

*A Unique Relationship: The United States and the Republic of China Under the Taiwan Relations Act.* Edited by RAMON H. MYERS. [Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989. 165 pp. ISBN 0-8179-8871-8.]

This collection of six essays, edited by Hoover Institution Senior Fellow Ramon Myers, revolves around the way the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) has altered the triangular relationship between the United States, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC). In considering this subject, the now-defunct superpower rivalry between the U.S. and Soviet Union, the bilateral U.S.–ROC ties, and the evolving U.S.–PRC relationship are all examined. Various sources, including the TRA itself and public statements issued by governments involved, are coupled with interviews and other direct sources that make for a thorough and forceful analysis of the unique relationship between the United States and ROC. And while the scrutiny of American arms sales and instrumentality issues will tire a casual reader, the data is well-utilized and supports the conclusion that the TRA indeed has been effective and should be continued for the foreseeable future.

Ramon Myers' succinct review of the shift to unofficial relations between the United States and Taiwan closes by emphatically stating that the TRA has added significantly to regional security and prosperity. It is left largely to the other contributors to support his assertion. Harvey Feldman describes the functional relationship and analyses several instances of crisis management under the TRA, concluding that it has served the needs of all parties well enough to resist any substantial alterations. Robert Sutter frames the TRA debate between the U.S. Congress and successive presidential administrations interested in closer ties to the PRC and finds that the Congress is not likely to alter the TRA because of the unavoidable fact that it works. Richard Bush covers the security aspects of the relationship. He goes into detail about the agonizing negotiations concerning arms sales to the ROC, and the trouble this issue caused in developing a relationship with Beijing, but notes that the security promises in the TRA have been fulfilled.

Ralph Clough begins his analysis of U.S.–PRC relations by cataloging the cycles that have occurred since the 1973 normalization communiqué related to Taiwan's status, and concludes that the TRA has allowed the United States more elasticity in ensuring that any downturn would not threaten Taiwan's security. Finally, David Chou analyses hastily the manner in which the ROC reacted to the TRA, but expends most of his energy criticizing the Carter administration for its "negative attitude." His focus on the difficulties in managing such a large and complex relationship as exists between the United States and ROC without diplomatic relations is not matched by any compelling evidence that TRA needs to be altered.

The real strength of this volume is to show that the TRA has proven flexible and effective in promoting the development of relations between the United States and ROC, and has brought needed balance into relations with the PRC. Various strengths and weaknesses of the Act are discussed,

but the weight of analysis shows that the TRA has served its purpose. Additionally, the essays show that the ROC and PRC had begun by the mid-1980s to accept that the TRA would determine American policy in the region, and had therefore begun to move away from purely zero-sum calculations vis-à-vis each other. In all, this collection can provide both a resource for scholars and a lesson for decision-makers in the United States contemplating an enhanced relationship with the ROC: history shows that a commitment to both a one-China policy and engagement with both sides of the Taiwan Strait serves the interests of all parties.

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*The British Government's China Policy 1945–1950.* By ZHONG-PING FENG. [Keele: Ryburn Publishing, Keele University Press, 1994. 189 pp. £26.00. ISBN 1-85331-053-0.]

This is a study of British policy towards China during the critical five years from the end of the Second World War to the outbreak of the Korean War. It covers the efforts of the British to re-establish themselves in China and relaunch their trade; the recovery of Hong Kong in the face of pressures from Chiang Kai-shek and reservations on the American side; the difficult relations with the Nationalist government; British internal debate over the Kuomintang–Communist struggle; the eventual decision to abandon Chiang Kai-shek and establish relations with the Communist regime; and the disappointing Communist response to the British overtures.

Feng brings out clearly the economic rationale for British policy: of the major powers, Britain had much the largest commercial stake in China and the government's object throughout was to maintain that position. He also brings out the steady decline in British power in the world as the background against which China policy had to be decided. Weakened and impoverished by the war, Britain found itself crucially dependent on the United States and therefore constrained, for example, by the pro-Nationalist complexion of American China policy and by the worsening Western relations with the Soviet Union in Europe.

British officials are shown to have had little love for the KMT. They were at first ill-informed about the Communists and inclined to class them as agrarian reformers; but they soon recovered from this error and were quick (much quicker than the Americans) to sense the possibilities of "Titoism" in China and consequent Sino-Soviet strains. The decision to accord *de jure* recognition to the Chinese People's Republic was a realistic one, based on a recognition of the fact of Communist control and the calculation that this was the best way to preserve British interests. The Foreign Office, however, underestimated the nationalist, xenophobic element in the new rulers' thinking: they wanted trade but they were intent on expelling foreign enterprises. In the end British firms were taxed