed the opinion that the present regime would be out of a job six months after the war was over. He ought to know . . . . 7

Secretary of War Stimson, General Marshall, and the Operations Division of the War Department accepted these recommendations that lend-lease to China should be contingent upon the Chinese military reforms with military accomplishments being the sole acceptable guarantee of its continuance. Already, by the end of 1942, such an approach to Sino-American relations had been recommended to the President. 8

In 1943, it was clear that President Roosevelt would be inevitably confronted with the major issue of choosing between support of Stilwell and Chennault. He received no unified guidance from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for they were divided among themselves over the problem. In addition to General Marshall, Admiral King supported and believed in Stilwell's strategy. 9 Admiral William Leahy encouraged support of Chennault and even advised the President before the Trident Conference that all available air transport over the Hump in the next three months should be used to send aviation material to China. 10 General Henry Arnold expressed a similar opinion to Harry Hopkins on January 19 at Casablanca where he said,

7Quoted in Romanus and Sunderland, pp. 182-3.
8Ibid., p. 223.
"the only intelligent move immediately is to strengthen Chennault's Air Force and get at the bombing of Japan as soon as possible."\(^{11}\)

In a series of decisions in 1943, President Roosevelt eventually came out in support of General Chennault's approach to Sino-American relations. In March, Roosevelt in response to Chiang Kai-shek's letter of February 7 placed Chennault in command of his own air force, previously under the leadership of General Clayton Bissel, and promised to increase the number of aircraft and tonnage delivered to China. At the same time, he warned the Chinese that the Burma Road would also have to be reopened. These steps were taken against the recommendations of General Marshall, who repeated Stilwell's warnings that to expand Chennault's operations without the Chinese army being strong enough to protect his air bases was dangerous.\(^{12}\) Stilwell himself saw the President's message as "more than simply a rebuke; it was repudiation without recall."\(^{13}\) He was of course correct; without the President's support he had no means of bargaining with Chiang for support of Anakim, the code name for the proposed Burma campaign. The decision for air power in China was only formalized at the end of April when Stilwell and Chennault were called to


\(^{12}\)Romanus and Sunderland, pp. 278-281.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 282.
Washington. Roosevelt ordered Chennault to precede with his air projects without delay, while also giving his consent to a modified Anakim campaign that was not to interfere with the air plan. Clearly Roosevelt's decisions were made because he felt action was needed immediately. Fearing the collapse of China and feeling that Anakim might be too slow to aid China in time, he chose the quickest way to assist China, air support.  

President Roosevelt had decided to build up Chennault's air force as a major offensive weapon against the Japanese in China. But developments in military planning towards the end of 1943 were to lead to a questioning of China's future role in the war. At the Trident Conference in May, the Japanese war was divided into six phases: (1) an attempt to recapture Burma; (2) the retaking of the Philippines while Chinese forces prepared to attack Hong Kong; (3) a campaign against Hong Kong to open another supply route into China; (4) preparation of an air offensive from China; (5) the air attack; and (6) invasion of Japan, if necessary.  

During the Quadrant Conference at Quebec in August, General Arnold proposed the defeat of Japan twelve months after the German surrender by bombing her with China-based B-24's. It was estimated that if these
operations began in October 1944 and were increased as more B-29's were produced, the surrender of Japan would be attained by August 31, 1945. China therefore still promised to be the leading theater in the defeat of Japan.

However, the introduction of the concept of Japan's rapid surrender after the fall of Germany made many military planners increasingly skeptical of China's future role in the war. By the fall of 1943, the Operations Division of the Army was cautioning against pouring large amounts of men and material into China; such investment seemed excessive in the light of the twelve-month concept. Though it was important to maintain China in the war, the Division stressed that forward air bases constructed for B-29's could not be defended against Japanese attack nor could Chinese troops be readied for offensive warfare before 1947. Rather than wasting time and energy on such long-term projects, they stressed that operations in the Central Pacific promised a more rapid advance toward Japan and the earlier acquisition of strategic air bases closer to the Japanese homeland. War Department planners thus were beginning to rely on an approach from the Pacific rather than from the Asiatic mainland to defeat Japan.

Despite this growing evidence that a reassessment of China's role in the war was in order, General Marshall during the Cairo Conference continued to support the potential

\[17\] Matloff, p. 329.
importance of China to the war effort; therefore, he supported Chiang Kai-shek's demand for an amphibious operation in the Bay of Bengal as the only way to secure Chinese cooperation in the north Burma campaign.\(^{19}\) King and Roosevelt also supported this operation.\(^{20}\) General Arnold, however, now felt that his B-29 bombers could operate more easily and safely against the Japanese homelands from the Marianas Islands than from bases in China and consequently arrangements were made to begin strikes both from there and from China.\(^{21}\) At Teheran, the promise of Soviet aid in the Pacific similarly affected thinking upon China's wartime role. This aid meant bases and manpower upon the Asiatic continent and strengthened the feeling that the China-Burma-India theater was an expendable operation from a military point of view. It was clear that Marshall and King would have to accept this reduction in importance of the China-Burma-India theater. The cancellation of the amphibious operations demanded by the Generalissimo was a reflection of this new reality in the Far East. In 1944, the focus of allied attention would be on the Pacific route as the quickest means to defeat Japan. This decision so important for the postwar period was not a dramatic turnabout but was arrived at slowly and almost by default. By the end of 1943, American military images of China playing a role in the defeat of Japan comparable to Russia in the defeat of Germany had proved to be wishful thinking.

\(^{19}\) Ibid., p. 348.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., p. 350, 352.
\(^{21}\) King and Whitehill, p. 532; Matloff, p. 377.
Part III: The Diplomats

The State Department during World War Two played a limited role in Far Eastern decisions. Secretary of State Cordell Hull seemed to be more concerned with ideas to prevent future wars than with wartime diplomacy. Instead, President Roosevelt, his presidential advisors, and the military were most involved in Sino-American wartime relations. Despite this small role played by the State Department in policy decisions, it is significant to note that a debate did rage within the Department over American policy towards China.

Throughout 1942 and 1943, Maxwell Hamilton, head of the Far Eastern Division, and Stanley Hornbeck, Far Eastern expert, emphasized Chinese weakness as due to circumstances beyond her control. An unfavorable situation of inflation and corruption did exist in China. But this problem was caused by China's virtual isolation from the world. Similarly, China should not be expected to defeat the Japanese without military assistance from the United States. They stressed that China's military accomplishments since 1937 were substantial considering this lack of vital war material. Hamilton and Hornbeck feared that, if a minimum amount of military supplies were not given to China, there was a strong possibility of China's war effort and resistance crumbling. They consequently placed great emphasis upon reports of frustration and defeatism in China. For the Chinese contribution to the war effort was important in engaging Japanese troops, in denying Japanese hegemony over Asia, in reducing the war potential of Japan in other theaters, in waging
psychological warfare against Japan, and in holding areas which might become important to future Allied air and land operations. They concluded that the Chinese would stick it out as long as they had justification in believing that the United States supported them and that military aid would provide this confidence. Given this moral and material support, the Generalissimo would fight to drive Japan out of China.¹

Reports from the Embassy in Chungking contrasted sharply with the above view. Ambassador Gauss continued to stress that the military impotence of China was not related to further American a... In a November 30, 1943 telegram to Secretary Hull, Gauss maintained that Americans could not expect China to increase her war contribution beyond her capacity. But there was much China could do within her capabilities to protect herself from Japan and to strike at Japanese strongholds in China. Air bases and facilities to utilize the planes the Chinese demanded and roads to connect the airfields with supplies needed to be built. China was at best only half-heartedly involved in ground support for air bases and in the extension of the air bases to within striking distance of Japan.² The diplomats in Chungking felt the United States was in a favorable position to influence these military trends within China, due to Chinese dependence

¹See Foreign Relations of the United States, China, 1942 and 1943, In the 1942 volume, see pp. 18-19, 26-22, 30-41, 49-51, 51-34, 58, 71-82, 84, and 135-139. In the 1943 volume, see pp. 4-9, 43-44, 96-100, 152-153, and 163.
upon the United States for financial assistance, equipment, and the final defeat of Japan. They also favored the use of pressure to influence political actions in China, especially with the seeming imminence of civil war between the Communists and the Kuomintang. Gauss in a February 3rd memorandum wrote:

The Kuomintang, in fact, gives every evidence of intention to perpetuate its present one-party control of the country. Consequently, the prospect is that, unless liberalizing elements gain the ascendency in the government, either internal unity will be destroyed in the clash between the dominating Kuomintang and opposing forces or Fascist-like domination will continue to the detriment of aspirations for the development in China of a democratic political and economic system.3

Gauss also concluded that "Liquidation of the Communists by the present Kuomintang leadership is a question of 'when' rather than 'whether.'"4

Reports on the Chinese internal struggle were gloomy; however, it was still thought that civil war might be averted. The Embassy was of the opinion that the Kuomintang would not undertake military action against the Communists during the war because of the adverse reaction of China's allies.5 Time thus still remained to prevent civil war. Alternatives to civil conflict were viewed as (1) a compromise between the Kuomintang and its rivals, which might serve to prevent the spread of Communism into China; and/or (2) socio-economic and democratic reforms by the Kuomintang to deprive the Communists of their

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3 Ibid., p. 3.
4 Ibid., p. 204
5 Ibid., pp. 277-279.
popular support. Both alternatives were based upon the
ascendancy of liberal elements of Chinese society as a major
political force. For neither compromise with the Communists
nor reform were viable actions for the dominant conservative
factions of the Kuomintang. Thus not only the public but also
government officials saw liberalism as the solution to Chinese
problems.

Some American diplomatic officials were warning that reform
by the Kuomintang was unlikely and that thus America should
keep a flexible policy in regard to China. John Davies expressed
this view to Harry Hopkins on December 31, 1943 as follows:

In this uncertain situation we should avoid committing
ourselves unalterably to Chiang. We should be ready during
or after the war to adjust ourselves to possible realign­
ments in China. We should wish, for example, to avoid
finding ourselves at the close of the war backing a coali­
tion of Chiang's Kuomintang and the degenerate puppets
against a democratic coalition commanding Russian sympathy.

The adoption of a more realistic policy towards Chiang
Kai-shek does not mean abandonment of our objectives (1) to
capitalize during the war on China's position on the
Japanese flank, and (2) to build up after the war a strong
and independent China. On the contrary, it will mean that
we shall be more likely to achieve these objectives. A
realistic policy toward Chiang would be based on (1) recog­
nition by us that Generalissimo is highly susceptible to
firm coordinated American pressure, (2) stern bargaining
(in consultation with American representatives in China)
and (3) readiness to support a strong new coalition offer­
ing cooperation mutually more beneficial to China and the
United States.7

Davies and John Service argued that, if civil war broke out in
China, the Soviet Union would probably support the Communists
and the United States back the Kuomintang, probably leading

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6Ibid., p. 358.
7Ibid., pp. 397-399.
to conflict between the two powers. They thus recommended that a consulate general and military observer's mission be established in Communist territory as a preliminary step towards bringing about military and eventual political cooperation between the Communists and the Kuomintang. The fear of Davies and Service was that the Kuomintang would successfully place the blame for their own failures at the doorstep of Russia. A State Department memorandum of August 19, 1943 expressed similar feelings, "It is well to bear in mind, therefore, that post-war conditions in China and other Far Eastern areas--such as failures to give serious attention to the needs of the people--may be more responsible for political developments in the Far East in which Soviet Russia would be concerned than any policy or initiative taken by the Soviet Government." Thus, a fear of an American-Soviet showdown over China reinforced Embassy emphasis upon a policy of pressuring Chiang Kai-shek to prevent civil war.

By the time of the Cairo Conference, two different interpretations of how to deal with wartime China had appeared within the State Department. Both groups hoped for the emergence of a strong, unified, and democratic postwar China but saw different ways of achieving this goal. President Roosevelt, however, was rarely influenced by the State Department in his wartime decisions. Thus, despite warnings from the Embassy in Chungking and within the State Department about American plans for China,

8Ibid., p. 196; pp. 258-266.
9Ibid., p. 319.
Roosevelt maintained in 1943 a policy based upon Chinese wartime and postwar power as verified in the decisions of the Cairo Conference. The Western powers recognized China as their equal; China now only had to live up to these expectations. Thus, in 1943, public attitudes towards China with the exception of Amerasia remained hopeful for the future. However, both within military and diplomatic circles, there were signs of dissent with the Rooseveltian policy of China playing a significant war and postwar role among the major world powers.
Chapter Three

1944: The Crisis in China
Dispute over Chinese policy was still a private affair among government officials at the start of 1944. However, there were indications in American periodicals that the debate might become a major public issue. Meanwhile, the military definitely focused upon the Central Pacific route as the quickest means to defeat Japan. This meant the transformation of the C-B-I theater into a nearly meaningless military operation. Attitudes among State Department personnel emphasized the dangers of civil war in China while the Embassy in Chungking continued to grow even more pessimistic about developments within China. Thus, within government circles, military and political decisions reached a crucial juncture with the new Japanese offensives in the summer of 1944 in China and in the ensuing Stilwell episode of September and October.

Part I: The Periodicals

Developments within liberal magazines in 1944 can be divided into two periods: the months before and after the recall of Stilwell. The first period saw a new emphasis upon the undemocratic traits of the Kuomintang and the progressive characteristics of the Communists. New stress was placed upon the need to unite militarily all Chinese forces. In an article entitled "Sixty Million Lost Allies", Edgar Snow complained that Communist bases and armies in North China were not being utilized by the Allies against the Japanese and that Chungking's best-trained troops were not fighting the Japanese but blockading Communist territory.  

Amerasia were other magazines which picked up the same theme and urged that American supplies should go to both Kuomintang and guerilla forces within China. For example, The Nation in a May 27, 1944 editorial pointed out that the United States could not be blamed for not sending more supplies to Chungking when there was a strong possibility that such supplies might be used only to encourage a disastrous civil war.²

Liberal journals were not just concerned about the apparent fascist tendencies of the Kuomintang. They saw American policy as making this unhappy situation even worse. The New Republic took the initiative in criticizing Americans for working only through the Kuomintang. In a March 13th editorial, it stressed that sole support of the Kuomintang had the bad effect of making Chungking feel it did not need to reform and alienating progressive elements within Chinese society.³ Ernest Hauser in the August 26, 1944 issue of Saturday Evening Post argued that, if latent Chinese democratic forces were not given an opportunity to assert themselves, China might drift towards fascism or communism. He argued that the United States must persuade Chiang Kai-shek to enact political and social reform measures.⁴ The Nation agreed that Western influence was essential to encourage reforms. The September 16, 1944 issue declared that,

"If the United States and Great Britain had a clear-cut policy for supporting the rising democratic elements within China, it is quite possible that Chiang Kai-shek might find the courage to oust the fascist, pro-Japanese clique that is responsible for the recent totalitarian trend in Chungking." Earlier, The Nation had again emphasized that Allied policy to help China must be based up on the recognition that Chiang was the only figure around whom unity was possible. Contributor J. Alvarez Del Vayo remarked that "If the Chinese Communist Party is not so red as may be thought abroad, neither is the Kuomintang so black as its detractors would pretend." Until the Stilwell dismissal in October, American periodicals continued to place high hopes upon reform activities by the Kuomintang. They argued that American diplomatic pressure should be used to encourage such actions. It is interesting to note that American magazines still viewed this use of pressures as compatible with the American tradition of political non-involvement in Chinese internal affairs. As a Nation editorial expressed, "As Americans we are not concerned with the charges and counter-charges made against each other by these two powerful Chinese factions. What does concern us is any ending of the internal struggle so that all the resources of China can be turned against our common foe."  

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5 "The Shape of Things," The Nation, CLIX (September 16, 1944), p. 311.
7 "Inside Red China," The Nation, CLIX (July 15, 1944), p. 61.
The recall of General Stilwell from Chungking caused much debate and controversy in American magazines. The reaction of liberal journals was mixed. The Nation at first concluded, "It would appear that we have abandoned our efforts to revitalize China's military contribution to the war. This will not only have far-reaching effects on basic military strategy, but strengthen the anti-democratic forces within China and delay, possible for years, the solution of that country's political crisis." However, the opinions of The Nation apparently switched to a less pessimistic view within a month. An article in the November 11th issue suggested that Stilwell's recall may have been a minor concession to Chiang Kai-shek to achieve the major objective of Chinese unity. A December 9th editorial confirmed that The Nation still considered Chiang to be China's key leader and that the United States still should support him in eliminating reactionary elements of the Kuomintang and in establishing a rapprochement between him and the Communists. Amerasia similarly viewed the recall of Stilwell and the resignation of Ambassador Gauss as not marking a change in American policy or an indication of American acceptance of non-representative government in Chungking. They concluded that

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10 "Keeping China in the War," The Nation, CLIX (December 9, 1944), p. 705.
both had left China because of their impasse with Chiang; yet the hope of achieving their original purpose remained. The New Republic, however, took a much more pessimistic attitude toward Stilwell's recall. As the leading anti-Chiang Kai-shek periodical in 1944, it saw his recall as a defeat for democratic hopes in China and concluded that "Chiang has proved himself unequal to the task of reforming and democratizing the Chungking armies, despite his numerous protestations of faith."

Such mixed reactions were the response of those periodicals most interested in China prior to 1944. However, the controversy over Stilwell's recall was so great that it produced a new critical interest in China among other periodicals, especially the Luce publications. Fortune, previously concentrating on postwar economic conditions within China, argued that the United States was bound to support Chiang Kai-shek's government as the chief unifying force within China and upon whose survival depended the future of free China. Admitting the faults of the Kuomintang, a Fortune editorial maintained that the United States could fare little better by supporting a totalitarian Communist faction within China. It urged three kinds of help to China: more military aid, economic assistance, and envoys sent to China who had a real knowledge of the country and an ability to work in friendship with the Chinese. To replace Stilwell, they hoped that an "American Lafayette" was

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on his way to Chungking.\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Time} was not critical of Stilwell but rather of the American ultimatum to Chiang. \textit{Time} defended the Kuomintang as safeguarding the last vestiges of democratic principles in China during an undeclared civil war with Yenan, a dictatorship whose purpose was the spread of totalitarian Communism in China. They thus concluded that "if Chiang Kai-shek were compelled to collaborate with Yenan on Yenan's terms, or if he were forced to lift his military blockade of the Chinese Communist area, a Communist China might soon replace Chungking."\textsuperscript{14} This would upset the object of American Far Eastern policy for a hundred years, to keep aggressors from taking over China. \textit{Life} too viewed the Stilwell incident as an indication of unwise and ignorant American meddling in Chinese internal affairs. Their editorial of November 13, 1944 attacked criticism of Chungking as based upon ignorance. Instead sound Sino-American relations would require faith and friendship, not meddling and limiting of aid.\textsuperscript{15} Such articles were indications of a new counter-attack in American magazines against criticism of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang. This was to result in a public debate over American Far Eastern Policy in 1945.

\textsuperscript{13}"Loyalty to China," \textit{Fortune}, XXX (December, 1944), p. 119.
\textsuperscript{14}"Crisis," \textit{Time}, November 13, 1944, p. 45.
\textsuperscript{15}"The U.S. In China," \textit{Life}, XVII (November 13, 1944), p. 32.
Part II: The Military

By the beginning of 1944, few illusions existed in the War Department about the value of China in the Japanese war. Intelligence estimates recognized that the main use of China would be to contain Japanese troops in China and to provide air bases for American planes. Little else was expected militarily from the China-Burma-India theater. It was becoming clear that the C-B-I was being sustained more for psychological and political reasons, to keep China in the war, than for military reasons.

This decreasing emphasis upon the C-B-I theater meant that an increase in the airlift over the Hump could meet Chinese minimum supply needs, that is enough to keep her in the war. It was decided that the Burma campaign would be carried out only in the north. This diminishing military interest in ground operations upon the East Asian mainland was reflected in a new set of instructions to Stilwell from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As Matloff writes,

The new JCS instructions marked the beginning of another phase of U.S. military policy in the CBI and went hand in hand with the more realistic attitude developing in Washington. No longer would Stilwell’s primary mission be to help the British in the Burma operations and improve the combat efficiency of the Chinese army. Rather, he would develop the air link to China and build up forces and stores there to aid in the Pacific advance. The former primary goals would remain as paper objectives but would now be carried out only insofar as they assisted the growth of the air route and its protection.

2 Ibid., p. 437.
3 Ibid., p. 440.
4 Ibid., p. 441.
A new reality began to dominate War Department strategy as planners envisioned the rapid fall of Japan after the surrender of Germany.

Some naval experts, however, felt differently about the C-B-I. Admirals Ernest King and Chester Nimitz continued to feel that the United States should establish positions on the China coast, by which supplies and arms could reach Chinese manpower. They favored landings on Formosa to precede these invasions of the Chinese mainland. Such operations would bypass the Philippines and render unnecessary their recapture. King and Nimitz were proceeding upon the assumption that Chinese troops would have to be used to defeat Japanese armies in China. Consequently, for the navy Russian aid was not essential to the defeat of Japan. If air attacks and naval blockade could defeat Japan without the necessity of a land assault on the Japanese home islands, the value of Russian entrance was not so great. Naturally, naval opinion emphasized this possibility, while army planners stressed the probable necessity of an invasion. Thus the American Army and Navy had different estimates of the value of Russian aid and the utilization of Chinese forces.

The Japanese offensives in the summer of 1944 against American air bases at Liuchow and Kweilin produced an emergency in the C-B-I theater. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and President Roosevelt agreed that drastic actions were needed and responded

by recommending that General Stilwell be given full responsibility and authority over all Allied military operations in China. This proposed new American involvement in Chinese affairs was to culminate in the Stilwell crisis. Both the Japanese offensive and the recall of Stilwell greatly influenced American military thinking about China's role in the war. With the loss of these airfields in East China and with the prospect of bases soon available in the Marianas, the military importance of China faded even more. By October the Joint Chiefs of Staff would conclude that an American landing either in Formosa or on the China coast was unnecessary.\(^5\) For most military leaders, the recall of Stilwell was the final blow. Marshall, King, and Secretary Stimson had completely supported Stilwell in his difficult mission. To them, his recall certainly meant the final acceptance of the C-B-I as a limited operation.\(^7\) Herbert Feis concludes that Marshall and Stimson must have been convinced that with the withdrawal of Stilwell worse failures would follow.\(^8\) After October 1944, a more impersonal approach to the training of China's forces would emerge with General Albert Wedemeyer, the Generalissimo's new Chief of Staff.

In 1943, President Roosevelt had gradually moved to support of the Stilwell approach to Sino-American relations. In 1944, this attitude was reflected in his pressure in April upon

\(^6\)Matloff, p. 530.


Chiang Kai-shek to support Stilwell's offensive in Burma and in October in the attempt to place Stilwell in command of the Chinese army. This new American use of pressure on China met frustration and defeat in the Stilwell recall. From then on, President Roosevelt as well as American military officials felt a sense of helplessness in attempts to aid China. This new attitude was to appear fully in Far Eastern decisions at the Yalta Conference in 1945.

Part III: The Diplomat

President Roosevelt's pressure tactics on Chiang Kai-shek were strongly supported in the State Department and in the Embassy at Chungking. Both had urged such an action in China for some time. Davies' suggestion to Hopkins for a military observer mission to the Chinese Communist regions picked up support in this new presidential attitude towards China. Most diplomatic officials viewed this attitude as a move towards Allied utilization of all Chinese forces and a first step towards a political settlement of the Kuomintang-Communist issue. A new American interest in the Chinese Communists was the resulting consequence. Ambassador Averell Harriman from Moscow reported in June Stalin's view that the Chinese Communists were "margarine" Communists. This report must certainly have influenced diplomatic thinking concerning the Communists. It is clear that concern over the continued military and political


1Feis, The China Tangle, pp. 140-141.
implications of the Kuomintang-Communist split had reached new levels in Washington even before Harriman's report. As early as March, 1944 the President had suggested to Vice-President Henry Wallace that he go to China. Wallace, first stopping in Russia where he was briefed by Harriman, arrived in China in June to encourage Chiang Kai-shek. From his visit, Wallace concluded, "At this time, there seems to be no alternative to support of Chiang. There is no Chinese leader or group now apparent of sufficient strength to take over the government. We can, however, while supporting Chiang, influence him in every possible way to adopt policies with the guidance of progressive Chinese which will inspire popular support and instill new vitality into China's war effort." The Wallace mission, in foreseeing the strong probability of the loss of East Chinese airfields to the Japanese army, only strengthened the U.S. policy of pressure to unify Chinese military forces.

Foreign Service officers saw other advantages in improved American communications with the Chinese Communists. John Davies in a January 15th memo perceived an American observers' mission to Yenan as breaking Chiang's blockade of the Communists and their consequent dependence upon Russia. After the Generalissimo agreed to allow an American mission to Yenan

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3Ibid., pp. 307-308.
following the Wallace visit, Embassy attitudes grew more and more favorable to the Communists. John Service reported that the Communist policy continued to be adherence to the policy of the united front with the Kuomintang and full mobilization to defeat Japan. He further explained "that the Communists base their policy toward the Kuomintang on a real desire for democracy in China under which there can be orderly economic growth through a stage of private enterprise to eventual socialism without the need of violent social upheaval and revolution." Ambassador Gauss agreed that the Communists had moderated their policies but suspected the policy was based upon seeking additional time for strengthening themselves to seize power in China and for gaining the sympathy and support of the great powers. Some differences might exist over Communist objectives, but, to all Embassy officials accustomed to the corruption, war-weariness, and lack of democracy in Chungking, it was only natural that the Communists appeared to be progressive.

As 1944 progressed, the attitude of American diplomats towards the Kuomintang Government grew more critical. A sense of likely failure emerged even more prominently with the summer Japanese offensives and heightened in the Stilwell crisis. The reports of Ambassador Gauss are excellent examples of this increasing fatalistic pessimism. In June 1944, Gauss expressed the feeling that the Chinese Government would continue to hold out for some time, even with the continuing deterioration in

4Ibid., p. 567.
5Ibid., pp. 542, 559-552.
political, military, and economic situations. As Gauss wrote, "In my opinion, while there is reason for the discouragement reflected by so many fine and able Chinese, there is not yet justification for their extreme gloom and their defeatism." By July, however, a new sense of urgency entered the memorands of Gauss. He wrote, for example,

I feel China situation is rapidly reaching desperate straits. . . . I feel that the situation can only be held by radical measures to effect a united front in China representative of all parties and elements who should share with Chiang the responsibility of making and carrying out plans for renewed resistance and for reviving spirit of resistance of both the people and the army. This would require a complete about-face on the part of Chiang and I do not know that other elements could be brought in even if Chiang agrees. I believe, however, the step worth trying and that it should be on Presidential level through diplomatic channels.7

A report by Gauss on November 4, 1944, at the time of his resignation, emphasized the discouraging and unrealistic policies of the Generalissimo. As he explained,

The essence of the Kmt-Communist impasse is that the Communists are naturally unwilling to accept any settlement which might entail liquidation or dissolution of their military forces and thus virtual elimination of their party; the Kmt for its part is looking determinedly to elimination of the Communists and is more than unwilling to give them any legitimate and secure place in the military and political scheme which would entail reduction of Kmt control or prestige or any sharing of government power. Almost all moves these days, political or military, of Chiang and his medievally minded cohorts revolve around the pressing problem of maintaining themselves in power, and under these circumstances there is little if any possibility of achieving a reasonable or realistic settlement of either the Communist or the other difficulties which are more and more besetting Chiang's regime as the weeks go by.

6Ibid., p. 101.
7Ibid., p. 125.
8Ibid., pp. 665-666.
Just as the hopes of the military leaders for China to play a major role in the defeat of Japan had been found to be wishful thinking, so too Ambassador Gauss and Foreign Service officers in China were becoming quite pessimistic about the creation of a postwar unified democratic China under Chiang Kai-shek.

Patrick Hurley brought to Sino-American relations a new optimism. First sent to China to promote better relations between Chiang and Stilwell, Hurley replaced Gauss as Ambassador to China on December 12th. Hurley viewed American policy in China as being: (1) to prevent the collapse of the National Government; (2) to sustain Chiang Kai-shek as President of the Republic and Generalissimo of the Armies; (3) to harmonize relations between the Generalissimo and the American commander; (4) to promote production of war supplies in China and prevent economic collapse; and (5) to unify all the military forces of China for the purpose of defeating Japan.9

However, not all American diplomats agreed with Ambassador Hurley that it was essential to preserve the authority of Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang government. One conflicting attitude was reflected in the pessimistic thinking of Foreign Service officers, especially Davies and Service, in Chungking. The two warned that if American policy-makers were not more realistic, they would commit the United States to support of a bankrupt regime. In a controversial October 10th memo, John Service argued that the Kuomintang was dependent upon American support

9Ibid., p. 745.
for survival but the United States was in no way dependent on the Kuomintang for military reasons or for our future interests in China.\textsuperscript{10} To Davies and Service, this in no way implied the abandonment of Chiang Kai-shok but only a realistic assessment of the future destiny of China. In a November 15th memorandum, Davies argued that American policy makers must keep in mind that power in China was on the verge of shifting to the Communists and that the Communists with this shift of power were the strongest unifying force in China. He warned of allowing this progressive element to adhere by default to the Russians. Rather a coalition government with the Communists was the solution most desirable to the United States as the greatest assurance of a strong, united, democratic, independent, and friendly China. Through a rejection of the Communists and the continued support of Chiang, American would be committed to a regime which had proved itself incapable of unifying China and which was dependent on American support for continued existence.\textsuperscript{11}

Other diplomats in the State Department had a different attitude towards the Kuomintang regime. They proposed support of Chiang Ka-shek only as long as he carried out reforms, cooperated with other Chinese parties, and built a unified, popular government. A memo by John Carter Vincent on December 26th, in which he commented on Hurley's five points, reflected this attitude. Hurley's five points seemed basically sound to Vincent, but

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., pp. 708-711.

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., pp. 695-697.
he stressed that American policy must be sufficiently flexible to avoid embarrassment in the unlikely event that Chiang was ousted. Such officials saw the strength of the Communists as being derived from the failures of the Kuomintang. A memo by Augustus Chase on December 13th emphasized the short-comings of policy recommendations of Service in his October 10th message. Chase maintained that, while most competent political observers would probably agree with most of Service's opinions, relatively few would subscribe to some conclusions such as:

that the "Communists" or provincial troops would be more useful to us than the Kuomintang armies; that any new government (assuming that such a government could even be formed in time) would be better able to mobilize the country; that Chiang did not resist Japan until "forced" by his own people; that we owe him no debt of gratitude; that the collapse of the Kuomintang government would not seriously affect or interrupt China's resistance; or even that the present Kuomintang ideology is fundamentally anti-foreign and anti-democratic.13

Chase concluded that a re-examination of the American position toward the Kuomintang regime would be justified only in the event that no improvement in the Chinese situation occurred through remedial action by Chungking.

At the end of 1944, no consensus existed among American diplomats as to what American policy should be towards Kuomintang China. Hurley's December 24th telegram to Washington was an excellent indication that such differences would not be easily resolved and that a fiery debate might emerge in 1945 between the advocates of the Hurley strategy and the Davies-Service strategy.

12 Ibid., pp. 750-751.
13 Ibid., pp. 735-736.
American diplomats in 1944 were agreed over one issue—the need for postwar Chinese liberal economic policies. Both the Embassy and State Department stressed that liberal economic policies rather than the present reactionary ones were best for the future of China. As Gauss wrote,

notwithstanding China's needs of American banking and other assistance for postwar reconstruction and rehabilitation, American assistance, governmental or private, will not be forthcoming if the Chinese Government persists in its illiberal policies; that we desire to help China, and in the postwar world to enjoy close political and economic collaboration with China, but present Fascist tendencies including tendencies toward state economic controls cast discouraging shadows on prospect of fulfilling desire. It might be intimated also that there would seem to be little point in concluding a commercial treaty with China unless the Chinese Government sincerely and effectually shares our desire for collaboration within a framework of liberal internal and international business economic policies, as in absence of such policies basis for collaboration is lacking. 14

The State Department held similar ideas on this subject. In an August 15th memo, for example, it encouraged the President:

> to express the hope to Ambassador H. H7 Rung that China will at an early date initiate concrete measures to clarify to American businessmen the basis upon which they may be able to operate in China, pointing out that the breadth and liberality of the basis upon which they may be able to operate will have much to do with the degree to which economic collaboration in the post war period, so much desired by both Americans and Chinese, will develop in a mutually beneficial manner. 15

Presidential pressure was seen by the State Department as a means to alleviate what they considered to be an unsatisfactory situation with regard to Chinese laws and regulations governing American trade in China. Thus a concern about the postwar China market was clearly part of American diplomatic attitudes towards China.

14 Ibid., p. 1061.
15 Ibid., pp. 1148-1149.
At the end of 1944, indications of a major public debate over American Far Eastern policy were appearing. Criticism of the Kuomintang regime by liberal periodicals was similar to that made by many diplomatic and military officials in 1943. Meanwhile, the dispute over China in official government circles further deepened with the new Japanese offensives in the summer of 1944 in China and in the recall of General Stilwell in October. Military planners began to view the C-B-I as a nearly meaningless military operation, while differences among diplomats over the future of Sino-American relations only intensified.
Chapter Four

1945: The Public Debate Over China Policy
In 1945, strong pro-Chiang Kai-shek sentiment appeared in American periodicals, raising public debate over the American role in China. Public awareness was further sparked by popular books written by Americans specially interested in China. Conflicting attitudes also existed among government officials over the future of postwar China. By the end of the war, several different images of China existed among Americans. Japanese surrender did little to resolve these contradictions. With the possibility of Chinese civil war increasing, continued American military presence in China appeared controversial and embarrassing. Where Americans had previously been able to put off decisions, they were now faced with political reality in China. With diverse attitudes towards Sino-American relations both inside and outside government, Americans were not well prepared to face their future with China.

Part I: The Periodicals and Books

In 1945, The New Republic and The Nation continued to lead criticism of American Far Eastern policy. The Nation in a March 3rd editorial again expressed concern over the possible use of American war supplies against Communist forces by Chiang Kai-shek. The New Republic charged that American appeasement of Chiang Kai-shek was not only encouraging civil war in China but also affecting American relations with Russia. Their editorial urged that the best way of avoiding civil war before the defeat of Japan would be the appointment of a Supreme Allied Commander in China with

authority over all troops and the right to use them as he saw fit. This step would have the immediate advantage of preventing China's internal political conflicts from weakening China's war effort against Japan. The editors stressed that Chiang Kai-shek could not be this commander and that the United States should insist upon Chiang stepping down as generalissimo.  

The defeat of Japan only increased such criticism. To The Nation and The New Republic, American policymakers were intent upon encouraging the Kuomintang to seek a showdown with the Chinese Communists and establishing "another bulwark against communism." They argued that America should instead work towards the goal of a liberal and democratic China, by following the Stilwell-Gauss line of policy. The target of their criticism was Ambassador Hurley, called by Richard Watts Jr., the "last best hope of reaction in China." Watts argued that "the two victories of our new Ambassador to Chungking have been that he has committed us more strongly than ever to support of the Kuomintang and that he has succeeded in wrecking one of the ablest diplomatic staffs that ever represented the United States in a foreign land." Maxwell Stewart, associate editor of


5 Ibid., p. 41.
The Nation wrote that Hurley’s China “would be a puppet China, bolstered by American arms and patrolled by American troops.”

The Nation in a November 10th editorial, as they had first done on August 25th, again demanded the replacement of Hurley with a man of liberal tendencies who would restore the policies of Stilwell and Gauss and put an end to the use of American armed forces to support one side of a domestic quarrel, in the fashion of the Russian intervention in Eastern Europe. The New Republic called for joint intervention by the Great Powers to mediate between the two sides. Thus, The New Republic saw Russian and American goals in China to be the same: to prevent a civil war and to create a genuine democratic government in China. If a genuine coalition government were not founded, the two periodicals warned an American-Russian confrontation in China would ensue.

Other American periodicals, especially the Luce publications, defended American support of the Kuomintang government and attacked what they called the anti-Chinese party in the American government. Viewing all Communists as subservient to Moscow,

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Fortune saw Russia's goals in the Far East as control of Manchuria and eventually all China. American policy was viewed as being friendly, to the Russians and Chinese Communists at the expense of Chinese democracy and territorial integrity. Americans should instead give China a chance to develop into a strong state. Chiang Kai-shek with the political advantage of United States aid would be able to achieve improved internal conditions and settle the Communist problem by political means. The editors of Life argued that only since Hurley went to China had American policy begun to yield results. These results were the consequences of a policy of complete support for Chiang Kai-shek. They felt American marines should stay in China until the Chinese Communists started to act like a legitimate political party. Viewing the Chinese Communists as one of China's minority parties, they argued that "instead of just preaching and politicking, they shoot and they control." Americans should support the legitimate government of China, thus maintaining what had been the cardinal point of American foreign policy for at least fifty years. Saturday Evening Post similarly feared the Bolshevization of China but also was critical of Kuomintang policy. This was essentially the point of Edgar Snow's


article, "Must China Go Red?" Snow urged combined Anglo-American-Soviet pressure on both parties in China to avoid the return to the old system of two Chinas, one in the North and one in the South. He concluded that whoever ruled Manchuria would eventually dominate all China, meaning at present the Chinese Communists. A December 8th editorial denied the charge that the United States was intervening on one side of a civil war. Instead, Americans were only upholding the authority of the Chinese government, the same one Russia had agreed to deal exclusively with in agreements with Chungking. The editorial closed by claiming the new isolationists on the Left wanted America to bring the boys home and leave Europe to the Red Army. By the end of 1945, The Saturday Evening Post was in effect supporting a policy designed to prevent China from going Communist and ignoring what it had once denounced as fascist tendencies of the Kuomintang.

However much American periodicals disagreed over American policy in China, all united at the end of 1945 to support the selection of General George Marshall to replace Ambassador Hurley. This was especially true of those most critical of Hurley. The New Republic encouraged Marshall to follow the advice and example of Stilwell while praising his selection by President Truman as a shrewd choice. Maxwell Stewart of The Nation called

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14Edgar Snow, "Must China Go Red?," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVII (May 12, 1945), pp. 9-10, 67-68, 70.

15"Left-Wing, Meet America First," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXVIII (December 8, 1945), p. 128.

General Marshall the right man for the China post and expressed hope for the future of Sino-American relations. Even supporters of General Hurley were not particularly disappointed in the selection of Marshall. The *Saturday Evening Post*, for example, wrote that both China and the United States were the gainers from the choice of Marshall, a man trusted by all segments of American society. Ironically, American periodicals at the end of 1945, just as in 1942, were hopeful of a new era of cooperation and friendship between the United States and China. They continued to differ over the means to obtain this goal, American diplomatic support of the Communists or Kuomintang. In 1945, both saw the Marshall Mission as involving the use of American power to support the Chinese political faction they each preferred.

A number of books published in 1945 served to further stimulate American interest in China. Both Gunther Stein and Harrison Forman, war correspondents who had visited Yenan, wrote describing Communist China. Stein maintained that the Communists felt China was not ready for communism, that she first had to pass through a political, economic, and social evolution where democracy and capitalism laid the basis for ultimate socialism. The "New Democracy" of the Chinese Communists meant real democracy; they were no longer engrossed in Marxist ideology. In fact, nationalism was now a more

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characteristic trait of Yenan's ideology than Marxism. The Communists realized, for example, the need to create a safe and stable environment so that Allied capitalists would be willing to invest their capital in China. Mao now realized that China could be dependent upon no other power and must serve as one of the bridges between the two camps of communism and democracy. Stein argued that American policy should no longer be based upon supporting the anti-democratic Kuomintang regime but should be designed to bring this progressive Communist movement into a united China. Harrison Forman in Report From Red China concluded that "the Chinese Communists are not Communists—not according to the Russian definition of the term." Mao Tse-tung was only a Communist in name, not in practice.

Other authors agreed with the analysis of Stein and Forman. Lawrence Rosinger, in his book China's Crisis, concluded that only a progressive China could be strong in the postwar world and serve the interests of the United States. As he wrote,

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20 Ibid., p. 188.
21 Ibid., p. 441.
22 Ibid., pp. 479-481.
24 Ibid., pp. 178-179.
America's interest in China might be summed up in three phrases: winning the war, developing post-war markets, and preserving the peace. Only a strong, democratic China—not a weak, subservient one—can promote these ends properly. A reactionary Chinese government cannot put forth a maximum effort to defeat Japan or develop internal reforms needed to raise popular purchasing power and create a great Chinese market. And since its policies would result in civil war, or at the least a continuing threat of strife, it could hardly play a useful part in preserving Far Eastern peace and might contribute greatly to the factors making for a third World War.26

To Rosinger, the Chinese Communists, a group toward which American policy would not ordinarily be drawn, seemed to be a progressive movement the United States could work with while Chungking moved in an opposite and reactionary direction.27


The situation in Asia is such that we cannot lightly cause delay in beginning to tackle major problems. Delay would cause dislocation of our own economic and political interests. America must realize that Asiatic problems are not academic. They work out to a plus or minus in American exports, imports, jobs or breadlines, because unless we do our share in developing markets in Asia for what we produce, as well as in Europe, Latin America, and Africa, we shall not be able to employ all the men who should do the producing. An American policy toward Asia is therefore not a luxury but a domestic, American necessity. 28

To preserve such interests, it was essential for the transition from colonialism to independence in Asia to be guided through non-revolutionary channels. In Asia, communism could serve as

26Ibid., p. 252.
27Ibid., p. 254.
a progressive force to prevent a return to colonialism or a too rapid change, both of which could upset the stable environment necessary for successful American trade. In China, the Kuomintang was moving from a coalition of interests towards a monopoly of one interest, while the Communists were being transformed in the opposite direction, becoming a coalition party. Continued support of the Kuomintang might be disastrous for two reasons. First, a China dependent upon the United States for its existence would be a cause of conflict between the United States and her allies, both Russia and Britain, and consequently an obstacle to international cooperation. Secondly, Lattimore feared that a one-party dictatorship would be used as a justification for the maintenance of a colonial system in Asia. Neither would be in the best economic interests of the United States.

All American periodicals and books agreed that it was in the best interests of the United States for a stable and progressive China to emerge from World War Two as a democratic nation and market, but differed over which political faction would lead to these desired ends and how the United States should use its power to influence the development of these ends. Liberal periodicals and books called for American diplomatic pressur to support the democratic, anti-Nationalist

29 Ibid., pp. 177-179.
30 Ibid., pp. 107-108.
31 Ibid., pp. 191-192.
32 Ibid., p. 170.
political factions. The Luce publications, on the other hand, favored support of Chiang Kai-shek which would include American military assistance in unifying China. Thus, in 1945 a substantial difference existed in American periodicals and books over what American policy should be towards China.

Part II: Attitudes of the Military and Diplomats at the end of the war.

By 1945, as has already been shown, military planners were agreed upon the minor role China would play in the defeat of Japan. Military debate over Far Eastern policy centered instead around whether Soviet aid was desirable against Japan and whether Japan could be defeated without an invasion of the home islands. Military decisions on these subjects were significant to China, for they influenced concessions in China made to Russia at the Yalta Conference.

The conservative line taken by most military planners was that an invasion and occupation of Japan would be necessary. This meant that Japanese armies in China would also have to be defeated. Feeling that the Chinese were incapable of such an effort, military officers concluded that Soviet troops would be needed. The argument of military necessity also influenced President Roosevelt to view Soviet entrance into the war in the Pacific as highly desirable. Others, especially in the air force and navy, felt that Japan might be forced to give in by bombing and blockade. Admiral William Leahy especially was
an ardent supporter of this strategy.\(^1\) As one might expect, however, conservative thinking dominated military planning and an invasion of Japan continued to be viewed as a necessity.

Meanwhile, a new optimism concerning the military capabilities of China emerged in Chungking. General Albert Wedemeyer concluded that, contrary to the view of General Stilwell, Chinese armies and the Nationalist Government of China were far from reluctant to fight. Instead they had shown great tenacity in resisting Japan. Wedemeyer began to think that suspicion of American intentions in China, motivated by an unsympathetic and unfriendly American approach to Sino-American relations, had caused a reluctance upon the part of Chiang Kai-shek to more actively resist Japan. As he wrote, "If Chiang had had firm assurances of U.S. postwar backing against Communists and Western imperialists, he might have dared to throw all his best troops into battle to stop Japanese advances in China and Burma."\(^2\) Wedemeyer now was so successful in his efforts to retrain Chinese armies that he saw these forces as able to play a large role in the defeat of Japanese armies in China. By May, this new feeling had penetrated the War Department, where the opening of a Chinese port, through which supplies and weapons could be sent, was again planned. The dropping of the atomic bomb occurred only a few days before this expected Port Bayard operation.\(^3\)


By this time, however arrangements had already been made for Russian troops to drive the Japanese out of Manchuria. Decisions at Yalta, partly the result of military pessimism in regard to China's war effort, had confirmed Soviet entrance into Manchuria. Improvements within the Chinese armed forces and the successful testing of the atomic bomb came too late to prevent this.

Differences among American diplomats, referred to in the last chapter, emerged as a public issue in 1945. The discord between Ambassador Hurley and career State Department officials in China was publicly revealed in the aftermath of a February 28th telegram from the Embassy to Washington during the absence of Hurley. The Foreign Service officers and Hurley disagreed in their attitudes towards both the Kuomintang and Communists. Hurley felt that a unified and democratic China could be created by the Generalissimo and the Kuomintang with American support and help. Hurley also argued that Chinese forces would fight the Japanese if only given the opportunity. He felt that the Chinese Communists were not really Communists but a rival nationalist political faction in China. Viewing the Communists as comparable to the out-of-power Republicans in the United States, Hurley maintained that no aid could be given to the Communists without the consent of Chiang Kai-shek, for this would amount to support of an armed belligerent. Denial of

4An excellent example of Hurley's comparison of the Communists to Republicans is in his press and radio news conference of April 2, 1945. See United States Department of State, Foreign
American aid would in fact cause the Communists to reach a reasonable agreement with the Kuomintang.

Foreign Service officers, on the other hand, with their pessimistic attitude towards Chiang and the Kuomintang concluded that the Kuomintang did not have the support of the Chinese people and were incapable of forming a democratic government. Their appraisal of the Chinese Communists was quite similar to that of Hurley, but they differed over what the Communists meant for China. Viewing the Communists as a progressive, popular mass movement in Chinese society, they feared that the lack of American support would drive the Communists to Soviet aid and away from the West, thereby losing for America the friendship of the potential future rulers of China. The best solution for American interests was immediate reform measures by the Kuomintang, to include the participation of the Communists in a coalition government. This would require American pressure upon Chiang Kai-shek. One means of applying pressure was to supply Communist armies.

In February, the dispute over the American supplying of Communist troops came to a head. While Hurley was in Washington, George Atcheson, in charge of the Embassy during Hurley's absence, sent a telegram which in effect challenged Hurley's entire policy in China. Atcheson, speaking for the Foreign Service officers, argued that American support was bolstering Chiang's feeling of strength and making him less willing to compromise, that the Communists had come to the conclusion
that the United States was definitely committed to the support of the Generalissimo alone and therefore were preparing for military action and considering a request for Soviet aid, and that civil conflict was probable if action were not taken now. In the telegram, the Foreign Service officers recommended that the President inform Chiang Kai-shek that military necessity required the supplying of the Communists. This did not mean a reduction of aid to the Generalissimo but represented a step towards the most effective prosecution of the war and towards full solution of the problem of ultimate complete unity. The sending of the telegram outraged Hurley and prompted another public crisis over American Far Eastern policy with the ensuing replacement of Embassy officials who had approved of the telegram. This did not stop criticism of Chiang Kai-shek and Hurley by Far Eastern specialists in the State Department. The later resignation of Hurley made this quite clear. But, most importantly, different attitudes did exist among American diplomats and continued to exist in 1945. Hurley had won only the first round.

Criticism came not only from the Foreign Service officers now in new assignments. Experts in the State Department questioned Hurley's "blank-check" support of the Generalissimo.

As Edwin Stanton, Deputy Director of the Office of Far Eastern

Affairs, wrote,

In our opinion General Hurley's "policy" is increasing Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's intransigence in dealing with the problem of internal unification, is unwisely restricting our military aid to China exclusively to the Generalissimo's forces, thereby preventing us from making use of other Chinese forces which might be effectively used against the Japanese. His policy, we believe, is vitiating the influence and leverage we possess to induce the Generalissimo to bring about the military, economic, and governmental reforms essential to the establishment of internal unity and stability. In brief, Ambassador Hurley is conducting this Government's relations with China along lines which we do not approve and which we fear will lead China toward internal chaos and serious external complications.6

State Department officials were leery of Hurley's approach to Sino-American relations. They felt Chiang Kai-shek was the only present leader who offered a hope for unification, but they stressed that America's long-term objective in China required the maintenance of a degree of flexibility to permit cooperation with any leadership in China that offered the likelihood of fostering a united, democratic, and friendly China. Some saw no reason why support of Chiang Kai-shek should preclude military assistance to the Communists. Joseph Ballantine, for example, in a March 7th memorandum, maintained that aid to the Communists could be limited to military equipment which our military authorities believed could effectively be used against Japan. This small amount of light equipment could cause no danger of an augmentation of Communist strength to the point where they could overthrow the Nationalist Government by armed force.7 Although not as radical as Foreign

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6Ibid., pp. 348-350.
7Ibid., pp. 262-264.
Service officer's opposition had been, hostility to Ambassador Hurley's policies continued to exist in the State Department. The attitudes of American diplomats towards China remained contradictory.

Some diplomatic officials disagreed with Hurley over Soviet intentions in China. The Ambassador based his efforts upon continued Soviet support of American objectives in the Far East, a belief further solidified by talks with Stalin in April. Averell Harriman, Ambassador to Russia, and George Kennan, member of the Embassy in Moscow, felt Hurley's impression of Stalin's intentions were too optimistic. Harriman, in a conversation with Edwin Stanton of the Far Eastern Division of the State Department, made known his opinion that, if Russia entered the conflict in the Far East, Stalin would end his cooperation with Chiang and support the Chinese Communists even to the extent of setting up a puppet government in Manchuria and possibly north China, unless Kuomintang-Communist differences had been resolved by that time and a united Chinese government established which was friendly to Russia. Kennan expressed similar warnings. In a April 23rd telegram, he argued that Stalin was prepared to affirm the principle of unification of Chinese armed forces because he knew such unification was feasible only on terms acceptable to the Chinese Communists. He pointed out that a free China meant to Stalin a China in which there would be a minimum of foreign influence other than Russian. Kennan felt Soviet policy would remain what it had been in the

Ibid., pp. 341-342.
recent past: "a fluid, resilient policy, aimed at the achievement of maximum power with minimum responsibility on portions of the Asiatic mainland lying beyond the Soviet border." This meant that Moscow would aim to reacquire former Czarist possessions on the Asiatic mainland, to acquire sufficient control of North China to prevent a repetition of the Japanese invasion, and to dominate the Chinese provinces adjacent to the Russian border in central Asia. Such warnings received little attention; instead the necessity of Soviet aid against Japan dominated American policy-makers. The diplomats in Washington realized that Soviet attitudes in China might change, as reflected in a April 23rd telegram to Hurley from Secretary of State Edward Stettinius. Stettinius warned that, once Russia was no longer preoccupied in Europe, she could be expected to "re-examine her policy and revise it in accordance with her best interests." He thus urged Hurley to press upon Chiang the necessity for early political and military unification to form the basis for a permanent friendship between China and the Soviet Union. American officials in Washington continued to depend upon a peaceful solution in China, while ignoring the repercussions of a failure of Communist-Kuomintang negotiations.

The arguments of military necessity continued to influence greatly President Roosevelt's attitudes towards China in 1945.

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9 Ibid., p. 343.
10 Ibid., pp. 342-344.
11 Ibid., pp. 344-345.
President Roosevelt was willing to meet Soviet territorial demands in the Far East at the Yalta Conference to bring about a Sino-Soviet rapprochement, to receive Soviet support for the Nationalist Government of Chiang Kai-shek, and to insure Soviet entry into the Pacific theater. As Akira Iriye writes, a reappraisal of China's strength may have made it psychologically easier for President Roosevelt to accept concessions to Stalin that infringed upon Chinese territorial integrity. Roosevelt had decided to base his hopes for world peace on American-Russian friendship. After Roosevelt's death, President Truman took the position that the promises made at Yalta should be kept. However, at the Potsdam Conference Truman, encouraged by Secretary Stimson, attempted to gain assurances that Russia would not interfere with the Open Door in Manchuria. Truman, like Roosevelt, depended more on military officials than American diplomats in plotting American war strategy and policy. The result was a continued emphasis upon military necessities rather than diplomatic concern about China.

Part III: Attitudes of the Military and Diplomats From the Surrender of Japan to the Marshall Mission

The close of the war in the Pacific brought a new problem to American public officials, that of how deeply the United States should intervene in Chinese internal affairs. Periodicals such as The Nation and The New Republic demanded that the United States remove her marines from China and advocated

a purely diplomatic policy in Sino-American relations. Other periodicals, as we have seen, defended and supported the use of American power to maintain Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang regime. Similar differences existed among members of Congress\(^1\) and the American public. Diverse public attitudes placed policy-makers in a potentially polarized situation. In such an atmosphere, diplomats naturally hoped for a Kuomintang-Communist negotiated settlement. By November, however, the chances for this had so diminished that policy-makers seemed to face the dilemma of either abandoning Chiang Kai-shek or intervening in China to preserve him in power.

After the defeat of Japan, the two basic questions facing American diplomats were the amount of direct aid to give to Chiang Kai-shek and assistance to improve his armies through an American military advisor group. Until October, Americans looked forward to a constitutional democratic Chinese government formed by a Kuomintang-Communist settlement. As Feis suggests, the promise of an American advisor group was meant probably to embolden Chiang Kai-shek to risk his fate in a compromise with the Communists.\(^2\) However, Americans were also planning to terminate direct American activity in China by ending the transport and supply of government troops, withdrawing the marines from China, and deactivating the China Theater of War.\(^3\) Thus

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\(^1\)See Walter Judd's speech in \textit{Congressional Record}, March 15, 1945 and Hugh De Lacy's speech in \textit{Congressional Record}, November 26, 1945.


\(^3\)Ibid., pp. 375-376
diplomats hoped for a solution establishing Chiang Kai-shek in control of a democratic coalition government and permitting American active military withdrawal from China. Events in Manchuria were soon to challenge this program.

However, in November officials in Washington became disturbed again over events in China. At the November 13th meeting of the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee, the Joint Chiefs of Staff challenged the planned termination of American military activity in China. They advised that the China Theater should not be deactivated until the American Military Advisory Group had been established in China. This action was a response to the increasing evidence that Chungking was proving incapable of reasserting its authority over all China. The reports of General Wedemeyer confirmed these fears, though not necessarily the JCS conclusions. Wedemeyer reported that the Central Government would not be able to gain and retain control of North China for many months and possibly years, unless an agreement was reached with the Communists. He warned that therefore the continuation of American forces in the China Theater would inevitably lead to serious American involvement in fratridical warfare and possibly to conflict with Russia. He saw three courses of action open to the United States: (1) that all American forces be evacuated from China as soon as possible regardless of the consequences; (2) that Americans approach a solution to the problem unilaterally by providing more forces and shipping

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resources to aid the Kuomintang in uniting China; or (3) that a United Nations trusteeship be set up for Korea or Manchuria. Regardless of which course was decided upon, Wedemeyer emphasized that his orders would have to be made more realistic. Secretary of War Robert Patterson and Secretary of Navy James Forrestal in a November 26th memorandum concluded that a change in Wedemeyer's directives was a political decision and threw the question to the State Department.\(^6\)

The State Department reacted with uncertainty. It advocated continuing to seek a solution which could make use of American power to create a compromise between the two rival factions in China. However, differences soon emerged among the Far Eastern experts. John Vincent, now Director of the Far Eastern office, questioned whether the United States was not moving toward establishing a relationship with China bordering on a de facto protectorate with a semi-colonial Chinese army under our direction. He argued that the Military Advisory Group should only be approved if it would further the American objective of providing for the security of the United States and warned that there should be reasonable assurances that the Advisory Group would not encourage Chiang to attempt unification of China by forceful means. Finally, Vincent warned "that interference in the internal affairs of China would not pay dividends and involvement in civil strife in China would occasion serious

\(^6\)Ibid., pp. 570-678.
difficulties for us without compensatory advantages." Everett Drumright, Chief of the Division of Chinese Affairs, presented a different point of view. He saw the Chinese Communists as making a strong bid to seize control of Manchuria and North China with what appeared to be the aid of the Soviet Union. In this critical stage in China, Drumright argued that policymakers were confronted with two alternatives: (1) to give vigorous support to the National Government so it could regain effective control of all parts of China, including Manchuria; or (2) the withdrawal of American support from the National Government and the evacuation of our armed forces from China. Drumright advocated the support of Chiang Kai-shek as the best opportunity for the unification of China and as the alternative to a strongly entrenched Chinese Communist regime in North China, resulting in a long civil war within China. Concluding that American security interests should be the primary concern in China, he maintained that a policy of American withdrawal or half-hearted assistance to China would destroy what Americans desired, a strong united China with friendly attachments to the United States. 8

In a meeting of the Secretaries of State, War, and Navy, the State Department revealed its policy conclusions, which would culminate in the Marshall Mission: (1) the Marines must be kept in China; (2) the United States should prepare to move other Chinese Nationalist armies north and support them; (3) the

7Ibid., p. 617. (Entire memo is p. 614-617).
8Ibid., pp. 629-634.
United States should seek to arrange a truce in areas now held by Japanese troops and which might be later disputed by the Nationalist and Communist forces; and (4) the United States should continue to support efforts for a political settlement under Chiang Kai-shek with a unified Chinese state and army. It was clear that the Drumright approach to Sino-American relations had been accepted by the State Department.

Ambassador Hurley's resignation in November brought to public attention a new explanation of America's role in China. Hurley in his letter of resignation denounced "the wide discrepancy between our announced policies and our conduct of international relations." He went on to blame the failure of his mission to China upon American career diplomats in the Embassy at Chungking and in the Chinese Division and Far Eastern Office of the State Department, who had sided with the armed Communist party and imperialist bloc to thwart American policy in the Far East. This was the first statement of the conspiracy thesis of the loss of China to the Communists. At the time, however, this notion was not as widespread as it was to become in the era of McCarthyism.

Hurley was replaced as Ambassador to China by General George Marshall. The Marshall Mission represented the effort of the United States unilaterally to use its power and influence

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10 Department of State, Foreign Relations, China, 1945, p. 722.

11 Ibid., pp. 722-726.
to bring the Kuomintang and Communists into a negotiated settlement. This represented a continuation of the American image of a China divided in a way similar to Western two-party politics. But more importantly, it seemed to indicate a realistic use of American power. For the United States seemed to be prepared to abandon Chiang Kai-shek if he refused to accept reasonable Communist concessions. John Hull's memo of a December 9th meeting between Marshall and Secretary of State Byrnes makes this clear. As he writes,

When asked by General Marshall the question--What if the Communist Government agrees to concessions which would appear to be acceptable, while the Central Government refuses to give ground?--Secretary Byrnes stated that in this case the Central Government would be informed that the assistance which we could otherwise give to China would not be given, such as loans, supplies, military and civilian, establishment of military advisory group, etc.; that we would be forced to deal directly with the Communists in so far as the evacuation of Japanese from North China was concerned.  

Such a policy represented a use of American power to assist those groups in China who shared American policy goals of a united Chinese state. However, two days later, American policy had changed. In a meeting between Marshall, Byrnes, President Truman, and Admiral Leahy, the President and Secretary Byrnes concurred with Marshall's view that even if the Generalissimo failed to make reasonable concessions and this resulted in the breakdown of negotiations to secure political unification, the United States should nevertheless assist the Generalissimo in the movement of his troops into north China to re-establish his control over all China.  

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12 Ibid., pp. 761-763.
13 Ibid., pp. 767-769.
in effect that Chiang Kai-shek was being given a blank check by the American Government. Rather than accept a divided China, the United States would continue to support the Generalissimo short of direct American military intervention regardless of whether or not he attempted to negotiate with the Communists. American policy-makers failed to recognize the ambiguity of a policy that sought to encourage Chinese unification and yet continued to support the Kuomintang regime as the government of China even if it made no attempt at negotiated unification.

The development of government policy at the end of 1945 was in striking contrast to the demands of the public to use American power to unify China. Periodicals and books on China differed over whether to support or abandon the Kuomintang, but all agreed that American power should be realistically used to create the goal of a united China that all Americans desired. This the diplomats seemed reluctant to do.
Chapter Five

Could China Have Been Saved?
American images of a unified democratic China in postwar Asia were never fulfilled. China indeed was unified by 1949, but under the auspices of a totalitarian Communist movement. To the present day, Americans have reacted in different ways to the failure of democracy to develop in postwar China. Some have seen it as the consequence of ineffective Kuomintang leadership, while others have viewed it as an American failure. These differing views are also reflected in the writings of historians.

Earliest writings on the subject stressed that the Communist triumph in China was due to Kuomintang failures, not to an inadequacy of American aid. The China White Paper stressed that "its leaders had proved incapable of meeting the crisis confronting them, its troops had lost the will to fight, and its Government had lost popular support." \(^1\) The White Paper concluded that the result of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the American government, for only a full-scale intervention could have saved a regime without faith in itself. Historians John Fairbank and Herbert Feis reached similar conclusions. Fairbank argued that the American capacity to influence events in China had been exaggerated. In reality, the United States could not control Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang generals, who used American material aid and ignored American political advice. \(^2\) Herbert Feis similarly felt that

\[^1\] Dean Acheson, Letter of Transmittal Accompanying United States Relations with China (Department of State Publication, August, 1949), p. xiv

there was little else the United States could have done to save the Kuomintang. He is critical of American policy-makers for basing their Far Eastern policy upon wishful thinking, "that the Chinese people had the latent qualities to become a great nation" and would "prove to be reliable and friendly partners of the West" and that "China would have a sufficiently unified and capable government to control and properly administer its greater domains."\(^3\) Feis maintained that on these views "Roosevelt and Churchill and their advisers, civil and military, risked the whole future of the Far East, and the position and security of their countries in the Far East."\(^4\) Rather than preceding from the unrealistic expectation that China would serve as the main peace-keeper in Asia, Americans should have perceived that no amount of American assistance could create such a China.

Tang Tsou in his *America's Failure in China* differed with these earlier interpretations and maintained that America had failed in China because Americans had not used their power to achieve the policy of making China a great power. As he writes,

> It is obvious that the task confronting the United States was at best an extremely difficult one. It is even likely that no matter what the United States might have done, she could only have postponed but could not have averted the final outcome. But if the United States had had ample resources and manpower to bring overwhelming power to bear on the Chinese situation, if she had subordinated her military activities to political policy, and if she had dealt skilfully with the Nationalist government, the chances of


\(^4\)Ibid.
making China a great and friendly power would have been enhanced. Unfortunately, none of these three conditions was fulfilled...5

According to Tang Tsou, the United States had opportunities to change Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang government into a regime which could have survived, but failed to take advantage of the chances because of the divorce between diplomacy and military power in American Far Eastern policy.

A third historical approach to World War II and postwar Sino-American relations has been critical of American policy, while agreeing with Fairbank and Feis that the regime of Chiang Kai-shek was hopelessly corrupt. Jim Peck in his article American-China Policy: 1942-1946 criticizes the American assumption that the Communists were inherently her enemy and the dogmatic hostility to the Chinese Communists as an alternative to the Kuomintang. Peck argues that American policy-makers should have listened to the advice of Foreign Service officers and realized that if the Chinese Communists came to power they would not necessarily form a pro-Soviet or anti-American government. He takes issue with Tang Tsou and Herbert Feis who both criticized the Foreign Service officers for underestimating the role of ideology in Chinese Communist affairs.

The demand for radical social change has been another theme emphasized in Sino-American relations. The Politics of War, Gabriel Kolko maintains that the United States opposed revolutionary movement, out of fear not only of social upheaval but also of Soviet influence. Therefore, the merging of these two

fears and their implications for American economic and political war aims led Washington to believe that only the Kuomintang could reform China in an acceptable manner, slowly and cautiously. Only by way of a Kuomintang China and a renovated and reformed Japan could the United States "supplant European colonialism with paternal cords of economic relations which would profit the United States and permit prosperity in the new trusteeships." Thus Kolko sees economic and social factors as prompting American distrust of the Chinese Communists.

A final approach to the study of Sino-American relations has been the emphasis upon the role of images and perceptions in international relations. Thus Akira Iriye in his Across the Pacific has stressed the significance of intellectual communication in American-Asian relations. The Iriye thesis is based upon the assumption that no nations can conduct effective foreign policies with each other when those policies are based upon misconceptions of each other. This thesis has applied this approach in the narrow compass of American attitudes towards China during World War Two. I believe that such a study of American images of China can explain much about "America's failure in China."

All Americans agreed that a liberal, democratic, and unified China was in the best interests of the United States. However, differences existed over the best means to implement this policy. One approach was advanced by liberal periodicals.

and called for American diplomatic pressure to support the true democratic forces in China, which to *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, and *Amerasia* meant anti-Nationalist political factions in China. This policy would have meant traditional American military-non-involvement in Chinese internal affairs and by 1945 would have meant the virtual rejection of a Kuomintang-led China. A similar view had been held by American Foreign Service officers in China. A second approach was supported particularly by the Luce publications in 1945 and advocated a policy to assure continued Kuomintang dominance even if it meant active American military involvement in China. This was the beginning of the famous China Lobby. *Life*, *Time*, and *Fortune* emphasized the dangers of an international Communist triumph in China and that cooperation with such a China would be impossible.

Thus a study of American intellectual attitudes reveals that no consensus existed among Americans in regard to events in China. Domestic pressure demanded American action in China; yet different groups were calling for different action. Obviously, the policy enactment of the demands of either group would leave the other unhappy. Placed in such a situation, Washington responded in a predictable manner by attempting to implement a policy designed to keep both sides happy. This policy could involve neither the complete rejection of Chiang Kai-shek and non-involvement in Chinese affairs nor active American military support and intervention to save his regime. The middle course for the State Department was to urge the creation of a coalition government under the leadership of
Chiang Kai-shek and the progressive wing of the Kuomintang. Washington would be the big winner only if American efforts to form a coalition government under Chiang Kai-shek succeeded; however, if this failed, Washington would have to face the wrath of American conservatives for trying to appease the Communists and liberals for adhering to Chiang Kai-shek. This thesis may explain the discrepancy between a proclaimed policy of making China strong and a seeming reluctance by the United States to assist China in realizing this goal. It may well be that different images of the American role in Chinese affairs placed formidable obstacles to any other post-war policy than that followed by the American Government.

State Department policy continued to be based upon reforming the Kuomintang into a liberal and democratic government. As Jim Peck and Gabriel Kolko have argued, this policy was anti-communistic in that the Communists were not viewed as an independent progressive alternative to the Kuomintang. I feel, however, that this point can be overemphasized. To a similar degree, Americans also were opposed to Kuomintang rule as long as corruption, inefficiency, and lack of support remained dominant characteristics of the Kuomintang. Rather, most Americans, liberal and conservative, continued to be infatuated with mission, the idea of creating a new China based on the American model of liberal democratic capitalism. Some admittedly did view Chinese developments after 1944 in terms of a showdown with Communism; yet this did not become a common public or government
The majority of Americans simply failed to realize that democracy was not a practical political model for China in 1945, that it had been discredited in the failure of the Revolution of 1911 leading to warlordism and general chaos and that Chinese society was based on a traditional authoritarian basis. Again, American misconceptions of China left them unprepared for events after 1945 when a disunited China appeared. In such an atmosphere, it is not surprising that both the American public and government were left confused and uncertain of what role the United States should play in post-war China.

American foreign policy was not responsible for the loss of China. As Tang Tsou writes, "No one can lose something which he has never possessed." Yet Americans did fail in China in the sense that a realistic view of the world is fundamental to a sound and wise foreign policy. The American public and government were influenced by distorted images and wishful thinking in appraising events in China. As a result, American policy-makers were in no position to assist Chiang Kai-shek to unify China, even if he had been worthy of such American support. This in itself is the highest form of failure in international relations. Joseph Grew expressed this well when he wrote, "The greatest obstacle to international conciliation is the inability

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of one Government to put itself in another Government's place and to comprehend the difficulties with which that Government is faced, and, when practical, to assist that other Government in overcoming those difficulties for the ultimate good of both countries . . . ."⁹ In their relations with China, Americans failed to achieve the first essential step to world peace, that is to understand and comprehend realistically one's international neighbors.

Bibliography
Primary Sources

Books

Excellent memoirs which were especially helpful in understanding American diplomacy before and during the Marshall Mission.

Useful book especially for the chapters dealing with Potsdam and the author's role as Secretary of State in 1945.

Essential work for understanding the Chennault-Stilwell controversy, although it is at times blatantly biased.

First-hand report on Chinese Communists by experienced journalist that is valuable for understanding public images of China.

Chapters which relate to author's work as Under Secretary of State in 1945 are good, but the best sections deal with his work as Ambassador to Japan before the American entrance into World War Two.

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This work was important for dealing with naval attitudes towards China; in fact, it was my most valuable source for this.

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An excellent work on China, very reliable and easily readable.


In a more convincing argument than Alperovitz presents, Feis documents the events preceding the dropping of the atomic bomb.


Based on State Department files, this work presents a balanced and unprejudiced account of American-Chinese relations during World War II, which virtually is must reading on this topic.
   An outstanding work on diplomacy of the Big Three, which places China policy in a world context.

   Standard work on Japanese-American relations leading up to Pearl Harbor, which takes an affirmative attitude towards American policy.

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   A classic work on American Far Eastern policy; although Griswold's interpretations are out-dated, his book remains an interesting contrast to more modern writings.

   A superb study of American-East Asian relations, which served as the stimulus behind this thesis.

   Dealing with the development of the China Lobby after 1945, Koen provides a correct interpretation of American images of China before 1945.

   In another revisionist work, Kolko emphasizes social and economic factors in American war diplomacy. However, his framework of analysis appears to be too narrow, while his view of Roosevelt as a weak and shallow leader is questionable. His arguments against the Alperovitz thesis however is quite convincing.

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   A stimulating interpretation that economic causes were the most important force driving America to world power in 1898.
An admirable work which properly emphasizes the role of the China Market in America’s emergence as a world power.

Merk is superb in this book, emphasizing the importance of mission in American history.

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A good short account of American diplomacy during World War Two.

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