



Threatened by peace: the PRC's peacefulness rhetoric and the 'China' representation question in the United Nations (1949–71)

Elisabeth Forster

To cite this article: Elisabeth Forster (2021) Threatened by peace: the PRC's peacefulness rhetoric and the 'China' representation question in the United Nations (1949–71), Cold War History, 21:4, 411–427, DOI: [10.1080/14682745.2019.1678028](https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2019.1678028)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2019.1678028>



Published online: 25 Dec 2019.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 541



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Threatened by peace: the PRC's peacefulness rhetoric and the 'China' representation question in the United Nations (1949–71)

Elisabeth Forster ^{a,b}

^aHistory Department, University of Southampton, Southampton, UK; ^bInstitute for Chinese Studies, University of Freiburg, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany

ABSTRACT

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC) not only distrusted, but also feared, the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s assertion to be peace-loving. The reason was that the PRC used its peacefulness claim to negotiate whether the ROC or the PRC should represent 'China' in the United Nations, based on a specific definition of 'peacefulness' and on the socialist World Peace Movement as a platform of public diplomacy and international networking. This explains a function of the PRC's peacefulness claim in the Cold War and rewrites the chronology of the PRC's gradual United Nations entry.

KEYWORDS

China; Taiwan; United Nations; China representation question; peace; World Peace Movement; World Peace Council

Introduction

In March 1961, the embassy of the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC) that was stationed in Mexico requested money for bribes – or, as they called it, 'intelligence expenses' – from the Foreign Ministry in Taipei. The purpose was to pay Mexican 'investigators from the Mexican immigration bureau' and other 'secret agents' for information on 'communist bandits' (*fei gong* 匪共), [who] might be staying in Mexico for many days'. 'Communist bandits' was the PRC's standard term to refer to representatives of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The Mexican investigators and agents would expect to be paid for any information they gave, and the more secret the 'bandits' visit became, the more 'expensive' this information was going to be, the embassy specified. The 'communist bandits', on the other hand, needed to be 'investigate[d] and monitor[ed]'. 'Would it be possible to grant the transfer of an information fee [at a value of] 400 USD as a means of coping [with the situation],' the embassy asked.¹

The occasion seemed strangely at odds with this hysteria, which was to last for the duration of the visit, with near-constant telegrams being sent to Taipei and the three 'bandits' every move being observed. What was happening was a three-week visit to Mexico by three obscure delegates from the People's Republic of China (a poet, an author, and a translator).² They participated in a four-day congress of the Latin American branch of the World Peace Council

CONTACT Elisabeth Forster  E.A.H.Forster@soton.ac.uk  History Department, University of Southampton, Building 65, Avenue Campus, Southampton SO17 1BF, UK

¹ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (2)," 7 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

²ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (2)," 4 March 1961, 2, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

(WPC), followed by a trip around the country.³ This was a way for the PRC to participate in the Soviet Union-sponsored World Peace Movement and to present itself to the world as a peace-loving nation. In the eyes of the ROC, it became clear from further correspondence with the ROC Foreign Ministry, this visit was a threat to the ROC's seat as 'China' in the United Nations and its legitimacy as a state.⁴ From 1945 to 1971, the ROC represented 'China' in the United Nations, and was then replaced by the PRC. In the 1950s and 1960s, the PRC used the peacefulness rhetoric, first of all, to appeal to a clause in the Charter of the United Nations, according to which 'peace-loving states' should be its members.⁵ Secondly, it deployed it to garner goodwill and support within the World Peace community, in the hope that the states from within this community would eventually vote for the PRC's entry into the UN in the United Nations General Assembly.

That peacefulness was scary was an assessment with which, in fact, many Western (in the Cold War sense) secret services and political bodies agreed. They called the World Peace Movement one knot in a network of 'Communist "front" organisations' or of 'camouflage organisations' (Western German Federal Intelligence Service: 'Tarnorganisationen', Swedish secret services: 'täckorganisationer'⁶). The Western German Federal Intelligence Service coined the name 'the world-communist net' (das Weltkommunistische Netz) to describe this.⁷ Other organisations in this 'net' were, in their view, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, or the Women's International Democratic Federation.⁸

From a Western perspective, this 'world-communist net' engaged in 'propaganda'.⁹ An expression that was created in 1965 in the US to denote the same (according to its inventor Edmund Gullion), just without the 'pejorative connotation' attached to 'propaganda', was 'public diplomacy'.¹⁰ Since then, public diplomacy has been used as an academic category to analyse the sort of diplomacy that does not happen between state actors, but between states and foreign publics or between foreign publics.¹¹ The precise definition of public diplomacy

³ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 14 December 1960, 2, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan; and ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (2)," 4 March 1961, 3.

⁴ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 14 December 1960, 2.

⁵UN, "Charter of the United Nations," 26 June 1945, II.4.1, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf> accessed 27 March 2017.

⁶'Communist "front" organisations': "Commons Sitting," *20th Century House of Commons Hansard Sessional Papers (Hansard)* 5, no. 639 (3 May 1961): 1563; and CIA, "The World Peace Movement," 1 October 1956, 5, CIA-RDP78-00915R000300040002-2, CIA Historical Collections, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/historical-collections> accessed 1 January 2019; 'Tarnorganisationen': BND, "Neue Richtlinien ...," April 1959, 2, B 206/3237, Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde (BArch); 'täckorganisationer': Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen: Säkerhetstjänsternas övervakning av fredsorganisationer, värnpliktsvägrare och FNL-grupper 1945–1990," 2 January 2002, 25, <https://www.regeringen.se/rattsliga-dokument/statens-offentliga-utredningar/2002/01/sou-200290/> accessed 6 August 2018.

⁷BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," May 1959, 1, B 206/3237, BArch.

⁸CIA, "The World Peace Council," 1954, 3, CIA-RDP78-00915R000300040001-3, CIA Historical Collections, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/historical-collections> accessed 1 January 2019; Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 26; "British Guiana," *20th Century House of Commons Sessional Papers* 23 (October 1953): 11, <https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1952-043684?accountid=13963> accessed 1 January 2019; and "Lords Sitting," *Hansard* 5, no. 179 (25 November 1952): 563.

⁹World-communist net': BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," 1; 'Propaganda': Nils Silfverskiöld, "Pressgrannar," *Dagens Nyheter*, 2 October 1949; and BND, "Erhöhte Aktivität des Weltfriedensrates im chinesischen Raum," 23 September 1959, 1, B 206/3237, BArch.

¹⁰Nicholas John Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945–1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 260.

¹¹Nancy Snow, "Rethinking Public Diplomacy," in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, ed. Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 6; Evan H. Potter, *Branding Canada: Projecting Canada's Soft Power through Public Diplomacy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 32; and Ingrid d'Hooghe, *China's Public Diplomacy* (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2015), 18.

has been a matter of debate, but scholars have included 'citizen diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and strategic communications, and ... nation-branding' under this headline.¹²

I suggest reading China's peacefulness rhetoric as part of a huge range of public diplomacy strategies which the PRC deployed, all of them designed to raise China's profile on the international stage and, in some cases, to achieve more specific steps along this way, such as gaining membership of the United Nations. It was designed, in the words of the British House of Lords in 1954, to 'seduce' foreign publics into these agendas.¹³ Among other such strategies were youth, sports, cultural, and educational exchanges.¹⁴ Simultaneously, the quest to turn China into a global player was supported by traditional forms of high-level diplomacy, among them the Asian-African Solidarity Movement, which was launched with the Bandung Conference of 1955.¹⁵ Western governments therefore considered Bandung as part of the same net to promote socialism and world revolution.¹⁶

Cold War paranoia led the ROC and other Western governments to overstate the effectiveness of the threat of peacefulness, when in fact it suffered from the general ailments of public diplomacy. As Ingrid d'Hooghe states, public diplomacy sometimes does not travel outside of a certain network.¹⁷ Moreover, its impact is, arguably, in its very nature difficult to trace. In the case of China's peacefulness rhetoric, eventually both the PRC government and Western secret services had to concede its limitations.

Exploring it is nevertheless important, in order to appreciate the sheer breadth of the PRC's strategies towards UN entry and to see that the PRC launched these strategies as early as 1949, the year of its foundation. By contrast, much of the previous literature has focused on high-level meetings between the PRC and the United States, on state-level diplomacy between the ROC and the United States, and on economic policies.¹⁸ This literature has identified the

¹²Hooghe, *China's Public Diplomacy*, 28. See also Potter, *Branding Canada*, 36. For a criticism, see Eytan Gilboa, "Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616, no. 1 (March 2008): 55–77.

¹³Literally 'seductive', 'Lords Sitting,' *Hansard* 5, no. 190 (8 December 1954): 319.

¹⁴Sofia Graziani, "The Case of Youth Exchanges and Interactions Between the PRC and Italy in the 1950s," *Modern Asian Studies* 51, no. 1 (January 2017): 194–226; Jian Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 257–62; Nicolai Volland, "Inventing a Proletarian Fiction for China: The Stalin Prize, Cultural Diplomacy, and the Creation of a Pan-Socialist Identity," in *Dynamics of the Cold War in Asia: Ideology, Identity, and Culture*, ed. Tuong Vu and Wasana Wongsurawat (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 93–111; Matthew D. Johnson, "New China's Wartime Cosmopolitanism: Media Industries, Cinematic Exchange, and Grassroots International Culture, 1949–1953" (2016); Jiang Huajie, "Gonggong waijiao de yishi xingtaihua: lengzhan shiqi Zhongguo peixun A'erbaniya shixisheng jihua jiedu," *Waijiao pinglun* no. 4 (2012): 129–43.

¹⁵Jian Chen, "China and the Bandung Conference: Changing Perceptions and Representations," in *Bandung Revisited: The Legacy of the 1955 Asian-African Conference for International Order*, ed. See Seng Tan and Amitav Acharya (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), 134; Shu Guang Zhang, "Constructing 'Peaceful Coexistence': China's Diplomacy toward the Geneva and Bandung Conferences, 1954–55," *Cold War History* 7, no. 4 (November 2007): 518.

¹⁶The ROC on Geneva: "Gongchan jituan wei peihe Rineiwa huiyi suo cai ge xiang xingdong zhi yanjiu," 1954, 1, 008-010602-00007-001, Guoshiguan. Bandung: "Dui Zhu Mao feigang liyong Ya-Fei huiyi jinxing waijiao hodong de celüe yinmou zhi fenxi," 16 April 1955, 20, 008-010602-00010-002, Guoshiguan.

¹⁷Hooghe, *China's Public Diplomacy*, 21.

¹⁸PRC-US meetings: James Fetzer, "Clinging to Containment: China Policy," in *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961–1963*, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 178–97; Zhang Xiujuan, "Zhou Enlai yu Zhongguo huifu zai Lianheguo hefa xiwei de douzheng lishi," *Dang de wenxian* no. 1 (1997): 33–5; Noam Kochavi, *A Conflict Perpetuated: China Policy during the Kennedy Years* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2002); Liu Zikui, "Meiguo yu 1966 nian Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," *Dangdai Zhongguoshi yanjiu* 14, no. 6 (November 2007): 55–61; Zhang Yijun, "Cong Zhongguo zai Lianheguo daibiaoquan wenti kan Zhong-Mei zhi jian de zhanlue bo'yi," *Zhongguo minzu daxue xuebao (zhxue shehui kexueban)* no. 1 (2015): 164–70. ROC-US diplomacy: Wang Zhenghua, "Jiang Jieshi yu 1961 Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," *Guoshiguan guankan* 21 (September 2009): 95–150; and Wang Zhenghua, "Jiang Jieshi yu 1971 Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," *Guoshiguan guankan* 26 (December 2010): 131–76. Economic policies: Shuguang Zhang, *Beijing's Economic Statecraft during the Cold War, 1949–1991* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2014).

PRC's United Nations entry as an event that only started shortly before its success, telling a story about how the split between the PRC and the Soviet Union under Khrushchev led to the rapprochement between the United States and the PRC after 1969, which led to the recognition of the PRC as 'China' by more countries, which in turn led to its UN entry in 1971.¹⁹ The focus on the peacefulness claim, however, shows that the PRC played UN entry as a much longer game.

Moreover, the PRC's self-image as a peace-loving nation has existed until the present day. In the 2000s, President Hu Jintao talked about China's 'peaceful rise'. Today, President Xi Jinping attributes a 'peace gene' to the Chinese people.²⁰ There has therefore been a lot of academic discussion if this is propaganda or an accurate description of the country's foreign policy outlook, both past and present.²¹ It is therefore useful to examine how the rhetoric was deployed in the past – into which messages foreign audiences were meant to be 'seduced'.²²

With archival access being increasingly restricted in mainland China – especially on the 1960s and 1970s – and the World Peace Council collection in the Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis in Paris having proven inaccessible to me, this picture needs to be triangulated: from correspondences between embassies and foreign ministries; from reports by the Chinese and other national peace committees; and from Western secret service documents.²³ These are drawn from the Declassified Documents of the Foreign Ministry in Beijing, the Beijing Municipal Archives, the Academia Historica (Guoshiguan, the state archive) in Taipei, the Bundesarchiv in Berlin, the UK Parliamentary Papers, and the CIA Historical Collections as well as a range of published materials, such as newspapers and propaganda materials.

The China representation question in the UN

The PRC's membership in the United Nations was one of the questions that was negotiated through the peacefulness claim. The core problem of this question was that between 1949 and 1971, both the ROC on Taiwan and the PRC in mainland China laid

¹⁹Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 238–76; Jeremy Scott Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 197; and Zhang Xiujuan, "Nikesong zhengfu yu Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaowan wenti (1969–1971)," *Lishi jiaoxue* no. 8 (2008): 39–44.

²⁰Luo Ronghai, "Xuexi Xi Jinping jianghua: heping shi Zhonghua minzu sui shengceng de wenhua jiyin," *Renminwang*, 30 September 2014, <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2014/0930/c1001-25766367.html> accessed 9 April 2018.

²¹Confucianism as a pacifist source: John King Fairbank, "Introduction: Varieties of the Chinese Military Experience," in *Chinese Ways in Warfare*, ed. Frank Algerton Kierman and John King Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 7; Confucianism as a source for pacifist rhetoric: Morton H. Fried, "Military Status in Chinese Society," *American Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 4 (1952): 347–57; Hans J. van de Ven, "War in the Making of Modern China," *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 4 (1996): 737; Nicola Di Cosmo, "Introduction," in *Military Culture in Imperial China*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 2. Slogans like 'peaceful rise' and 'peaceful coexistence' as indicators for China's disinclination to war Chen Yue, "'Zhongguo weixie lun' yu Zhongguo heping jueqi: yi zhong 'cengci fenxi' fa de jiedu," *Waijiao pinglun* no. 82 (March 2005): 93–9; Biwu Zhang, "Chinese Perceptions of US Return to Southeast Asia and the Prospect of China's Peaceful Rise," *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 91 (2 January 2015): 176–95; Honghua Men, "China's Position in the World and the Orientation of Its Grand Strategy," *Modern China Studies* 24, no. 1 (2017): 42. These slogans as empty propaganda: Ralph D. Sawyer, "Chinese Strategic Power: Myths, Intent, and Projections," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 9, no. 2 (2006–2007): 57–62; June Teufel Dreyer, "US-China Relations: Engagement or Talking Past Each Other," *Journal of Contemporary China* 17, no. 57 (2008): 591–609. Alternative viewpoints: Liselotte Odgaard, *China and Coexistence: Beijing's National Security Strategy for the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012), 162; and Wang Yiwei, "Chaoyue heping jueqi: Zhongguo shishi baorongxing jueqi zhanlue de bijiaoxing he kenengxing," *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* no. 8 (2011): 140–60.

²²[s]eductive', "Lords Sitting," 8 December 1954, 319.

²³I could not obtain the written permission by the current president of the WPC, which is required for access to the Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis.

claim to being the only state that should represent China in the United Nations. As a 1949 document written by the Foreign Policy Group of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party stated, 'the question of China having a seat in the UN General Assembly' was not just about gaining membership, but about 'the *recognition question* of the People's Republic of China' (emphasis in the original).²⁴

China had been a founding member of the United Nations at the San Francisco conference of 1945. At the time, it was uncontested that China was led by Chiang Kaishek's government, and therefore Guomindang representatives formed the majority of China's signatories of the UN Charter, with only one person signing on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party.²⁵ In the ensuing civil war between the Guomindang under Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communist Party under Mao Zedong (1945–9), China split into the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China on the mainland, both with aspirations of being the one, true China.

Initially, the United Nations recognised the claim of the ROC, turning down the PRC. The ROC's claim was supported by the United States and the PRC by the Soviet Union, and while the United States' commitment to the ROC's cause diminished over time, both superpowers remained loyal to their respective choices for 'China'. However, UN membership is voted on in the General Assembly, where, naturally, the non-superpowers were in the majority.²⁶ PRC strategies, such as the peacefulness rhetoric, were therefore targeted at the countries that were not the superpowers (Mao Zedong called them the 'Intermediate Zone' [*zhongjian didai*]) and not the Eastern Bloc, whose support in the UN question it had anyway.²⁷ It was shifts in the preferences of the non-superpowers that eventually voted the PRC in and the ROC out in 1971.²⁸

From the early 1950s onwards, the PRC and its allies engaged in a variety of manoeuvres, from sending messages to the United Nations, to submitting draft resolutions and motions to the General Assembly. They also adopted the PRC's narrative that it was the legal representative of 'China' and the ROC an 'illegal' government.²⁹ In 1950, the Soviet Union even boycotted the UN Security Council over the China recognition question, which, incidentally, prevented it from vetoing the UN's entry into the Korean War.³⁰

On the ROC side, the United States and other non-superpowers tried to counter these moves through changing strategies. Initially, the United States put a moratorium on

²⁴Zhong-Gong Zhongyang waijiaozu, *Guanyu Zhongguo chuxi Lian-Da wenti*, 1949, 2, 113-00001-02, Waijiaobu dangan'guan (WJBDAG).

²⁵Zhang, "Zhou Enlai yu Zhongguo huifu zai Lianheguo hefa xiwei de douzheng lishi," 62.

²⁶UN, "Charter," II.4.2.

²⁷Mao coined the term 'Intermediate Zone' in 1946, but it only gained traction in the second half of the 1950s. In the 1960s, Mao distinguished between two Intermediate Zones: Asia, Africa, and Latin America on the one hand, and the Western non-superpowers (including Japan) on the other. In the 1970s, the Intermediate Zone was replaced by the Three Worlds theory. Luo Shiping, "Mao Zedong 'zhongjian didai' lilun de tichu yu fazhan," *Dangshi yanjiu yu jiaoxue* no. 2 (2000): 33–5.

²⁸J.D. Armstrong, *Revolutionary Diplomacy: Chinese Foreign Policy and the United Front Doctrine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); Zhang, "Constructing 'Peaceful Coexistence'"; Julia C. Strauss, "The Past in the Present: Historical and Rhetorical Lineages in China's Relations with Africa," *China Quarterly* 199 (2009): 777–95; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*.

²⁹UNGA, "Question of the Representation of China," 18 October 1951, A/1923, United Nations Archives, Official Document System (UNODS), <https://documents.un.org/> accessed 22 February 2018. Example for a message: UNGA, "Economic and Social Council Official Records," 1 August 1950, 2 (Agenda item 32), E/11TH SESS. (RESUMED)/ANNEXES, UNODS, <https://documents.un.org/> (accessed 13 March 2018).

³⁰Vaughan Lowe et al., eds., *The United Nations Security Council and War: The Evolution of Thought and Practice since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), vi.

including the debate about the China representation in the General Assembly agenda. In 1951, it was supported in this by Italy and Thailand. From 1952, it did so alone.³¹ But over the years, the ROC lost the support of increasingly more nations, especially from non-aligned African countries, and consequently only won the moratorium vote by a narrow margin in 1960.³² Therefore, a new strategy was developed, which made the China representation question 'an important question' and which was proposed by 'Australia, Colombia, Italy, Japan, and the United States'.³³ As per the Charter, any decisions on an 'important question' needed a 'two-thirds majority'.³⁴ At home, meanwhile, the PRC shilly-shallied on the question of whether it wanted to enter the UN. While it had wanted this in its early years, it announced in the mid-1960s that the UN was unjust and under the thumb of the United States, and therefore called for a 'reformed' United Nations.³⁵ This initiative, however, came to an end in 1966.³⁶

The final phase of the PRC's entry into the United Nations came in 1971, when geopolitical allegiances had changed again. Thanks to the PRC-Soviet split, the United States was striking up an alliance with the PRC to counter the Soviets. Kissinger visited China in the summer of 1971 and Nixon would visit soon afterwards, and they found that Beijing was adamant about the UN question. Increasingly more non-superpowers recognised the PRC as 'China' as part of this PRC-US rapprochement, among them Canada and Italy.³⁷ Even the United States (which would only recognise the PRC in 1979) referred to mainland China as the 'People's Republic of China' in February 1971.³⁸ Finding itself increasingly more cornered, the government in Taipei came to accept the idea of 'dual representation' in the United Nations, that is, that both the PRC and the ROC could be represented.³⁹ The United States submitted an 'explanatory memorandum' to this purpose to the UN in August 1971.⁴⁰

The fateful day, then, was 25 October 1971, when the General Assembly found itself tasked with voting on three major draft resolutions: one by Australia, Latin American countries, Asian states and the United States, calling for a continuation of the 'important question' strategy; another by largely the same countries, proposing dual representation; and a third, submitted by Albania and various Asian and African countries, calling for the PRC's replacement of the ROC. This is sometimes referred to as the 'Albanian resolution'. At the initiative of the United States, the 'important question' resolution was voted on first, but rejected.⁴¹ Then the US proposed to vote separately on the part of the Albanian resolution

³¹Wang, "Jiang Jieshi yu 1961 Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," 99.

³²Zhang, "Zhou Enlai yu Zhongguo huifu zai Lianheguo hefa xiwei de douzheng lishi," 64; and Wang, "Jiang Jieshi yu 1961 Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," 99.

³³'An important question': UNGA, "Representation of China in the United Nations," 15 December 1961, A/RES/1668 (XVI), General Assembly Resolutions, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/16> accessed 13 March 2018; 'Australia, Colombia, Italy, Japan, and the United States': United Nations, *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1961 (New York: Office of Public Information, United Nations, 1963), 125.

³⁴UN, "Charter," IV.18.2.

³⁵Earlier years: Zhong-Gong Zhongyang waijiaozu, *Guanyu Zhongguo chuxi Lian-Da wenti*, 2; 1960s: "Indu'nixiya tuichu Lianheguo shi Zhengyi de zhengque de geming xingdong," *RMRB*, 10 January 1965, Beijing; "Shou diguozhu yi kongzhi de Lianheguo bi jiang kuatai," *RMRB*, 9 February 1965, Beijing.

³⁶Winsberg Chai, "China and the United Nations: Problems of Representation and Alternatives," *Asian Survey* 10, no. 5 (May 1970): 407.

³⁷Wang, "Jiang Jieshi yu 1971 Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti," 138.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 144.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 153.

⁴⁰USA, "Letter to the Secretary-General," 17 August 1971, 2, A/8442, UNODS, <https://documents.un.org/> accessed 21 February 2018.

⁴¹On the result of the vote by country, see UN, *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1971 (New York: Office of Public Information, United Nations, 1974), 131.

that would expel the ROC, but was defeated. Thereupon the ROC representative declared that his country would withdraw from the General Assembly, a move that Chiang Kai-shek had announced in his talks with Washington for a long time.⁴² Finally, the Albanian resolution was accepted, with votes for both sides coming from all across the world. In favour of the resolution were the Eastern European countries. Among the Western European states in favour were the United Kingdom, the Scandinavian countries, France, Italy, and Austria; among the Latin American nations were Cuba, Ecuador, and Mexico.⁴³ The dual representation resolution was dismissed without a vote (seeing as it contradicted the already accepted Albanian resolution).⁴⁴

‘Seductive titles’ – arguing for United Nations entry⁴⁵

One of the stranger aspects of the World Peace Movement was that the different Western secret services and governments projected their various greatest fears into it. For the CIA in the late 1960s, the Movement was directed against the United States’ Vietnam policy.⁴⁶ For the Western German Federal Intelligence Agency, it was about the ‘German question’.⁴⁷ For the Swedish secret services, it was about Soviet infiltration in general.⁴⁸ In the eyes of the British parliament in the 1950s, it was against NATO and for decolonisation.⁴⁹ For the ROC, it was about the China representation question in the UN.⁵⁰

The UN Charter

The ROC’s fear was, first of all, based on the fact that successfully claiming peacefulness made the PRC eligible to become a United Nations member. After all, the United Nations Charter stipulated that membership was open to ‘peace-loving states’.⁵¹ The PRC was aware of this. As the 1949 briefing of the CCP’s Central Committee pointed out, opponents, such as the United States, might ‘slander our China as not having the qualification of a member, citing the obligation stipulated by the Charter [and saying that] our government . . . is not a peace-loving country’.⁵²

When arguing for the PRC’s entry into the United Nations, allies therefore emphasised mainland China’s peaceful character. For example, in August 1970 various African countries, Albania, Cuba, and Romania addressed a letter to the Secretary-General of the UN, arguing for the PRC’s membership on the basis that ‘China [i.e. the PRC] sincerely desires peace and peaceful coexistence with all countries.’⁵³ The

⁴²Wang, “Jiang Jieshi yu 1971 Lianheguo Zhongguo daibiaoquan wenti,” 137.

⁴³For a complete list, see UN, *Yearbook 1971*, 136.

⁴⁴For a full account of the General Assembly vote, see *ibid.*, 126–32.

⁴⁵“Lords Sitting,” 8 December 1954, 319.

⁴⁶Vladimir Bukovsky, “The Peace Movement and the Soviet Union,” 1 May 1982, 3, CIA-RDP85T00153R000300020014-2, CIA Historical Collections, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/historical-collections> accessed 1 January 2019.

⁴⁷BND, “Tagung des Weltfriedensrates in Stockholm,” 23 May 1959, B 206/3237, BArch.

⁴⁸Justitiedepartementet, “Den farliga fredsrörelsen,” 29.

⁴⁹“Lords Sitting,” 25 November 1952, 563; and “Commons Sitting,” *Hansard* 5, no. 660 (24 May 1962): 777.

⁵⁰ROC embassy in Mexico, “Telegram to the Foreign Ministry,” 14 December 1960, 2.

⁵¹UN, “Charter,” II.4.1.

⁵²Zhong-Gong Zhongyang waijiaozu, *Guanyu Zhongguo chuxi Lian-Da wenti*, 2.

⁵³Albania et al., “Letter to the Secretary-General,” 2 September 1970, 3, A/8043/ADD.2, UNODS, <https://documents.un.org/> accessed 2 February 2018.

allies of the ROC, unsurprisingly, argued the exact opposite: the PRC should not enter because of its 'war-like character and aggressive behaviour'.⁵⁴

Peace as a concept

Secondly, the ROC's fear hinged on the conceptualisation of peace. In international political thinking of the time, peace did not denote the absence of war, but a fight against the 'aggressors' and 'warmongers'. Simultaneously, the Western secret services and governments felt, 'peace' sounded harmless ('seductive') enough to trick naïve non-communists into aiding a Soviet front organisation, namely the World Peace Council (WPC).⁵⁵

During the Cold War, the PRC's peacefulness claim was part of a global dichotomy between Eastern and Western Bloc, in which the socialist world called itself 'peace-loving' and the capitalist world self-identified as 'free'. The World Peace Council had been founded in 1948 on a Polish initiative and was soon sponsored by the Soviet Union.⁵⁶ Its activities consisted of organising mass campaigns to sign appeals (e.g. against the atomic bomb in 1950), distributing propaganda materials, and convening international congresses, such as the one in Mexico in March 1961.⁵⁷ It was made up of a secretariat and a presidium, as well as of national committees. In the Eastern Bloc, the national committees were backed by their states. In the West, they were run by individuals from all walks of life, some of them artists, some scientists, some politicians.⁵⁸ Often, though not always, they had communist leanings, and they were frequently persecuted by their governments and monitored by their secret services.⁵⁹ The PRC had participated in the World Peace Council since 1949.⁶⁰ But it was excluded in 1967 as a result of the PRC-Soviet split.⁶¹

Peacefulness, in the eyes of the PRC and the World Peace Movement, was not about a disinclination to wage war; rather, it was about making statements about international allegiances. Peacefulness was envisioned as a 'fight for peace' ('lutte pour la paix', *zhengqu heping*), and a fight against those declared 'warmongers'.⁶² This idea was not peculiar to the World Peace Council or the Eastern Bloc, but also inherent in the idea of collective security, which had originated at the end of the First World War.⁶³ As it therefore predated the Cold

⁵⁴UN, *Yearbook 1961*, 126.

⁵⁵Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 26; "Lords Sitting," 8 December 1954, 319; "Commons Sitting," 3 May 1961, 1563; "Commons Sitting," 24 May 1962, 777; and BND, "Neue Richtlinien . . .," 2 'seductive': "Lords Sitting," 8 December 1954, 319.

⁵⁶Rüdiger Schlaga, *Die Kommunisten in der Friedensbewegung – erfolglos? Die Politik des Weltfriedensrates im Verhältnis zur Aussenpolitik der Sowjetunion und zu unabhängigen Friedensbewegungen im Westen (1950–1979)* (Münster: Lit, 1991), 52.

⁵⁷On the appeal against the A-bomb, see Henrietta Harrison, "Popular Responses to the Atomic Bomb in China 1945–1955," *Past & Present* 218, no. suppl. 8 (2013): 98–116; and Elisabeth Forster, "Bellifera Peace: China's Peace Signature Campaign and Discourses about 'Peace' in the Early 1950s," *Modern China* (June 2019).

⁵⁸For examples of politicians, see Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 53.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 25; Lawrence S. Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement through 1953* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 301; Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen"; BND, "Ergebnis des WFR-Kongresses in Stockholm," 25 July 1958, B 206/3237, BArch; and CIA, "The World Peace Movement."

⁶⁰Yang Lijun, "Baowei shijie heping yundong": Dongfang zhenying yingdui Xifang lengzhan de yishi xingtai xingwei," *Heilongjiang shehui kexue* no. 1 (2013): 135.

⁶¹Schlaga, *Die Kommunisten in der Friedensbewegung – erfolglos?*, 206.

⁶²"Lutte pour la paix": R. De Grada and J. Lafitte, "Letter from the World Peace Council," 6 October 1950, 1, DZ 9/1707, BArch; *zhengqu heping*: Literally, 'fighting for peace', "Yi jiji xingdong zhengqu heping!," *RMRB*, 27 December 1950, Beijing.

⁶³Christi Scott Bartman, "Lawfare: Use of the Definition of Aggressive War by the Soviet and Russian Governments" (PhD, Bowling Green State University, 2009), 30.

War, it bridged the Cold War camps. The United Nations, the big collective security organisation of the time, specified that if there was 'any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression', 'the use of armed force' was an option 'to maintain or restore international peace and security'.⁶⁴ The idea here was that there were just (e.g. 'defensive') and unjust (e.g. 'aggressive') wars, and that wars against unjust wars were just.

One perennial problem was, of course, how to distinguish those waging unjust wars (e.g. 'aggressors') from those whose causes were just.⁶⁵ But while this was a problem for legal practitioners, it was an opportunity for politicians.⁶⁶ The unjust warmongers (mostly then labelled 'aggressors') could be defined very flexibly as the enemy one wanted to denounce, and certainly never as oneself. For example, in the Korean War (1950–3) both sides claimed to be fighting 'aggressors' in the service of peace.⁶⁷ Consequently, it was possible to assign the labels 'peaceful' and 'warmongering' just as flexibly. Although for some at the time peace smacked of pre-Second World War 'appeasement' or Cold War-era communism, in an era that feared a potentially nuclear third world war, peace generally speaking had a good ring.⁶⁸ It was therefore a very powerful way of framing one's vision for friend (those labelled 'peaceful') and foe (those labelled 'war-mongers') that is, of framing one's vision for international alliances and an international order.

Which of its policies the PRC identified as most peaceful changed over time. For instance, in the run-up to the Korean War, when peace rhetoric was strongest in the Chinese state-led press, fighting the 'US imperialists' was identified as China's most peaceful programme.⁶⁹ During the Korean War, the PRC made its voice heard through the World Peace Council on the topic of the bacteriological warfare which the US allegedly waged against North Korea and China.⁷⁰ When the Korean War ended, China deemed 'solving disputes through the method of negotiation' as its most peaceful accomplishment and promoted it as such in World Peace congress speeches.⁷¹ World Peace Council central and the delegations adopted this idea.⁷² In the late 1950s and 1960s, the PRC emphasised the association of peace with a fight against imperialism, in an attempt to establish itself as a leader of Asia and Africa with a unique vision for a peaceful world order.⁷³

⁶⁴UN, "Charter," VII.39, VII.41.

⁶⁵Jocelyn Getgen Kestenbaum, "Closing Impunity Gaps for the Crime of Aggression," *Chicago Journal of International Law* 17, no. 1 (2016): 57–60; Richard K. Betts, "Systems for Peace or Causes of War? Collective Security, Arms Control, and the New Europe," *International Security* 17, no. 1 (1992): 17; and Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (London: Allen Lane, 1978), 53–8.

⁶⁶On the legal challenges: Judith N. Shklar, *Legalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), 180.

⁶⁷UNSC, "Resolution Concerning the Complaint of Aggression upon the Republic of Korea," June 27, 1950, 1, S/1511, UNODS, <http://undocs.org/S/1511> accessed 28 March 2017; and Forster, "Bellicose Peace," 10–13.

⁶⁸Appeasement: Holger Nehring, "Peace Movements and Internationalism," *Moving the Social* 55 (2016): 104; Communism: Robbie Lieberman, *The Strangest Dream: Communism, Anticommunism and the U.S. Peace Movement 1945–1963*, 1st ed. (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 92; WWII: Lieberman, *The Strangest Dream*, 4; and Harrison, "Popular Responses to the Atomic Bomb in China 1945–1955," 101.

⁶⁹Jiang Lingjia, *Shijie heping yundong*, 2nd ed. (Renren chubanshe, 1950), 18–19. See also Forster, "Bellicose Peace". That peace rhetoric was strongest just before the Korean War is suggested by a search for 'heping' (peace) in the database *Renmin ribao: dianzi ban*, rmb.egreenapple.com (accessed 5 September 2016).

⁷⁰"Commons Sitting," *Hansard* 5, no. 505 (23 October 1952): 1433; Xiao San, "Zai shijie yonghu heping dahui changshe weiyuanhui Sige'ermo huiyi shang de fayan," *RMRB*, 11 May 1950, Beijing.

⁷¹"Shijie heping lishihui zhuxi Jueli'ao Juli ...," *RMRB*, 2 August 1953, Beijing; "Wei jinyibu zhengqu guoji jushi de huanhe er nuli," *RMRB*, 27 November 1953, Beijing; and Mao Dun, "Wei jinyibu zhengqu guoji jushi de huanhe er nuli," *Baowei heping* no. 32 (February 1954): 20–4.

⁷²Without mentioning China, but only the importance of 'negotiations': Frédéric Joliot-Curie, "Rede," 1953, 5, DZ 9/686, BArch; Ilja Ehrenburg, "Rede (SU)," 1953, DZ 9/686, BArch; and H.M.-SER-J., "Rede (Korea)," 1953, 4–5, DZ 9/686, BArch.

⁷³Chinesische Delegation, "Redenentwurf," 2 December 1964, DZ 9/498, BArch; and "Heping gongchu de xin bangyang," *RMRB*, 30 April 1960, Beijing.

Whom the PRC considered a peaceful friend and a warmongering foe changed as well. In its early years, the country pursued a policy of 'leaning to one [the Soviet Union's] side'. The Soviet Union was then regarded as a 'peaceful' ally and the United States as the 'imperialist' 'warmonger'.⁷⁴ However, this changed when PRC-Soviet relations deteriorated after Khrushchev's rise to power after 1953, and the ensuing PRC-SU split in the 1960s. In the *People's Daily*, the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party, the PRC increasingly labelled the Soviet Union as 'revisionist' and warmongering on the basis that it was not committed to fighting the 'imperialist' 'aggressors', i.e. the United States.⁷⁵ The Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 was, according to PRC delegations to the World Peace Council, a 'big fraud'.⁷⁶

Mirroring this, China's reputation for peacefulness declined in the pro-Soviet camp of the World Peace Council. While China's national politics, such as the Great Leap Forward or the Cultural Revolution were never mentioned in the Council, increasingly more countries criticised the PRC's refusal to sign the Partial Test Ban Treaty (which was of course related to the fact that China had acquired its own nuclear bomb in 1964).⁷⁷ The Chinese and Indian delegations mutually blamed each other for not ending their border conflict of 1962.⁷⁸ And in 1979, China was even denounced as an 'aggressor' against Vietnam.⁷⁹

Western secret services gloated over this.⁸⁰ In 1965 the Western German, Munich-based *Süddeutsche Zeitung* was delighted to report how a congress in Helsinki had ended in scandal when the PRC delegate had declared that '[t]hose who live in peaceful coexistence with American imperialism [i.e. the Soviets] cannot be true friends of peace'.⁸¹ As a result of the PRC-SU split, the PRC was excluded from the World Peace Council in 1967, and then hardly ever mentioned again in congress speeches, even though its positions continued to be implicitly criticised, for instance when the Council supported nuclear disarmament.⁸² Nevertheless, the Council members still regularly expressed support for the PRC's claim to 'China's' seat in the UN.⁸³

Peace and the UN in the World Peace Council

Before the break of the mid-1960s, the China representation question in the United Nations was therefore one of the World Peace Council's (minor) campaigns, and it framed the issue as a question of world peace. For example, at a World Peace congress in

⁷⁴Forster, "Bellicose Peace."

⁷⁵"Xiuzhengzhuyi zhe de zhanzheng yu heping lilun he lishi dui ta de shenpan," *RMRB*, 30 August 1965, Beijing. See also Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 89.

⁷⁶Chinesische Delegation, "Redenentwurf," 1. On China's attitude on disarmament, see also Nicola Horsburgh, *China and Global Nuclear Order: From Estrangement to Active Engagement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 58–76.

⁷⁷BND, "Präsidiumstagung des WFR in Wien," April 1962, B 206/3239, BArch.

⁷⁸Chinesische Delegation, "Erklärung," 2 December 1963, DZ 9/498, BArch; and Arjun Arora, "Speech (India)," 1963, 5, DZ 9/695, BArch.

⁷⁹Nationale Front der DDR Bezirksausschuß Karl-Marx-Stadt, "Informationsbericht," January 3, 1979, DY 6/1972, BArch. The Sino-Soviet border conflict of 1969 was not criticised.

⁸⁰BND, "Ergebnis des WFR-Kongresses in Stockholm," 2; BND, "Präsidiumstagung des WFR in Wien"; and Bukovsky, "The Peace Movement and the Soviet Union."

⁸¹"Unfrieden auf dem Friedenskongreß: Sowjets verlassen in Helsinki während der Rede eines Albaners die Sitzung," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 July 1965, DZ 9/397, BArch, Munich.

⁸²Assemblée des Weltfriedensrates, "Appell," 1971, DZ 9/51, BArch.

⁸³For instance Frédéric Joliot-Curie, "Der Weg zum Frieden und zur nationalen Unabhängigkeit ...," 1971, 58, DZ 9/51, BArch.

Vienna in 1951, delegate Guo Moruo protested against the United States' 'obstruction against a rightful admission of the Chinese People's Republic into the United Nations' by the United States and placed this into a wider context of US warmongering.⁸⁴ Other delegates echoed this view in their speeches. For instance, in Helsinki in 1955 the Ceylonese delegate made the reintegration of Taiwan into the PRC (which would imply that the PRC was the uncontested 'China') a matter of peace in East Asia. He expressed his 'deep sympathy for the freedom fight of ... our brothers in ... Taiwan. As long as their justified wishes are denied, there can be no permanent peace in the world.'⁸⁵

World Peace Council propaganda also transported this view to a wider public, at least within the Council's community. In 1952, in the follow-up to the congress in Vienna, the Eastern German peace committee published a booklet, which said that a peaceful solution of Asia's problems was impossible without the PRC's entry into the United Nations, and which called for the replacement of a 'Chiang Kai-shek [spelled "Tschiangkaishek"]', who was only propped up by American bayonets' with 'the legal and actual government of China, the government of Mao Zedong'.⁸⁶

In 1954, the World Peace Council announced the intention to 'launch activities to fight for China's legal position in the United Nations'.⁸⁷ It also requested an article on the 'Taiwan question' from the PRC for its journal *Defence of Peace (Baowei heping zazhi)*.⁸⁸ To the annoyance of the PRC and its peace committee, the World Peace Council had not discussed this campaign with it in advance.⁸⁹ This indicated that the PRC was not always fully in control of the narratives, even when they came from its well-meaning allies. Nevertheless, it assigned the task of writing this article to someone on its staff, and this article would subsequently have been read by the World Peace Council community.⁹⁰

'The world-communist net'⁹¹

In addition to this discursive benefit of peacefulness, the World Peace Council also made it a networking instrument, and obtaining UN membership was in many ways a networking game. The 'procedure of recognition', the 1949 report to the PRC's Central Committee said, consisted of 'sending and receiving diplomatic envoys, concluding treaties'.⁹² One method to gain UN membership was to mobilise state-level support networks, which had often been built through the more important organisations of the 'world-communist net'.⁹³

Prominent in this 'net' was the Bandung Conference of 1955. For instance, in 1955, Ceylon asked the PRC (which was as yet without membership) to use its influence with the Soviet Union to lobby this superpower to support Ceylon's bid for a United Nations seat.⁹⁴ Ceylon's foreign policy was at the time shifting from a pro-Western attitude to

⁸⁴Moruo Guo, "Rede (China)," 1951, 7, DZ 9/153, BArch.

⁸⁵Saranankara, "Speech," 1955, 3, DZ 9/407, BArch.

⁸⁶Deutsches Friedenskomitee, ed., "Vernunft und Herz der Menschheit," 1952, 15, DZ 9/153, BArch.

⁸⁷Heda, "Letter to Zheng Senyu," 18 September 1954, 1, 113-00222-03, WJBDAG.

⁸⁸Zheng Senyu, "Letter to the Chinese Council for the Protection of World Peace," 20 September 1954, 1, 113-00222-03, WJBDAG.

⁸⁹Heda, "Letter to Zheng Senyu," 18 September 1954, 1.

⁹⁰Heda, "Letter to Zheng Senyu," 30 September 1954, 1, 113-00222-03, WJBDAG.

⁹¹In the original: "Das Weltkommunistische Netz," BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," 1.

⁹²Zhong-Gong Zhongyang waijiaozu, *Guanyu Zhongguo chuxi Lian-Da wenti*, 4.

⁹³BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," 1.

⁹⁴Waijiaobu, "Letter to the Embassy of the PRC in India," 17 November 1955, 3, 113-00225-01, WJBDAG.

non-alignment.⁹⁵ In making this request to the PRC, Ceylon referenced the Bandung Conference, which had announced 'to give any help to the matter of a few Asian and African countries' joining the UN'.⁹⁶ Similarly, in 1964, Cambodia supported the PRC's United Nations bid, which included discussions with the PRC about strategy, the submission of a memorandum to the United Nations, and the mobilisation of more international support (e.g. from Albania, cf. the later 'Albanian resolution') for a motion.⁹⁷ The PRC's peacefulness was again a theme addressed in the memorandum Cambodia submitted to the UN.⁹⁸

Another route which the PRC attempted to follow was public diplomacy, for which it again tapped into the 'world-communist net'.⁹⁹ At World Peace conferences, delegates not only gave speeches, but also built contacts with other delegations, and this was deemed so important that they reported back home on their activities. Networking started on the way to the congresses. In December 1951, for example, a PRC delegation, including Stalin Peace Prize winner Song Qinglin, travelled home through Hungary from a peace congress in Vienna in December 1951. The networking in Hungary was state-sponsored. The PRC embassy in Hungary later reported how 'important comrades of party and government, as well as of mass organisations' had come to 'welcome' Song and show her around Budapest. Importantly for a country that was competing for international prestige after a period of imperialist humiliation, an 'important comrade from the Hungarian foreign ministry' told the PRC embassy that at least one member of the Hungarian welcome committee had 'mainly' come because of Song Qinglin, even though the Soviet delegation to the World Peace Council congress was travelling on the same train as Song. This 'important comrade' was General Secretary of the Hungarian Working People's Party, Mátyás Rákosi himself.¹⁰⁰

At the conferences, networking was crucial too. For example, the PRC delegation reported about a conference in Sweden in 1954 that they had given banquets for various countries, 'as instructed by the premier [Zhou Enlai]'. Among them were the delegations from Japan, India, and France.¹⁰¹ The Japanese and French delegations, of course, were not state-sponsored. India, however, was more complicated. There, too, the national peace committee was led by communists and the state was sceptical about it. However, in 1954, the PRC and India moved closer together on a state level, with the joint declaration of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.¹⁰² While the Indian government was therefore still officially sceptical about the World Peace Movement, several congressmen started participating in it in

⁹⁵D.M. Prasad, "Ceylon's Foreign Policy under the Bandaranaiques 1956–65: A Study in the Emergence and Role of Non-Alignment," *Indian Journal of Political Science* 33, no. 3 (1972): 271–8.

⁹⁶Waijiaobu, "Letter to the Foreign Ministry of the PRC," 22 June 1955, 113-00225-01, WJBDAG.

⁹⁷The discussion: Embassy of the PRC in Guangdong, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry of the PRC," 19 November 1964, 1, 113-00391-04, WJBDAG; Memorandum: Waijiaobu, "Memorandum du Cambodge," November 1964, 113-00391-03, WJBDAG; Mobilisation of support: PRC embassy in Cambodia, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry of the PRC (3)," 20 November 1964, 1–2, 113-00391-04, WJBDAG.

⁹⁸Waijiaobu, "Memorandum du Cambodge," 2–3.

⁹⁹BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," 1.

¹⁰⁰Embassy of the PRC in Hungary, *Yi jiu wu er nian guoji heping youhao huodong zongjie baogao*, 1952, 4, 113-00181-01, WJBDAG.

¹⁰¹Moruo Guo et al., *Guojixing jihui kaihui qingkuang*, 21 June 1954, 4, 113-00217-03, WJBDAG.

¹⁰²Huang Jingqi, *Ying-Han duizhao waijiao shuwen jiaocheng* (Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1985), 644.

that year.¹⁰³ In 1955, the Indian government also invited the PRC to the Bandung Conference.¹⁰⁴

At the 1954 World Peace Congress in Sweden, the Indian delegate's speech was aligned with official Indian policy, and the banquet invitation by the PRC delegation suggested that China used the non-state World Peace delegation of India to support its interactions with the Indian government. The Indian delegate praised Zhou Enlai's and Nehru's proclamation of the Five Principles and the state-level friendship between the countries, placing all these activities within a broader move towards 'Asian solidarity'. He also called for the PRC's entry into the United Nations and stated that Taiwan was a part of the PRC.¹⁰⁵ The PRC delegations moreover used the congresses to set up events of the other platforms of the 'net'.¹⁰⁶ For example, at the 1954 conference in Sweden, the PRC delegation 'communicated the decision to convene an Asian Trade Union conference' to Japan.¹⁰⁷ Just as the ROC suspected, the World Peace Movement was one of many networking platforms that could strengthen international contacts and prestige on both state and non-state levels.

Tracing the impact of public diplomacy

How were these strategies imagined to work? The restricted archival situation in mainland China makes it hard to trace these mechanisms, and they can only really be deduced from the observation of (the more open archives of) Western secret services and governments. In a bout of Cold War paranoia, these secret services monitored the World Peace Council meticulously and feared that it was indeed a threat. The CIA and the Western German service produced long documents with lists of attendees to World Peace conferences and Council members, or with information about developments within the Council.¹⁰⁸ The Swedish secret services had an inside informant in the Swedish peace committee, and did things like photographing attendees of a peace congress.¹⁰⁹

As mentioned earlier, Taiwan closely monitored the movement of the PRC delegates to the World Peace conference in Mexico in 1961. The Foreign Ministry in Taipei learned details about the delegates' dates and times of arrival and departure, their schedules, hotels, ages, birth places, marital status, and employment.¹¹⁰ The embassy also 'sent someone to secretly listen in' at the 1961 conference, to report about the speeches given there and to collect 'a big amount of red propaganda materials' of international provenance, namely from the Soviet Union, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Mexico.¹¹¹ A conference in Mexico in 1961 was particularly sensitive for the ROC, since the very close vote on the moratorium strategy

¹⁰³Gene D. Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller, *Communism in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 412–26.

¹⁰⁴Dietmar Rothermund, "The Era of Non-Alignment," in *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War: Delhi, Bandung, Belgrade*, ed. Nataša Mišković, Harald Fischer-Tiné, and Nada Boškovska Leimgruber (London: Routledge, 2014), 21.

¹⁰⁵M. Chandra, "Durch asiatische Solidarität zum Weltfrieden," 1954, 1–6, 11, 13, DZ 9/1915, BArch.

¹⁰⁶BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," 1.

¹⁰⁷Chengzhi Liao et al., *Guanyu huanhe jushi guoji huiyi gaikuang jianbao*, 25 June 1954, 9, 113-00217-03, WJBDAG.

¹⁰⁸BND, "Ergebnis des WFR-Kongresses in Stockholm"; and CIA, "The World Peace Movement."

¹⁰⁹Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 35, 45.

¹¹⁰ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 14 December 1960, 2; ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (2)," 4 March 1961, 2.

¹¹¹Listening in: ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 11 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan; Report on speeches: ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (1)," 7 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan; and Collecting propaganda material: ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 11 March 1961, 1–2.

in the General Assembly had only happened a few months before, in 1960. Mexico itself was a tricky country. It was, like most Latin American countries, part of the Western Bloc, but (under US instruction) it was also the only one that had diplomatic relations with Cuba.¹¹² Like its neighbours, its government suppressed Leftists violently.¹¹³ But it was also in many ways more tolerant than them, being one of the few that allowed the World Peace Council to convene conferences on its territory.¹¹⁴

On the question of how this was supposed to change United Nations votes, the available internal PRC documents are remarkably silent. From what can be deduced from in between the lines, they were also somewhat confused. Western and non-aligned delegates to World Peace congresses were not normally sent by their states. But the reports to the foreign ministry in Beijing did not distinguish between state-sponsored and other delegates, although they sometimes noted that 'the social rank of ... the delegates from Western countries was not very high'.¹¹⁵ They seemed to hope to influence governments directly. For example, when the Yokohama peace committee planned to visit China in 1956, an internal report speculated that these delegates had the 'support of their local government' in Japan.¹¹⁶

The ROC government too was concerned about the fact that the 1961 Mexico conference was sponsored by Mexico's former president, General Lázaro Cárdenas.¹¹⁷ While not a member of a communist party, Cárdenas was, in Patrick Iber's words, an 'anti-anti-Communist'.¹¹⁸ He was also a holder of the World Peace Council's Stalin Peace Prize of 1955.¹¹⁹ The PRC delegates accompanied Cárdenas in visiting the countryside after the congress had ended, a strategy Cárdenas had successfully deployed when he was president, and which he now used again to gain support for the World Peace Movement.¹²⁰

Western secret services also often triangulated a different route of influence. The World Peace Movement sought to sway public opinion through publications, the distribution of leaflets, and especially by making contact with trade unions, individuals (such as scientists, artists, or intellectuals), non-socialist pro-peace groups, or other groups of the 'world-communist net'.¹²¹ For instance, during 'raids' against the People's Progressive Party in British Guiana, a report to the British parliament read,

¹¹²Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 146.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, 156.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 149.

¹¹⁵Guo et al., *Guojixing jihui kaihui qingkuang*, 1.

¹¹⁶Guanyu jiedai Riben Hengbin shi daibiaotuan lai Hua (cao'an'), 1956, 10, 127-001-00240, Beijing Municipal Archives.

¹¹⁷ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (2)," 4 March 1961, 3.

¹¹⁸Lit. 'anti-anti-Communists', Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom*, 153.

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*, 154.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, 162.

¹²¹Publications: For example, the *Daily Worker* in Britain ("Commons Sitting," 23 October 1952, 1433) or *Live in Peace* (*Leva i Fred*) in Sweden (Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 22). Leaflets: BND, "Konferenz zur Koordinierung des "Kampfes für den Frieden in Mitteleuropa" in Plauen," February 1961, B 206/3239, BArch. Making contact with trade unions: Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 35. Contacting scientists: *Ibid.*, 47. Contacting artists: BND, "Versuche zur Einschaltung ...," 30 January 1961, B 206/3239, BArch. Contacting intellectuals: BND, "Weltfriedensrat," December 1958, 4, B 206/3237, BArch. Contacting non-socialist pro-peace groups: Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 47; and BND, "Kontaktaufnahme des WFR mit Friedensorganisationen," 3 January 1961, 3, B 206/3239, BArch. '[W]orld-communist net': BND, "Internationaler Studentenbund," 1. For relevant discussions, see "Lords Sitting," 25 November 1952, 563; "British Guiana," 11; Justitiedepartementet, "Den farliga fredsrörelsen," 26-7; BND, "Weltfriedensrat," 1; and CIA, "The World Peace Council," 3.

police found World Peace Council documents, in this case on the alleged 'bacteriological warfare in Korea and China'.¹²²

When the PRC delegates travelled through Mexico with Cárdenas in 1961, they reportedly tried to persuade another group of individuals: Communist *huaqiao* (people of Chinese origin living abroad).¹²³ Trying to win over the world's *huaqiao* was a strategy popular with both the PRC and the ROC, and, for the Guomindang at least, it went back to the times of Sun Yat-sen. Both sides sought to persuade them to recognise one, but not the other.¹²⁴ The PRC delegates had received *huaqiao* at their hotel a few days after their arrival.¹²⁵ On their return to Mexico City after the trip with Cárdenas to the countryside, the delegates again 'entered all of Mexico's important red ringleaders', whose names the embassy listed.¹²⁶

Both sides, the Eastern and the Western Bloc, agreed that none of this bore any (or merely negligible) fruits.¹²⁷ When monitoring the Western press after the launch of a major World Peace Council initiative in 1953, PRC embassy reports to the foreign ministry in Beijing noted with disappointment that newspapers and political figures in Sweden, Burma, Britain, the United States, and Western Germany did not really write and talk about it, or were against it.¹²⁸ The ROC noted the same from the opposite angle. The *China Post*, a Taiwanese English-language newspaper, made a point of declaring that the 1961 Congress in Mexico was a 'propaganda failure'.¹²⁹ An embassy letter to the foreign ministry claimed that only the communist newspapers had reported about it.¹³⁰

This impression is borne out by a look at the Western press. For instance, in Sweden, which hosted a number of World Peace congresses, the newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* (News of the Day) mostly held that the World Peace Movement was a Soviet front and that participating in it was akin to collaborating with Nazi Germany during the Second World War.¹³¹ Nevertheless, it did allow debate, for instance in 1950, when a member of the Swedish Peace Committee could publish an article refuting all these allegations.¹³² The ROC embassy in Mexico went even further and organised counter-action. As the *huaqiao* themselves were divided into pro-PRC and pro-ROC camps, the ROC embassy sought to mobilise anti-communist *huaqiao* to protest against the conference. They 'instigated the Anti-Communist Salvation Society of *huaqiao* of this place to print leaflets and to distribute them everywhere in Mexico City today [8 March 1961]'.¹³³ The embassy also made sure to report to Taipei that there had been anti-communist protesters who had 'thrown tear gas bombs'.¹³⁴

¹²²'British Guiana,' 15.

¹²³ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 13 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

¹²⁴Steven Phillips, "National Legitimacy and Overseas Chinese Mobilization," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 7, no. 1 (2013): 64, 75.

¹²⁵ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 8 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

¹²⁶ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 7 April 1961, 2, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

¹²⁷That the movement was negligible: Bukovsky, "The Peace Movement and the Soviet Union," 3.

¹²⁸PRC embassy in Sweden, "Letter to the Foreign Ministry," April 1953, 1, 113-00165-02, WJBDAG; Embassy of the PRC in Burma, "Letter to the Foreign Ministry," 5 May 1953, 1, 113-00165-02, WJBDAG; and Embassy of the PRC in Switzerland, "Letter to the Foreign Ministry," 5 May 1953, 1-3, 113-00165-02, WJBDAG.

¹²⁹"Peace Congress in Mexico," *China Post*, 12 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

¹³⁰ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (1)," 4 March 1961, 1, 020-063201-0029, Guoshiguan.

¹³¹Anders Örne, "Hur är det möjligt?" *Dagens Nyheter*, 19 February 1950.

¹³²Nils Silfverskiöld, "Kring Världsfredskommittén," *Dagens Nyheter*, 5 March 1950.

¹³³ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry," 8 March 1961, 1. On the division of the *huaqiao*: and Joan S.H. Wang, "In the Name of Legitimacy: Taiwan and Overseas Chinese during the Cold War Era," *China Review* 11, no. 2 (2011): 73.

¹³⁴ROC embassy in Mexico, "Telegram to the Foreign Ministry (1)," 7 March 1961, 1.

Conclusion

China's claim to be a peaceful nation has been vocal in the twentieth century and still is today. In the 1950s and 1960s, one of the PRC's goals behind the peacefulness rhetoric was to get into the United Nations: by appealing to the clause in the United Nations Charter according to which 'peace-loving states'¹³⁵ should be members; by trying to build soft power; and by (again, attempting to) expand international networks on the level of public diplomacy. It is in the nature of public diplomacy that its impact narratives are difficult to write. But it seems that Western secret services were relieved, and the PRC was disappointed, to see that contrary to fears and expectations the World Peace Movement did not have much impact on public opinion outside of the Eastern Bloc. While this is therefore the story about a failed strategy, it nevertheless shows two things. First of all, the PRC's strategy to represent 'China' in the United Nations was incredibly broad and long predated the PRC-US rapprochement that began in 1968/9, which previous narratives have focused on.¹³⁶ Secondly, it shows that the peacefulness rhetoric was in no way designed to make statements about waging or not waging war, but that it was about describing international friendships and enmities, building soft power, and fostering networks.

On a broader, conceptual level, this highlights the importance of looking at the China representation question in the United Nations from a 'pericentric' perspective, that is, from a perspective that does not see the Cold War as a conflict driven by only the superpowers, but also by all the other countries.¹³⁷ It further expands the meaning of pericentrism for China historians. Where the study of the Cold War is concerned, it is useful to move away from a mainland-centric perspective, and to start including Taiwan as well.

Secondly, this speaks to debates that explore the question of whether the PRC created (and is creating) a unique vision for a peaceful world order. Such a view is discussed and sometimes supported in academia, as well as in PRC politics, past and present.¹³⁸ The story of this article shows that answering this question is a complex endeavour, because the PRC played all sides of this question with what Peter Burke has called an 'occasionalist' streak.¹³⁹

When the PRC and its allies depicted the country as peaceful while addressing the United Nations, the definition of peacefulness was kept vague and the idea was that it fit with established concepts of peace, as envisioned in the UN Charter. On other occasions, when addressing the World Peace community, the PRC's peace rhetoric was aligned with the wider Cold War rhetoric of the East as 'peaceful' and 'anti-imperialist' versus a 'warmongering' and 'imperialist' West. Yet on other occasions, the PRC and its

¹³⁵UN, "Charter," II.4.1.

¹³⁶For this dating of the rapprochement, see Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 238–76.

¹³⁷Tony Smith, "New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 4 (2000): 567–91.

¹³⁸On the GMD's vision for an alternative post-Second World War international order: Rana Mitter, "Imperialism, Transnationalism, and the Reconstruction of Post-War China: UNRRA in China, 1944–7," *Past & Present* 218, no. suppl. 8 (2013): 69. On proposing alternative international orders throughout the twentieth century: Marc Andre Matten, *Imagining a Postnational World: Hegemony and Space in Modern China* (Leiden: Brill, 2016). Scholars ascribing to the PRC a vision for an alternative order: Zhao Tingyang, *Tianxia tixi: shijie zhidu zhexue daolun* (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2011); and David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). Similar views in in PRC politics: Luo, "Xuexi Xi Jinping jianghua."

¹³⁹Peter Burke, "Performing History: The Importance of Occasions," *Rethinking History* 9, no. 1 (2005): 44.

supporters used the peacefulness claim to garner goodwill among countries that had just decolonised or were in the process of doing so. In these cases, the PRC depicted itself as a peaceful, anti-imperialist potential leader of these regions, with a unique vision (the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence) for a peaceful international order. The question, I propose, is therefore not so much whether the PRC's vision for an international order and for world peace was truly unique, but rather in which ways it played the issue, and what this says about the country's notion of its own position within the international order at any one point in time.

In negotiating the China representation question, peacefulness had detached itself from its intuitive definition as the disinclination to wage war. While this had turned peacefulness into something else, it had not made it insignificant or empty propaganda. It had transformed it into a label to negotiate diplomatic recognition, the legitimacy of states, and the big alliances and fronts in the Cold War.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my colleagues Puck Engman, Elisabeth Schleep, and Daniel Leese for their invaluable feedback. I am also indebted to my colleagues and students who discussed this paper in the Q&A session of a lecture in Hamburg in April 2018, as well as to my colleagues at the University of Southampton for their incredibly helpful input during the workshop 'Conversations on Research' in 2019. My thanks also go to my students in Hamburg and Freiburg for their inspiring discussions during our seminars on China in the Cold War during the academic year 2017/18.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Funding

This work was supported by the Wissenschaftliche Gesellschaft Freiburg im Breisgau and by the Max Weber Stiftung, Germany.

Notes on contributor

Elisabeth Forster After having taught at the Universities of Oxford, Freiburg, and Hamburg, Forster is now a lecturer in modern Chinese history at the University of Southampton. She has recently published in the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *Modern Asian Studies*, and *Modern China* (June 2019). Her monograph, *1919 – The Year That Changed China*, was published in 2018 with De Gruyter.

ORCID

Elisabeth Forster  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1540-3139>