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A CONFLICT PERPETUATED

China Policy During the Kennedy Years

NOAM KOCHAVI

INTERNATIONAL HISTORY
Erik Goldstein, William R. Keylor,
and Cathal J. Nolan, Series Editors

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For Leah

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Series Foreword

Erik Goldstein, William R. Keylor, and Cathal J. Nolan

This series furthers historical writing that is genuinely international in scope and multi-archival in methodology. It publishes different types of works in the field of international history: scholarly monographs which elucidate important but hitherto unexplored or under-explored topics; more general works which incorporate the results of specialized studies and present them to a wider public; and edited volumes which bring together distinguished scholars to address salient issues in international history.

The series promotes scholarship in traditional sub-fields of international history such as the political, military, diplomatic, and economic relations among states. But it also welcomes studies which address topics of non-state history and of more recent interest, such as the role of international non-governmental organizations in promoting new policies, cultural relations among societies, and the history of private international economic activity.

In short, while this series happily embraces traditional diplomatic history, it does not operate on the assumption that the state is an autonomous actor in international relations and that the job of the international historian is done solely by consulting the official records left behind by various foreign offices. Instead, it encourages scholarly work which also probes the broader forces within society that influence the formulation and execution of foreign policies, social tensions, religious and ethnic conflict, economic competition, environmental concerns, scientific and technology issues, and international cultural relations.

On the other hand, the series eschews works which concentrate exclusively on the foreign policy of any single nation. Hence, notwithstanding the central role played by the United States in international affairs since

World War II, or of Great Britain in the 19th century, history written according to “the view from Washington” or “the view from London” does not satisfy the editors’ criteria for international history, in the proper sense of that term. The books in this series do not assume a parochial perspective. In addition to reviewing the domestic context of any one country’s foreign policies, they also accord appropriate consideration to the consequences of those policies abroad and the reciprocal relationship between the country of primary interest and other countries (and actors) with which it comes into contact.

The vast majority of recent publications in international history, in both book and article form, deal with the period since the end of the Second World War. The Cold War in particular has generated an impressive and constantly expanding body of historical scholarship. While this series also publishes works which treat this recent historical period, overall it takes a long view of international history. It is deeply interested in scholarship dealing with much earlier, even classical, eras of world history. The prospect of obtaining access to newly declassified documentary records (from Western governments and especially from the former members of the Warsaw Pact Organization) is an exciting one, and will doubtless lead to the publication of important works which deepen our understanding of the recent past. But historians must not be dissuaded from investigating periods in the more distant past. Although most of the pertinent archives for such periods have been available for some time and have already been perused by scholars, renewed interpretations and assessments of earlier historical developments are essential to any ongoing understanding of the roots of the contemporary world.

The editors of this series hold appointments in departments of history, political science, and international relations. They are, therefore, deeply committed to an interdisciplinary approach to international history and welcome submissions from scholars in all these separate, but interrelated, disciplines. But that eclectic, humanistic approach should not be misconstrued to mean that any political science or international relations work will be of interest to the series, or its readers. Scholars from any discipline who locate their research and writing in the classical tradition of intellectual inquiry, that which examines the historical antecedents of international conflict and cooperation in order to understand contemporary affairs, are welcome to submit works for consideration. Such scholars are not interested in constructing abstract, and abstruse, theoretical models which have little relation to historical reality, and possess no explanatory power for contemporary affairs, either. Instead, they share the conviction that a careful, scrupulous, deeply scholarly examination of historical evidence is a prerequisite to understanding the past, living in the present, and preparing for the future. And most fundamentally, although they may disagree on the precise meaning of this or that past event or decision, they reject the fash-

ionable but ultimately intellectually and morally sterile assertion that historical truth is entirely relative, and therefore that all interpretations of past events are equally valid, or equally squalid, as they merely reflect the whims and prejudices of individual historians. This group of scholars, the natural clientele of this series, instead believe that it is the principal obligation of scholarship to ferret out real and lasting truths. Furthermore, they believe that having done so, the results of scholarly investigation must be conveyed with clarity and precision to a more general audience, in jargon-free, unpretentious language which any intelligent reader may readily comprehend.

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Acknowledgments

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Abbreviations

ACDA	Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations
AID	Agency for International Development
CBI	China-Burma-India
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CHINCOM	China Committee
Chirep	Chinese representation
CI	Counter-insurgency
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINCPAC	Commander in Chief, Pacific
COCOM	Coordinating Committee for Multinational Export Controls
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DDI	Deputy Director for Intelligence (CIA)
DOD	Department of Defense
FE	Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Department of State
FSO	Foreign Service officer
GNP	Gross national product

GRC	Government of the Republic of China
HUMINT	Human intelligence
ICBM	Intercontinental ballistic missile
INR	Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State
IO	Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State
ISA	Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
KMT	Kuomintang (Nationalist Party)
LTBT	Limited Test Ban Treaty
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group
MAP	Military Assistance Program
MLF	Multilateral Force
MMT	million metric tons
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEFA	Northeast Frontier Agency
NIPE	National Intelligence Program Evaluation
NPC	New Pacific Community
NSC	National Security Council
OCI	Office of Current Intelligence
O/NE	Office of National Estimates
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PL	Pathet Lao
PLA	People's Liberation Army (PRC)
PL480	Public Law 480: Agricultural Trade and Assistance Act, 1954
POWs	Prisoners of war
PPS	Policy Planning Staff
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
USIA	U.S. Information Agency
USIS	U.S. Information Service

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

AES Papers	Adlai E. Stevenson Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton, New Jersey
AK Papers	Arthur Krock Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton, New Jersey
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations Records, New York, New York
CO	Country
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DOS	Department of State
<i>DSB</i>	<i>Department of State Bulletin</i>
EOR Papers	Edwin O. Reischauer Papers, Harvard University
<i>Executive Sessions</i>	U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, <i>Executive Sessions of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee</i> (Historical Series)
f	folder
FE	Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Department of State
FO	Foreign Office, Great Britain
<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i> (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office)
IO	Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State
JA Papers	Joseph Alsop Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
JBMF	John Bartlow Martin Files on Adlai E. Stevenson, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton, New Jersey
JCT Papers	James C. Thomson Papers, John F. Kennedy Library
JFKL	John F. Kennedy Library, Columbia Point, Boston, Massachusetts
LBJL	Lyndon B. Johnson Library, Austin, Texas
M&M	Meetings and Memoranda
NA	National Archives, College Park, Maryland
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NSF	National Security Files
OH	Oral History

POF	President's Office Files
<i>PPP</i>	<i>Public Papers of the Presidents</i>
PREM	Prime Minister's Office
PreP	Pre-Presidential Papers, John F. Kennedy Library
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew, Great Britain
RG	Record Group
RH Papers	Roger Hilsman Papers, JFKL
<i>ROG</i>	<i>Record of Groups</i>
ROH	Rusk Oral History, Richard B. Russell Library, University of Georgia, Athens
<i>ROM</i>	<i>Record of Meetings</i>
SNIE	Special National Intelligence Estimate
S/P	Policy Planning Council, Department of State
USUN	U.S. Delegation, United Nations
WAH Papers	W. Averell Harriman Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division
WH	White House

A Note on Transliteration

In general, the Pinyin system of transliteration has been used for most mainland Chinese names and places, and the Wade-Giles system for Taiwanese ones, except where they appear in different form in quotations or where familiar names might be confused if changed.

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Introduction

The United States and China conducted an important relationship during the John F. Kennedy years. The China factor figured significantly in Kennedy's halting progress toward détente with the Soviet Union, his quest for a nuclear test ban, and his handling of the Vietnam issue. As well, the notion of a critical contest with the Chinese over Third World allegiances both fueled and colored official interest in the Asian-African arena.¹ For its part, Beijing's perception that the United States was behaving in an imperious fashion reinforced Mao Zedong's hawkish predilections. In addition, Beijing took advantage of friction with Washington to divert domestic attention away from the economic catastrophes that had befallen the country.² No full-length study, however, has made the Kennedy administration's China policy its principal focus.

The web of Rashomonesque reminiscences and sharply competing interpretations surrounding Kennedy's performance enhances the value of inquiry into this topic. The writing on Washington's encounter with Beijing has mirrored the familiar pattern of Kennedy historiography. As historian Nancy B. Tucker notes, early eulogizers of Camelot insisted that had the young president lived, he would have repaired relations with China in his second term.³ This corresponded to the picture of an open-minded Kennedy who had proven himself extremely capable of "growing," learning from the recurring crises he experienced, and steering toward a more conciliatory stance in the handling of the Cold War.⁴ A later school of historians conversely posits a president who was more inclined to obsession than growth, in the China sphere as elsewhere. According to Thomas G. Paterson, Warren I. Cohen, James Fetzer, and particularly Gordon H. Chang, Kennedy rigidly "believed the Chinese to be fanatics and feared the atomic bomb

that they were in the process of developing.” To their mind, he epitomized an action-prone quest for victory, imbued with ethnocentricity and insensitive to the limits of American power.⁵ Utilizing newly available evidence to review Kennedy’s China record may help to advance some of these debates, shedding light not only on U.S. policy in the Asian theater during the early 1960s but also on Kennedy’s overall performance as president.

One key interest of this book is Kennedy’s “China mind-set” or “prism.” Following a trail blazed primarily by political scientist Alexander George, this line of inquiry explores Kennedy’s pertinent assumptions and premises regarding the fundamental nature of politics and political conflict; his image of the Chinese leadership and perception of the threat China posed to American security and the international order; the prism’s elasticity and evolution over time; and Kennedy’s capacity for refining it to incorporate novel information and changing circumstances. Careful attention is given to the related issue of whether the president contemplated a major China policy departure.⁶

The attendant probe into the president’s China *modus operandi* arguably affords a glimpse of his policy-making style in general. It examines both Kennedy’s modes of analyzing conditions and his willingness to assume the initiative—and run risks—both at home and abroad. Under particular scrutiny will be the purposefulness, coherence, and utility of Kennedy’s patterns of foreign policy making. The China case provides useful insights into Kennedy’s relationship with the foreign service and the intelligence community, as well as evidence relevant to the controversy over the consequences of his aversion to formalized and structured decision-making procedures.⁷

Historical narratives by members of the administration are often emotionally charged, personalized, and contradictory. This is especially true with respect to Foggy Bottom.⁸ Over the years, a number of critical subordinates and historians, some of them Kennedy defenders, have leveled the charge of undue rigidity and zealotry on China policy against Secretary of State Dean Rusk.⁹ Rusk responded with a hint that the inflexibility was not his but Kennedy’s.¹⁰ Seeking a balanced verdict, this book appraises both Rusk’s conduct and the self-portrayal of the China “revisionists” as opposed to the prevailing conservative ethos on China.¹¹ It further offers a rough typology of revisionist thinking and attempts to determine the extent to which the revisionist endeavor influenced the Kennedy administration’s record and legacy.

Expanding the lens from the level of national policy making to the Sino-American dynamic, this study situates the Kennedy era on the continuum of Sino-American history. Under scrutiny are the degree of departure from previous American practices, particularly those exhibited under Dwight D. Eisenhower, and the stamps the Kennedy years left on future Sino-American relations. Incorporating such a perspective is imperative, since a purely Washington-centered analysis would not only distort the historical

record but also, in historian Christopher Thorne's biting words, run the risk of "national, cultural, and disciplinary parochialism."¹² Although not easily achieved, given lingering limits on research opportunities in Chinese archives, the bilateral dimension can be elucidated to some extent, thanks to pioneering works by Chinese and American scholars who have carefully examined the growing trickle of documentary evidence emanating from Beijing. These studies allow some tentative responses to a cluster of key questions: On balance, was the Chinese leadership receptive to the notion of transforming Sino-American relations? How united was the Chinese leadership on the question of basic policy toward the United States, and how did the related intraleadership power dynamic evolve over time? Did Washington misread China's intentions on account of psychological predispositions, domestic political considerations, or "strategic triangle" calculations? In short, did Washington miss an opportunity for rapprochement as early as the Kennedy years by not following a more conciliatory line?

Finally, the Kennedy administration's China policy furnishes an instructive historical instance of the management of deep-seated conflicts. The deterrence paradigm, long encapsulating much of the conventional wisdom in the field of international security studies, has come under scrutiny during the last 20 years. Its challengers criticize the paradigm on two levels. As an operational guideline, it may cause decision makers to overlook the "security dilemma." Namely, they might fail to appreciate the degree to which their deterrence policies acquire the nature of a self-fulfilling mechanism, stoking apprehension and hostility on the other side and thus contributing to an escalatory spiral. As a theoretical construct, when applied arbitrarily, the paradigm might become too abstract, static, and apolitical. Deterrence theory, its detractors assert, often suffers from a tendency to neglect domestic political factors and fails to adequately explain change in the intensity of conflict, particularly its amelioration.¹³ This case study touches themes and questions germane to this debate. How committed was Kennedy to the objective of deterrence and to a confrontational, zero-sum conceptualization of the Sino-American game? How closely did his public statements mirror his private thinking on this matter? How did the spectrum of relevant opinion within the administration at large evolve over time? And ultimately, were the administration's conflict management strategies central to the perpetuation of Sino-American hostility, or did the root factors reside elsewhere?¹⁴

At the time of writing, accessible records are voluminous and rich enough to render the project feasible, though two important impediments to a comprehensive account still exist. First, a particularly protracted declassification process is not yet complete, particularly with respect to the role of the Defense establishment. Even the privileged authors of the *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* series themselves secured but partial access to

intelligence-related files maintained at the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR).¹⁵

Second, certain features of "New Frontier" decision-making style work to handicap research. Kennedy and Rusk were evidently prone to making some major decisions off the record. As Kennedy confidants testify and scholarly studies confirm, both statesmen revealed neither their innermost self nor the full range of their intentions to their subordinates. Further, the secretary of state often kept his counsel for the president's ear alone. For his part, Kennedy was inclined to reach decisions through informal (and hence, less detectable) channels, only pretending to keep issues open for deliberation in formal forums such as the National Security Council (NSC). He liked to communicate his decisions by voice and in the presence of the chosen few. And the obsession of both decision makers about leaks served to create gaps in the written record.¹⁶

A number of recent developments combine to largely offset these drawbacks, however. On the Chinese side, domestic reforms and the collapse of the Soviet Union have converged to create an atmosphere more conducive to serious historical inquiry. As historian Robert J. McMahon observes, the "trickle of documentary and first-hand evidence emerging from China, the Soviet Union, even from Vietnam, [while of mixed reliability], has made the writing of a truly international history of the Cold War suddenly appear a not-so-impossible prospect."¹⁷ On the American side, archivists at the Kennedy Library have made important strides in opening files,¹⁸ in part thanks to the liberalization of mandatory declassification rules. The Central Intelligence Agency's decision to increase access to some intelligence files also bears directly on China policy.¹⁹ Finally, the Johnson Library (Austin, Texas), the Council of Foreign Relations (New York), the Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), and the British Public Records Office all house records that usefully complement the main body of evidence extracted from both the Kennedy Library and the National Archives at College Park, Maryland. In aggregate, the available corpus of documentation opens new vistas on Sino-American relations during the Kennedy years.

The timing of this study has both drawbacks and benefits from a historiographic perspective. As Robert Jervis and historian Diane B. Kunz comment, the contemporary historian may find the concerns and aspirations of 1960s statesmen quite foreign. Consider, for instance, the New Frontier preoccupation with the notion that the United States was on the verge of losing the Cold War.²⁰ In the Chinese context, hindsight knowledge of the "Nixon shock" only renders this discrepancy more acute. One may easily commit the error of slighting the obstacles to a significant Chinese-American accommodation, in terms of both the American domestic climate and the degree to which the idea of rapprochement appealed to the Chinese leadership.

On the other hand, scholars have recently started to look at the Kennedy

administration's foreign policy with more detachment and a better sense of balance.²¹ They draw a complex picture of the president and his administration that is better substantiated, more specified, and more nuanced than had previously been the case.

As for the literature on Sino-American relations after the establishment of the People's Republic, between 1950 and the late 1970s, traumatic events such as the "who lost China" imbroglio and the Korean and Vietnam Wars haunted not only American-Chinese relations but American political life in general. Accordingly, the contemporaneous historiographical discourse was imbued to an unusual degree with presentism, preconceptions, political convictions, and a generally polemic tone. The "Cold War prism" determined the terms of debate, lending a "blame-game" cast to scholarship. The Kennedy era mainly conformed to this mold.²²

The first 20 years after the "Nixon shock" saw a shift away from this cast—evincing, in part, the tendency of U.S.-China relations to be marked by what Charles R. Lilley has termed "oscillation between euphoria and disillusionment."²³

The departure from the Cold War prism culminated during the 1990s for a number of reasons. The winds of Vietnam had largely subsided by this time. Moreover, and somewhat paradoxically, the Tiananmen massacre of June 1989 injected some equanimity into the Sino-U.S. relationship, as officials and interested observers on both sides lowered expectations. In addition, relevant American (and British) records underwent massive declassification, while historians have further refined the practice of selectively borrowing tools from the social sciences to illuminate the cognitive and bureaucratic underpinnings of the policy-making process. Finally, an unprecedented number of Chinese scholars arrived on the stage of serious and relatively nonpolemical historical analysis, bringing a new (though limited) access to Chinese archives as well as channels of communication and collaboration between Chinese and non-Chinese scholars.²⁴

These developments have facilitated a more sophisticated examination of the history of Sino-American relations. To date, however, the Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower periods have received most of the attention.²⁵ It is time to attempt a comprehensive application of the new wave of scholarship to the Kennedy era as well.²⁶

The framework of analysis employed here builds on some recent seminal volumes on Sino-American relations. Historians Nancy B. Tucker and Rosemary Foot have demonstrated the advantages of reconstructing the policy-making environment as the politicians and officials saw it, averting a monofocal emphasis on the "strategic triangle," and embedding analysis within a broad contextual framework.²⁷ Following these examples, this study interweaves a roughly chronological narrative with an inclusive approach that factors in bureaucratic as well as "linkage" politics. The role of pressure groups such as the "China Lobby" is investigated, and attention

is paid to other domestic aspects of American China policy, to include the views of the mass public, the attentive or informed public (at most some 15 percent of the population), and especially the views of the policy elites with access to top decision makers—as well as the interplay of public opinion with executive performance.²⁸

It is, however, the cognitive approach to decision making that most informs this study.²⁹ Underlying this choice is the premise that “filters” in the minds of policy makers, formed by their belief systems and past experiences, explain policy decisions as much as interests, whether political, bureaucratic, or personal.³⁰ Identification of perceptual schema helps one to elucidate the way policy makers interpret the decision-making environment and process new information. The particular value and import of the cognitive approach to this study derive partly from the key historical question: Did psychological predispositions lead the Kennedy team to misread Beijing’s intentions and, thus, miss opportunities to reduce conflict with viable compromises?

The emphasis on cognitive processes meshes with the imperative of examining the intelligence facet of China policy making during the Kennedy years. This undertaking is important for its own sake, as intelligence performance on China has previously received only scattered attention in the literature and also coincides with the welcome trend of integrating the hitherto “missing dimension” of intelligence into the mainstream disciplines of diplomatic history and policy studies.³¹

The first two chapters of the study explore the policy environment on the eve of Kennedy’s ascent to power, evaluating Eisenhower’s legacy and the perceptual baggage the Kennedy team brought to bear on the issue. The third chapter identifies the emerging patterns of 1961, and the fourth assesses American performance with regard to charting events on the Chinese scene. The fifth and sixth chapters turn the spotlight on the elusive American effort at integrating China policy into broader Asian policy goals. The seventh and eighth widen the geographical lens still further to assess the administration’s success in playing the triangular strategic game. Highlighting several key themes, the concluding summary attempts to link an individual-level focus on Kennedy with a bilateral-level appraisal of the conflict management strategies he employed.³²

NOTES

1. See Gordon H. Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948–1972* (Stanford, Calif., 1990), 217–252; James Fetzner, “Clinging to Containment: China Policy,” in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Kennedy’s Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961–1963* (New York, 1989), 196; “Notes on the NSC Meeting,” 15 November 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961–1963* (hereafter cited as *FRUS*) 1:607; Dennis Merrill, *Bread and the*

Ballot: The United States and India's Economic Development, 1947–1963 (Chapel Hill, 1990), 142–148.

2. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vol. 3: *The Coming of the Cataclysm* (New York, 1997), 270–281, 298, 325; Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: U.S. Relations with China since 1949* (Oxford, 1995), 263; Alfred D. Wilhelm, Jr., *The Chinese at the Negotiating Table: Style and Characteristics* (Washington, D.C., 1994), 214–215; Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, 2001), 11–12, 83–84.
3. Nancy B. Tucker, “No Common Ground: American-Chinese-Soviet Relations, 1948–1972,” *Diplomatic History* 16:2 (1992): 321; Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (Garden City, N.Y., 1967), 347–348, 580–581; Hilsman letter to author, 7 May 1995; Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York, 1965), 665–666.
4. As historian Thomas G. Paterson explains, this conception of growth and unfulfilled promise, cultivated by many a Kennedy associate, has also been central to the interpretative framework of a number of historians. See Paterson, ed., introduction to *Kennedy's Quest*, 6, 318–319 nn.15, 16. The image achieved an enduring hold over the American popular mind, in good part due to the trauma of Kennedy's assassination. For general discussions of Kennedy historiography and mythmaking, see Thomas Brown, *JFK: History of an Image* (London, 1989); Burton I. Kaufman, “John F. Kennedy as World Leader: A Perspective on the Literature,” *Diplomatic History* 17:3 (1993): 447–469.
5. Fetzer, “Clinging to Containment,” 178–197; Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, 217–252; Warren I. Cohen, “The United States and China since 1945,” in Warren I. Cohen, ed., *New Frontiers in American–East Asian Relations: Essays Presented to Dorothy Borg* (New York, 1983), 160. The quotation is from Nancy B. Tucker, “Continuing Controversies in the Literature of U.S.-China Relations since 1945,” in Warren I. Cohen, ed., *Pacific Passage: The Study of American–East Asian Relations on the Eve of the Twenty-first Century* (New York, 1996), 226.
6. For one elucidation of Alexander George's cognitive approach to policy making, see Alexander George, “The Causal Nexus between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behaviour: The ‘Operational Code’ Belief System,” in Lawrence Falkowski, ed., *Psychological Models in International Politics* (Boulder, Colo., 1979), 95–124.
7. This last Kennedy trait drew favorable appraisals from Alexander L. George, “Presidential Management Styles and Models,” in Charles W. Kegley, Jr. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, eds., *Perspectives on American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1983), 466–468; David Kaiser, “Men and Policies: 1961–1969,” in Diane B. Kunz, ed., *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade: American Foreign Relations during the 1960s* (New York, 1994), 19. Others, officials as well as historians, have faulted the trait as breeding disorder, confusion, and ill-fated intrigue. See U. Alexis Johnson, with Jef Olivarius McAllister, *The Right Hand of Power* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1984), 326–330; John Prados, *Keepers of the Keys: A History of the National Security Council from Truman to Bush* (New York, 1991), 102–103; Moya Ann Ball, *Vietnam-on-the-Potomac* (New York, 1992), 36–37, 99.
8. Of course, the phenomenon of conflicting recollections is not unique to the case at hand but is rather a staple feature of both retrospective historical evidence and human memory. The accentuated presence of the phenomenon here probably

owes much to the salience of emotion and high drama in recent Sino-American history (i.e., the “who lost China” imbroglio, the bitter legacy of the Korean War, and the “Nixon shock”). The Kennedy “China hands,” often personally engaged in these episodes, obviously could not help but reflect on these matters in a somewhat agitated state of mind.

9. James C. Thomson, John K. Galbraith, Roger Hilsman, and Foster Rhea Dulles have been among the most strident critics of Rusk on this score. See James C. Thomson, “On the Making of U.S. China Policy, 1961–1969: A Study in Bureaucratic Politics,” *China Quarterly* 50 (April–June 1972): 233; James Thomson OH, 22 July 1971, LBJL; Hilsman OH, 15 May 1969, LBJL; Foster Rhea Dulles, *American Policy toward Communist China, 1949–1969* (New York, 1972), 192; John K. Galbraith, *A Life in Our Times* (Boston, 1981), 402–406, 428 n.3.
10. For an elaboration of Rusk’s argument, see Chapter 3 in this volume.
11. For an example of this portrayal, see Thomson, “On the Making,” *passim*. In the context of this study, “revisionists” denotes a disparate group of Democratic officials who sought, in significantly varying degrees, to revise the Eisenhower administration’s China policy—a policy an early revisionist quite aptly defined as one of “no intercourse” with the People’s Republic of China (PRC). “US Policy toward China,” Edward Rice, (S/P 61159), 26 October 1961, f. “S/P-61159: US Policy towards China, 10/26/61,” box 14, JCT Papers.
12. Christopher Thorne, “After the Europeans: American Designs for the Remaking of Southeast Asia,” *Diplomatic History* 12:2 (1988), 208. For similar, if somewhat milder, statements, see John K. Fairbank, *China Perceived: Images and Policies in American-Chinese Relations* (New York, 1974), xiv; Michael H. Hunt, “Internationalizing U.S. Diplomatic History: A Practical Agenda,” *Diplomatic History* 15 (Winter 1991): 1–11; Michael H. Hunt and Steven Levine, “The Revolutionary Challenge to Early U.S. Cold War Policy in Asia,” in Warren I. Cohen and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Great Powers in East Asia, 1953–1960* (New York, 1990), 13–14; Thomas G. Paterson, “Defining and Doing the History of American Foreign Relations: A Primer,” in Michael G. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge, 1991), 52–53.
13. A useful overview of some of the literature critical of deterrence theory is Robert Jervis, “Deterrence Theory Revisited,” *World Politics* 31:2 (1979): 289–324. For a more recent critique of both the practice and theory of deterrence, see Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and Sean M. Lynn-Jones, “International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field,” *International Security* 12 (Spring 1988): 5–27; Robert Jervis, Richard N. Lebow, and Janice G. Stein, eds., *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore, 1985); Richard N. Lebow and Janice G. Stein, “Beyond Deterrence,” *Journal of Social Issues* 43:4 (1987): 5–71.
14. The methodological orientation employed here endorses historian John L. Gaddis’s and political scientist Robert Jervis’s assertion that an interdisciplinary focus that integrates perspectives from political psychology and history would benefit both disciplines. Specifically, it embraces Jervis’s advocacy of the need to treat the theory of deterrence and conflict management inductively by looking at historical cases in some detail and by applying perspectives of cognitive psychology. See John L. Gaddis, “Expanding the Data Base: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Enrichment of Security Studies,” *International Security* 12:1 (Summer 1987): 5; Richard N. Lebow, preface to Jervis, Lebow, and Stein, eds., *Psychology and De-*

- terrence, viii; Robert Jervis, "Political Psychology—Some Challenges and Opportunities," *Political Psychology* 10:3 (1989): 487; Fred I. Greenstein, "Taking Account of Individuals in International Political Psychology: Eisenhower, Kennedy and Indochina," *Political Psychology* 15:1 (1994): 61–74.
15. Preface to *FRUS 1961–1963* 22:iv. Thus, this study only partially meets the pressing need, identified by historian Michael A. Barnhart, for more studies on the role of the military in America's relations with East Asia. Michael A. Barnhart, "Whose Asia?" *Diplomatic History* 16:3 (1992): 470.
 16. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 4–5, 284; Warren I. Cohen, *Dean Rusk* (Totowa, N.J., 1980), 99; Johnson, *The Right Hand of Power*, 320–321; preface to *FRUS 1961–1963* 22:vii.
 17. Robert J. McMahon, "The Cold War in Asia: The Elusive Synthesis," in Michael J. Hogan, ed., *America in the World: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations since 1941* (Cambridge, 1995), 528. See also Tucker, "Continuing Controversies," 215.
 18. Researching the Kennedy era at the library has become a less frustrating experience in recent years. See James N. Giglio, "Past Frustrations and New Opportunities: Researching the Kennedy Presidency at the Kennedy Library," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 22:2 (1992): 371–379.
 19. For instance, the declassification of pertinent material has informed *Orphans of the Cold War: America and the Tibetan Struggle for Survival* (New York, 1999) by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) official John K. Knaus.
 20. Diane B. Kunz, introduction to *The Diplomacy of the Crucial Decade*, ed. Kunz, 3; Robert Jervis, backcover to *ibid.*
 21. Kaufman, "John F. Kennedy as World Leader," 448.
 22. A case in point is Felix Greene's crusading *A Curtain of Ignorance: How the American Public Has Been Misinformed about China* (Garden City, N.Y., 1964). Witness also the telling—and dismal—story of Ross Y. Koen's pioneering *The China Lobby in American Politics* (New York, 1974). This indictment of the proKuomintang (KMT) China Lobby, scheduled for publication in March 1960, was suppressed until 1974, ostensibly because of its accusation of Chinese Nationalist involvement in drug trafficking, but actually as a result of China Lobby (and Chinese Nationalist) pressure. See Stanley D. Bachrack, *The Committee of One Million: The "China Lobby" and U.S. Policy, 1953–1971* (New York, 1976), 4, 167–172.
 23. Charles R. Lilley, "American–East Asian Relations in the Heroic and Whig Modes," *Diplomatic History* 18:1 (1994): 141. See also Harry Harding, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China since 1972* (Washington, D.C., 1992), 5–22.
 24. Tucker, "Continuing Controversies," 214; McMahon, "The Cold War in Asia," 528–529; Rosemary Foot, "Leadership, Perceptions and Interest: Chinese-American Relations in the Early Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 20:3 (Summer 1996): 474.
 25. This "new wave" of scholarship has virtually transformed the understanding of the crucial Chinese (and Soviet) role in the initiation and continuation of hostilities in Korea. McMahon, "The Cold War in Asia," 529. It has also sparked anew the long-standing debate around the question of whether the Truman administration missed a chance to reach a *modus vivendi* with Beijing prior to the Korean War. See John W. Garver, "Polemics, Paradigms, Responsibility, and the Origins