

Richard Haddoc...: (silence)

Welcome Listeners to another episode of the East Asia Hotspots Podcast hosted by the GW East Asia National Resource Center. I'm Richard Haddock, the program manager. And I'm here with a very special guest, Professor Robert Sutter of our very own George Washington University.

Professor Sutter is Professor of Practice of International Affairs at the Elliott School of George Washington University from 2011 to present. He also served as director of the school's main undergraduate program involving over 2,000 students from 2013 to 2019. His earlier full time position was visiting professor of Asian studies at Georgetown University from 2001 to 2011.

A PhD graduate in history in East Asian languages from Harvard University, Sutter has published 22 books, four with multiple editions, over 300 articles and several hundred government reports dealing with contemporary East Asian and Pacific countries and their relations with the United States. His forthcoming book is, *US-China Relations: Perilous Past, Uncertain Present*. Now in its fourth edition. Published Rowman & Littlefield coming out this year.

Professor Sutter, thanks so much for joining our conversation today.

Professor Rober...: My pleasure. Thank you for inviting me.

Richard Haddoc...: So, I wanted us to talk about the Ukraine Crisis and its implications for East Asia, particularly China and Taiwan. The Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022 has been met by a variety of coordinated economic, diplomatic and security responses by NATO and U.S allies and partners worldwide, including those in East Asia, such as Japan, South Korea, and even Taiwan.

The conflict puts The People's Republic of China in a difficult position of having to balance its support and strategic partnership with Russia, economic ties with democracies worldwide, and its own foreign policy principles such as non intervention. How is the Ukraine Crisis affecting Russia-China relations? And what position has the PRC taken regarding the conflict?

Professor Rober...: Well, thanks. Those are very good questions. And to understand the Russia-China relations, we need to understand that this is a deepening relationship. And it's been remarkably strong. Beginning with Xi Jinping and Putin. Since 2013, they've developed a very strong relationship. And it's really stronger than ever. And it's designed to do many things.

But one of the things it is designed to do, is to support one another as they expand their influence in their respective spheres of influence. In the past, they saw the West, United States, Europe and Japan and others as weak. And so they moved that forward as a target of opportunity, opportunistically.

Now they face a situation of pressure. Probably unexpected pressure coming from the West. And so, they'll have to deal with that accordingly. Maybe they'll change in some way. But for now, what we see is China has a pro Russian position. But still endorsing principles in their foreign affairs consistent with the United Nations, at least the way they conceive of the United Nations.

So, I think basically you can define it as a pro Russian decision waiting to see what exactly happens in Ukraine. And waiting to see the full scope of the implications of it. It's too early to say. So for now, I'd say this has not had a major effect on the Russian-China relationship. And I doubt it will have a big effect. But it could lead to some wariness going forward. But it's not evident yet.

Richard Haddoc...: It's very interesting. Going to China's foreign and domestic policy making apparatuses, what do you see are the challenges that the Ukraine Crisis presents to China's overall foreign and domestic policy priorities? Do you find that the crisis will drive China to change course on certain economic, political or security objectives?

Professor Rober...: The Chinese administration has really worked hard to come up with the kind of strategy they have today. It mixes blandishments and positive incentives with very strong coercive measures. It tends to do this in a less dramatic way than Mr Putin did. But this is their basic approach. I don't think this will change. They will continue along these lines. They've worked this out over the years. It's worked well for them overall.

And so, this is a setback in that situation, in the sense that the West, the United States and European countries in particular are outraged by Putin's actions in Ukraine. And they're taking harsh actions against that, which weakens the Russian part of the connection with China. And it puts China as we said, in a very awkward position where they look like they're backing Putin. This aggressor in this situation. And that does help them very much.

But the cost of all this is not very clear yet. It requires persistence and resolution, resolve by the West, by the United States going forward. And if the outcome is a Russian defeat in Ukraine, that would lead to recalculations for sure. And if it leads to a Russian victory in Ukraine, that also it would have some implications for China.

But for now, it's a very uncertain situation for them. And then, dealing with other issues, I think the Chinese on Taiwan, for example, the Chinese can wait. They don't have to take dramatic action on Taiwan. There's a lot of the... We'll deal with that I'm sure later on. But they can wait on this issue. And wait for the outcome in Ukraine before coming to any sort of decision.

Keep in mind that Xi Jinping is moving toward a Congress or a Party Congress later this year, which will be very important for him. And he wants to show that his policies have been successful. So expecting a big change in policy, I think is

remote in this period unless some very serious matter takes place. That's the way I tend to see it at this point.

Richard Haddoc...: And going into different articles that I've seen written about internalizing lessons or absorbing different policy pronouncements that China might see the NATO allies and the U.S taking on, one element is the united or coordinated front on sanctions against Russia. And whether or not that might be any key lesson or take away for the Chinese government to internalize regarding its own planning or how it works with or engages other countries.

So, do you think that there are key policy lessons or takeaways from what's happening around Ukraine that China's leadership will internalize in a particular way?

Professor Rober...: Well, if I had to point to one or two, I would say the reaction of the West is particularly striking. The Chinese foreign policy had been premised to some degree on the declining West. On the declining U.S. Declining Europe and declining Japan. And now we see the U.S and the Europeans moving in a very different direction. And how far this goes, will have a big impact I think on how China has to calculate its foreign affairs, or foreign approach.

So again, it's a little early to make that kind of change. And I think the incentive of China, the change is low at this point. They don't want the change if they don't have to. And so I think this outcome is something they probably hadn't expected. And they'd like to see how resolute it's going to be. Will it continue? Or will it be something that will just pass and developments in Ukraine will move in such a direction that this won't work very well. And therefore these other powers will have to do something else and change their approach. So there's a lot of uncertainty here as you can see.

Now on the issue of Taiwan, this is also an important question for them. It's related to the Ukraine situation. And there too, I think they're in a waiting mode and to a considerable degree. They're putting pressure on Taiwan. But they're not taking drastic actions at this point because they're not sure what the implications of the Ukraine situation are. And as we'll talk, I think we'll talk about this some more, the balance of interest that they have is such that it doesn't really argue for an attack on Taiwan.

Richard Haddoc...: That's actually a good segue to my next question, which is about the Ukraine-Taiwan comparison. So there have been many that have drawn parallels between the Ukraine Crisis and a potential armed conflict between China and Taiwan. You might have heard the sentiment, Ukraine today, Taiwan tomorrow felt worldwide, expresses this concern.

At the same time, Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi underlines that the situations in Ukraine and Taiwan are not comparable because the Ukraine Crisis is a matter between two countries while Taiwan is a quote unquote, entirely

internal matter. Could you unpack some of the reasons why this comparison between Ukraine and Taiwan is being drawn?

Professor Rober...: Well, I think, first on Wang Yi's position, that's just standard posturing on the part of the PRC. So that's their position. That doesn't really answer the question about, will China be prone to attack Taiwan given the Ukraine crisis? And here, you have a lot of speculation that the Biden administration will be distracted from Taiwan and Asia. And will focus on Europe because of the situation in Ukraine. That the U.S military will be unprepared for dealing with Taiwan as a result. This kind of discussion.

And therefore, Beijing will take this opportunity to follow through and use force and reunify Taiwan with the mainland. That's the general argument that you see in this situation. But the reality I think is quite different.

Number one, China really is deterred in this situation. And then being deterred, the U.S is ready to fight if necessary. So, yes. They may be distracted. But the whole military establishment in the Indo-Pacific region is focused on this contingency.

And so if China goes after Taiwan, they're ready to go. And they know how to do it. And they've exercised this for 30 years. They've been focusing on this issue. You just push a button and they know what to do. And they're there to do it. If you see those forces being moved to Europe or things like that, then you have a different situation. But as far as I know, that hasn't happened.

Now, we recently had a very senior unofficial military delegation visit Taiwan. And they had a message of reassurance to Taiwan. And I think privately, they probably underlined this point to the Taiwan leaders so that they would be reassured in this context. Meanwhile, the United States sent a warship through the Taiwan straits. I think in the first week of the fighting in Ukraine. Just to underline, yes, do you mind, the United States remains committed to this sort of situation.

Getting back to the Taiwan issue itself, many say that Xi Jinping's impatient about Taiwan. He's ready to... He needs to take action on this issue. I think that's incorrect. First of all, he is deterred at this point, as I mentioned. And he doesn't need to provoke the West at this point. A war with the United States is the last thing he wants at this particular time.

You watch his record, Xi Jinping's record. And he's very much in control of this situation in China. He controls foreign policy very well, and policy toward Taiwan. And what does he do? Well, he's pressuring Japan. He's pressuring Taiwan. He pressures Australia. And he doesn't do much against the United States. He doesn't confront the United States. He avoids that. For very good reasons.

Because the cost of that would be very detrimental to what he wants. He wants to continue to work with the system that the U.S supports that's very beneficial for China. High technology. He needs high technology. And if there's an embargo because of a conflict with China, and there would be, then they'll be cut off from that. That's just one example. His trade routes remain very vulnerable to the U.S Navy.

So he understands this. And he has a lot of domestic issues at home. And he wants to have a very smooth running Party Congress later this year. So the argument that he's looking at this as a way to take advantage of this situation to strike Taiwan, I think is not well founded.

In addition, please keep in mind, what we see today in Taiwan is a very strong identity, countering the PRC. And that's been going on since 2016. And that's true. And it's getting stronger. But how lasting is it from the point of view of China. They look back at the previous eight years, and what do you see?

A policy of unique accommodation of China. Will Taiwan voters continue to have this very resolute resistance to the PRC going forward? I think that's a big question. I'm not sure about it myself. Because Taiwan opinion can really swing. They can be very concerned about their identity and then they can be very pragmatic. And so one has to look at this carefully. And so, why should Xi Jinping then take action on this and risk all the things that he would risk by getting into a war with the United States?

And I therefore think that this is unlikely under current circumstances. Those circumstances could change. Taiwan could cause a provocation. The United States could cause a provocation. But this has been pretty well managed from the U.S government point of view. So I don't think this is going to happen. And actually when you look at Taiwan, their government has managed this very well. Improving relations without provoking Beijing in any substantial way.

So on balance, I think I'm not too worried about the spillover of Ukraine causing Beijing to attack Taiwan. I just don't. I've tried to lay out the reasons why I think that way.

Richard Haddoc...: Yeah. And it's great too that you also mentioned the role that domestic politics plays in each of these locations. I'm wondering before moving on, if you could comment your own thoughts on the role that Ukraine and Taiwan may play in the respective regime legitimacy narratives in Russia and China. And if you any potential parallels with that? Or in China's case, that long term prospect or approach regarding the Taiwan question. How Taiwan might factor into China's own national legitimacy.

Professor Rober...: Well, I think that's a very interesting question. I think a lot depends on Xi Jinping. On this kind of an issue, I think he's very powerful. And he will be the ultimate decider. And if he decides that he wants to be moderate, I think he can

very easily defend that in his control of the media, his control of the propaganda apparatus of China and the broad general support that his government has in among the Chinese people. Would the quest for identity be such that it would drive Xi Jinping to take the risks that we've just been talking about? I don't think so. Those risks are too high.

And so therefore, he doesn't do it. And he hasn't done it. This is the point. This isn't the first time that the U.S government in particular has confronted Xi Jinping with insults and negative things. When the Trump administration did this, at one time after another, insulting this person, Xi Jinping, all the time. And what did he do? Look at the record of what he did. He was very nice. And he managed Mr. Trump. He was the one that interacted with Mr. Trump. And he was constantly avoiding this confrontation that would be necessary if they took this kind of action against Taiwan.

And so, I think there are important reasons for this that I tried to enumerate. And I don't see them changing that much for the sake of some quest for identity. It's a little vague. And where the other things aren't vague at all. The things that they would lose or risk at least. And I think therefore, they won't do it.

Richard Haddoc...: So going back to Taiwan's own foreign and domestic political discourse. Taiwan has joined other democracies in supporting Ukraine during the ongoing crisis. Taiwan has applied sanctions. Blocked some Russian banks from the SWIFT international payment system and donated 27 tons of medical supplies to Ukraine.

Taiwan's foreign minister, Joseph Wu stated that the people of Ukraine, quote unquote, have been an inspiration to the Taiwanese people in facing threats and coercion from authoritarian power. What do you see are the drivers for Taiwan's actions regarding the Ukraine Crisis? And how is the crisis affecting Taiwan's foreign and domestic political priorities?

Professor Rober...: Great. Well, I think it's obvious that Taiwan is taking advantage of the U.S resolve and the Western resolve to counter Putin in Ukraine and seeing that as having positive implications for them in building support of Taiwan's position and helping the West to counter Chinese expansionism.

So they're clearly working this issue in a way that will benefit, that will integrate them with these powers in this common effort against the PRC. And I think it's going to be reciprocated by these actors. They're also more forward looking and forward making in helping Taiwan in the face of PRC pressures and intimidation efforts. And I think this has a lot of traction. And this will continue for some time.

And so the question here is, so the Taiwan government, Taiwan people, they want this sort of thing. The question here is, would they go further? Would

Taiwan take advantage of this to push their position in a way that would provoke Beijing to attack Taiwan? That would be the nightmare that the U.S would face and the West would face and the Taiwan people would face. But it could happen if it's not handled well.

And the relief here is that we have a very stable leader in Taiwan, President Tsai. And very knowledgeable about cross strait issues and relations with the United States. And so she's very careful in how she does this sort of thing. She welcomes the improvements in relations. She welcomes initiatives on the part of the United States that Beijing reacts very strongly to. But she's very careful to avoid egregious actions that might prompt Beijing to use force. Well aware that that lies in the background.

And at the same time, you run in the United States the danger that politicians and leaders who are not in the Biden administration would take actions that would even go much further than what the U.S government is doing. The Biden government has been quite good I think in managing the Taiwan relations within the broad confines of the very vaguely defined American One China Policy. They haven't abandoned the policy. And so that keeps the framework. And that's important for Beijing. It's the basis of our relationship with Beijing. It'd be very hard to have that relationship without this kind of framework.

So they sustain that. Even though they are steadily, incrementally, improving their relationships with Taiwan, politically, economically, and militarily. And that pattern is something that they inherited from the Trump administration. The Trump administration did this very well too.

They changed the way the administrations of the past had looked at Taiwan and were prepared to do a lot more. But iteratively, step by step and still in broad consistency with the broadly vaguely defined American One China policy. And so continuing that trend, I think is in the interest of Taiwan. It's in the interest of the United States and is not a danger of provoking Beijing to attack Taiwan. But you need a steady hand at the tiller. It's very... Tsai provides that.

Subsequent leaders, she's not going to be president after a while. And a new president will be elected. And if it's from this party, it could be more provocative. Her vice president in the past has said statements that were very provocative, as far as Beijing is concerned. How that person would behave as president is an important element to watch. And of course other trends could intervene. And so, that's worrisome.

Another thing that's happening that's a positive development or could be a positive development, is that the experience of Ukraine underlines the utility of having a reserve force that will show an opponent that if they come in, they may knock out much of the conventional forces of Taiwan. But there still will be this residual force that will, when these troops have to get on the ground and occupy villages and cities, those folks will be there. And they will make their life

miserable. Then that's the message that's being conveyed by Ukraine. And the question is, will Taiwan do this?

This is something that U.S analysts have advised Taiwan to do. And yet it hasn't been done yet. And so will this affect the Taiwan popular opinion about this sort of thing? If it does, I think that would reinforce the strength of Taiwan. Again, without being provocative. These are not nuclear weapons that they're getting. This is just regular defense training and preparations. And so, this sort of thing I think would be very helpful longer term for a close U.S-Taiwan relationship. A Taiwan more secure than it would be otherwise going forward.

Richard Haddoc...: So actually, pivoting to the United States' role in this, during the state of the union address, President Biden stated that the United States has been building coalitions from America to the Asian and African continents to levy punishments on Russia's premeditated and totally unprovoked attack on Ukraine. So how do you see that the United States is currently engaging China and Taiwan and trying to address the Ukraine crisis? How will this crisis affect the U.S's own foreign and domestic policy priorities looking ahead?

Professor Rober...: Great question. It depends on the outcome of the Ukraine crisis of course, but not... The current situation, I would have to say that this just underlines the imperative on the part of the United States to increase its support for Taiwan, militarily, economically, and diplomatically.

Keep in mind, much of this increase in support is justified by the fact that Beijing is trying to change the status quo through its various pressures on Taiwan. Diplomatic pressures, military pressures, economic pressures. They're trying to change the status quo and the U.S is trying to change it back. This is the basic dynamic that's been going on for several years in the cross strait relationship. And I think the Ukrainian crisis underlines the need for the United States to do this sort of thing.

And so, I think this is a trend that I think will continue. Again just to emphasize, it's being done consistent with a very broad concept of the One China Policy. That policy is not being thrown away. And so the idea that U.S supports Taiwan independence, that is put aside. The U.S does not support Taiwan independence. And so that's an important element that gives some reassurance to Beijing, that the situation won't change fundamentally in the near future.

And so, so long as this well managed broad U.S policy toward Taiwan continues and Taiwan remains in the hands of sober leaders, I think we have a very good positive situation. It could be challenged as I indicated by Taiwan domestic politics, post Tsai Ing-wen. I don't think... I think she's powerful enough to manage this effectively, even with domestic pressures.



On the U.S side, Mr. Biden isn't the strongest president we've had. And he doesn't have a strong political base as far as public opinion is concerned. And now he's likely to lose the Congress to the Republicans.

So the Republicans will have this kind of power looking to the 2024 elections. And they will have candidates that will take tougher positions on issues than the Biden administration. And Mr. Pompeo showed this in about a week ago visiting Taiwan, when he said the U.S should officially recognize the government in Taiwan. Now that would break the One China policy. That would be a direct affront to Beijing if the U.S were to do that.

And so would Beijing then not use force? What would they do? That would put the real onus on Beijing to take strong actions. And I think just raises the risk. And as I'm trying to point out throughout our talk, raise it unnecessarily from the American point of view. We can do so much in interacting and have in the last several years in improving economic and political and military relations with Taiwan. Solidifying security of Taiwan and making it a prosperous and leading force in the world. And that's all been done. And it's continuing.

And I think that's what we should continue doing rather than posturing in a way that's just going to antagonize Beijing. And frankly, I think it's done for political reasons inside the United States. So that's not a good situation. Yet, it will happen. I think there's no question that the Republicans have positioned themselves even harder than the Democrats in dealing with China in preparation for of the midterms and looking at 2024.

And behind all of this, is the danger that China could use force. That's the main card that they have. They used to have influence over the administration because the administration valued the China relationship. I don't think that's the case anymore. That really ended with Trump. They used to have leverage because the regional powers didn't want disruption in the U.S-China relations. And didn't want the U.S to do that. And that's over now because it's already been heavily disrupted.

And so, what card does Beijing have? It's this card of pressure and then aggression that they use against Taiwan militarily, and other ways. But particularly militarily. And so, I think the U.S has so many problems. They'd much rather that not happen. They're ready if it's happen. But they much rather not happen.

So going forward, I would think that sober leadership in Taiwan, sober leadership in the United States done by people who know what they're doing and dealing with this issue, it's a very complicated and sensitive issue. And I think they do know. They act like... I think Tsai Ing-wen definitely knows. And I think the administration of the United States knows. And I think they're acting in a way that's consistent with their interest as they ever more incrementally build stronger relations with one another.

Richard Haddoc...: So connecting these topics to your forthcoming book, US-China Relations: Perilous Past, Uncertain Present, its fourth edition, your book examines the historical and contemporary determinants of Sino-American relations up to the present. Giving special focus to the recent dramatic hardening of the acute competition between the world's leading powers.

The catalyst and main driver of this negative change remains the unique bipartisan congressional administration consensus that these multiple challenges from China now posing an overall existential threat. Urgency to counter these challenges dominates U.S policy making toward China in spite of the divisive domestic partisan and political and erratic leadership transition in the United States. So what do you see are the key issues regarding China and Taiwan that will leave the strongest imprints on current and near term U.S policy making?

Professor Rober...: Well, let's take a look at the challenges if we may that the U.S is reacting to. The big change that the United States undertook began in the end of the first year of the Trump administration with the national security strategy. And then Congress endorsed it and strengthened it. And the congress, bipartisan groups in the Congress, as you mentioned, have remained very steadfast in this. Even though Mr. Trump waffled and the democratic candidates including Biden were very weak on this issue for a year or two.

And the media wasn't very strong on it either. But that changed with the election of 2020 and COVID hitting the United States and public opinion tending dramatically against China. And that's persisted with the Biden administration and with his key leaders who also were very moderate toward China until 2020. And really 2021 was when they showed this resolve.

So what's the challenge that they're worried about? But first, there are three elements there. This is collective. But the first is security. China is tipping the balance in East Asia, as it expands its influence. And if it really tips the balance in East Asia, it will dominate the reason in these countries that it has claims on. And others that don't want to defer to China will be under tremendous pressure. It will change the order in Asia fundamentally.

Now U.S strategists have long seen the balance of Asia as fundamental to American interest. If a power hostile to the United States controls North East Asia, that's seen as a direct threat to the United States, just like if a hostile power controlled North Western Europe, and including Great Britain. That would be a hostile threat to the United States. And so, this kind of situation is very bad from the American point of view. And the U.S has worked hard for decades to try to prevent it from happening.

So in this case, what do we have? We have this intense competition with China. China does want to be the leading power of Asian, no question. And they want the U.S alliances to be weakened. And they want the U.S ultimately to be

displaced strategically in this area. And so this is a big problem. So how do you stop it?

Well, you stop it with building up allies and partners and building up your forces to counter it. Taiwan is right in the middle of this. Right in the center. It's position geographically is essential for the United States. And so under those circumstances, this makes the U.S very anxious to work closely with Taiwan. And of course, Taiwan welcomes the support it gets from the United States in this area. So this is a key challenge. And Taiwan's role is very strong and Taiwan benefits from the U.S interest in this.

The second biggest challenge, and probably the most important one at this point, is economics. Now Beijing's broad economic policies, multifaceted, have enormous negative impacts on the United States. And they're enormously unfair by WTO standards. And they're nefarious in many cases. This has been going on for decades. But now Beijing's so big and that has a tremendous impact on the United States.

And so the U.S opposes this. And they see this as an existential threat, just like the military thing is an existential threat. They see this as an existential threat. Particularly in the area of high technology. China is moving to try to dominate that field. They don't want to be subservient to the United States.

So how do you know you're not going to be subservient? The other side will have too much power against you. You really don't know, unless you dominate. It's not like an arms race where you can measure the arms and calculate that and see who has the advantage. It's very hard to do that unless you dominate the whole thing.

And so that's what they're striving to do. And of course America's striving to do that too. And so with this enormous high technology competition and the stakes are very high, dominance. Americans look at that, and many Americans in this bipartisan consensus that we're talking about in Washington, they tend to look at it this way. And so the upshot is, it's fundamental that we take action to make sure this doesn't happen. Well, how do we take action?

Well, there are a lot of different ways. But key to this, is high technology in Taiwan. It has a tremendous advantage on advanced computer reduction in particular. And these areas are very important for the U.S high technology competition with China. So number two. You can see, Taiwan plays a central role in the American policy.

And then the third area is China's challenge to governance. This is not so much an existential threat, although it would be if the Chinese had the power to implement it in a broad part of the world. The Chinese governance, what they like, is emblematic in a whole host of ways. But you can just look at their support for Putin.

So that's the kind of thing in the world order that China would accept. They would say, well, big powers are powerful. And as long as they don't intrude on Chinese interest, then China just leaves it alone. It's not a problem for them. And that's what's going to take place. What this means is, it's a blank cheque to authoritarians in big countries to go and gobble up small countries.

And this is what's been going on. Would go on if there wasn't some sort of check sustaining a global governance system that would prevent this kind of thing. Protect the small, and in the case of China, the medium sized countries, and even some of the bigger ones from Chinese expansionism at their expense.

So Taiwan figures here as part of this group of countries that is very concerned about this and willing to take actions and certainly doing their part to promote a world order that preserves the order that we have now to the benefit of the people in these countries, rather than having a type of world order where the big powers in their respective spheres of influence would dominate the countries in their area and without any regard except for their own narrow interests.

And so I think that's the kind of governance problem that we would have. But again, that's not so existential at this point. The threats are really in the military area and in the high technology area. And Taiwan plays a central role in both of those.

Richard Haddoc...: Well, thank you so much for such a comprehensive response for those listening. Pleased too. And check out his forthcoming book, US-China Relations: Perilous Past, Uncertain Present for more. Before we take off for the day, Professor Sutter, if you have any recommendations on resources, organizations or opportunities for those who'd like to learn more about Taiwan strait issues or US-China-Taiwan relations, I'd love to hear your recommendations.

Professor Rober...: Great. Well, I think a few, I'm sure most people... Well, many people aren't aware of it. But I think many, well specialists are aware of this sort of thing. We have some excellent analysis on US-Taiwan-China relations. And it's done by think tanks here in Washington, DC in particular and other groups. But here, if you want a moderate perspective on this, then the Brookings Institution is good. And CSIS is good. And Bonnie Glaser, very leading specialist on this issue. She's with the German Marshall Fund now. So I'm sure they'll be doing some very good things on this issue as well.

One of the real gaps among China specialists and Taiwan specialists is an understanding of the drivers inside the United States and particularly the Congress. The mainstream media covers it episodically. You don't get really good coverage of this. And so you look for others that'll basically tell you what is Congress doing that matters? And what is the Congress doing that's mainly posturing?

And there's an awful lot of the latter in dealing with Congress and Taiwan in particular. Because Taiwan enjoys enormous support across the board in Congress. And so most members will want to affiliate with various bills that come up, even though they do things that don't mean very much. But they posture. And so paying a lot of attention to that can probably be counterproductive. You really want to see what are they mandating? What are they requiring?

And this kind of thing needs discernment. And needs to understand congressional process better. But places do do this. The congressional quarterly publications. They're very good on this sort of thing. And then others get into the act pretty well. And so here, the U.S.–China Policy Foundation covers significant congressional action. Can help you look at things that really matter. And Taiwan is important here.

Richard Haddoc...: Indeed, spoken with your decades of government career experience. For those who don't already know, Professor Sutter formally served in various posts such as in the Congressional Research Service to the National Intelligence Council in the Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research. And as a professional staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. So, he's certainly from a wealth of research experience and being involved in these issues and a practitioner as well. So, thank you so much Professor Sutter for being so generous with your time and [inaudible 00:39:32].

Professor Rober...: Thank you very much.

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