

# Henry Kissinger 1971 secret trip to China

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Introduction The political issue on Kissinger's secret visit to China created a controversy that changed the diplomatic relations between China and the United States. Under the command of the former U. S. President Nixon, the National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, went to a secret visit in China to conduct and discuss matters that truly made a significant history of American, foreign policy. As Fergusson noted, Kissinger's secret trip to China in 1971 has made two areas of its foreign policy be consistent, and these include the renewal of the United States' relationship with China and Kissinger's strategic thinking influenced every president from Kennedy and up until the current U. S President Obama. 1

This paper seeks to present three arguments on the issue regarding Henry Kissinger's secret trip to China in 1971.

### Arguments

As manifested by historical events, Kissinger's trip to China could be considered as an essential factor that strengthened the U. S-China relations. Fergusson further noted that the substantial matters discussed during his trip in 1971 enabled the United States' opening to China, and at the same time, China began to open its relations with the United States, which was actually driven by " Mao Zedong's fear of encirclement." 2 Under such circumstance, a potential argument could be justified such that if it was not for China's opening to the United States, China would not emerge to be America's largest foreign holder and as to how it would utilize its present economic power is a crucial matter that needs to be addressed, wherein Kissinger, who had a long period of diplomatic relations with China, could offer a better insight regarding the issue. 3 In addition, Hanhimaki and Westad mentioned that one of the primary objectives for the opening of <https://assignbuster.com/henry-kissinger-1971-secret-trip-to-china/>

relations was to use China as a support against the Soviet Union towards a triangular diplomacy between Washington, Moscow and Beijing. 4 Another significant issue is on the implication of foreign policy, wherein Hamilton emphasized that Kissinger recognized the rivalry between China and Russia, which could indicate that the Chinese would possibly welcome improved relations with the Americans that may cause much trouble to the Soviets. 5 Similarly, Xia also pointed out that Nixon, being a foreign policy president, was firm on restoring and enhancing the United States' status in world affairs, where he gave an extensive value of improving its relations with China. 6 Finally, Kissinger's secret visit stimulated China's expectation to gain political benefits, where it would have greater chances to enter the U. N., and as expected by Kissinger, China used its influence to urge Vietnam in developing peaceful relations with the U. S. while the latter could still preserve its diplomatic ties with Taiwan, and withdrew its military forces after the Vietnam War to further improve its relations with China. 7

### Conclusion

As the U. S. Secretary of State, Kissinger truly played a crucial role in the development of the US-China diplomatic relations. In fact, his secret trip to China was a huge success that made him influential in terms of foreign policy, where he contributed much of America's success in world affairs. There may have been some criticisms regarding the secrecy of his visit to China, yet it was able to create a positive impact towards the Chinese in fulfilling their common political interests.

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