

## China in U.S. Presidential Debates, 1960-2016

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Most of the transcripts from which these excerpts are drawn are available at the Commission on Presidential Debates website ([debates.org](http://debates.org)).

### 1960: September 26, Senator John F. Kennedy (D) and Vice President Richard M. Nixon (R)

*The focus of this debate was domestic issues, but Kennedy referred to China a couple of times in his opening statement and Nixon responded to those references.*

**Kennedy Opening Statement:** ... The Chinese Communists have always had a large population. But they are important and dangerous now because they are mounting a major effort within their own country. The kind of country we have here, the kind of society we have, the kind of strength we build in the United States will be the defense of freedom. If we do well here, if we meet our obligations, if we're moving ahead, then I think freedom will be secure around the world. If we fail, then freedom fails. Therefore, I think the question before the American people is: Are we doing as much as we can do? Are we as strong as we should be? Are we as strong as we must be if we're going to maintain our independence, and if we're going to maintain and hold out the hand of friendship to those who look to us for assistance, to those who look to us for survival? I should make it very clear that I do not think we're doing enough, that I am not satisfied as an American with the progress that we're making. This is a great country, but I think it could be a greater country; and this is a powerful country, but I think it could be a more powerful country....

... I want us to recapture that image. I want people in Latin America and Africa and Asia to start to look to America; to see how we're doing things; to wonder what the resident of the United States is doing;

and not to look at Khrushchev, or look at the Chinese Communists. That is the obligation upon our generation...

**Nixon Opening Statement:** ... There is no question but that this nation cannot stand still; because we are in a deadly competition, a competition not only with the men in the Kremlin, but the men in Peking. We're ahead in this competition, as Senator Kennedy, I think, has implied. But when you're in a race, the only way to stay ahead is to move ahead. And I subscribe completely to the spirit that Senator Kennedy has expressed tonight, the spirit that the United States should move ahead. Where, then, do we disagree? I think we disagree on the implication of his remarks tonight and on the statements that he has made on many occasions during his campaign to the effect that the United States has been standing still...

## **1960: October 7, Senator John F. Kennedy (D) and Vice President Richard M. Nixon (R)**

*The candidates did not make opening statements, but the very first question from CBS's Paul Niven took them to the question of China.*

**Niven:** Mr. Vice President, Senator Kennedy said last night that the Administration must take responsibility for the loss of Cuba. Would you compare the validity of that statement with the validity of your own statements in previous campaigns that the Truman Administration was responsible for the loss of China to the Communists?

**Nixon:** Well first of all, I don't agree with Senator Kennedy that Cuba is lost and certainly China was lost when this Administration came into power in 1953.

*A later question from Edward Morgan of ABC went first to Nixon. Kennedy referred to China in his answer.*

**Morgan:** Mr. Vice President, in your speeches you emphasize that the United States is doing basically well in the cold war. Can you square that statement with a considerable mass of bipartisan reports and studies, including one prominently participated in by Governor Rockefeller, which almost unanimously conclude that we are not doing nearly so well as we should?

**Kennedy:** ... Thirdly, in 1952, there were only seven votes in favor of the admission of Red China into the United Nations. Last year there were twenty-nine and tomorrow when the preliminary vote is held you will see a strengthening of that position or very closely to it. We have not maintained our position and our prestige....

*Niven later raised a question that led Nixon to refer to Quemoy (Kinmen or Jinmen) and Matsu, two islands held by Formosa (Taiwan) and which mainland forces had shelled and subjected to propaganda barrages while Taipei's forces responded by shelling the mainland.*

**Niven:** Mr. Vice President, you said that while Mr. Khrushchev is here, Senator Kennedy should talk about what's right with this country as well as what's wrong with the country. In the 1952 campaign when you were Republican candidate for Vice President, and we were eh - at war with the Communists, did you feel a similar responsibility to talk about what was right with the country?

**Nixon:** ... I should point out here that Senator Kennedy has attacked our foreign policy. He's said that it's been a policy that has led to defeat and retreat. And I'd like to know where have we been defeated and where have we retreated? In the Truman Administration, six hundred million people went behind the Iron Curtain including the satellite countries of Eastern Europe and Communist China. In this Administration we've stopped them at Quemoy and Matsu; we've stopped them in Indochina; we've stopped them in Lebanon; we've stopped them in other parts of the world...

**Morgan:** Senator, Saturday on television you said that you had always thought that Quemoy and Matsu were unwise places to draw our defense line in the Far East. Would you comment further on that and also address to this question; couldn't a pullback from those islands be interpreted as appeasement?

**Kennedy:** Well, the United States uh - has on occasion attempted uh - mostly in the middle fifties, to persuade Chiang Kai-shek to pull his troops back to Formosa. I believe strongly in the defense of Formosa. These islands are a few miles - five or six miles - off the coast of Red China, within a general harbor area and more than a hundred miles from Formosa. We have never said flatly that we will defend Quemoy and Matsu if it's attacked. We say we will defend it if it's part of a general attack on Formosa. But it's extremely difficult to make that judgment. Now, Mr. Herter in 1958, when he was Under Secretary of State, said they were strategically undefensible. Admirals Spruance and Callins in 1955 said that we should not attempt to defend these islands, in their conference in the Far East. General Ridgway has said the same thing. I believe that when you get into a war - if you're going to get into war for the defense of Formosa, it ought to be on a clearly defined line. One of the problems, I think, at the time of South Korea was the question of whether the United States would defend it if it were attacked. I believe that we should defend Formosa. We should come to its defense. To leave this rather in the air, that we will defend it under some conditions but not under other, I think is a mistake. Secondly, I would not suggest the withdrawal at the point of the Communist gun. It is a decision finally that the Nationalists should make and I believe that we should consult with them and attempt to work out a plan by which the line is drawn at the island of Formosa. It leaves a hundred miles between the sea. But with General Ridgway, Mr. Herter, General Collins, Admiral Spruance and many others, I think it's unwise to take the chance of being dragged into a war which may lead to a world war over two islands which are not strategically defensible, which are not, according to their testimony, essential to the defense of Formosa. I think that uh - we should protect our commitments. I believe strongly we should do so in Berlin. I believe strongly we should do so in Formosa and I believe we should meet our commitments to every country whose security we've guaranteed. But I do not believe that that line in case of war should be drawn on those islands but instead on the island of Formosa. And as long as they are not essential to the defense of Formosa, it's been my judgment ever since 1954, at the time of the Eisenhower Doctrine for the Far East, that our line should be drawn in the sea around the island itself.

**Nixon:** I disagree completely with Senator Kennedy on this point. I remember in the period immediately before the Korean War, South Korea was supposed to be indefensible as well. Generals testified to that. And Secretary Acheson made a very famous speech at the Press Club, early in the year that Korean

War started, indicating in effect that South Korea was beyond the defense zone of the United States. I suppose it was hoped when he made that speech that we wouldn't get into a war. But it didn't mean that. We had to go in when they came in. Now I think as far as Quemoy and Matsu are concerned, that the question is not these two little pieces of real estate - they are unimportant. It isn't the few people who live on them - they are not too important. It's the principle involved. These two islands are in the area of freedom. The Nationalists have these two islands. We should not uh - force our Nationalist allies to get off of them and give them to the Communists. If we do that we start a chain reaction; because the Communists aren't after Quemoy and Matsu, they're after Formosa. In my opinion this is the same kind of woolly thinking that led to disaster for America in Korea. I am against it. I would never tolerate it as president of the United States, and I will hope that Senator Kennedy will change his mind if he should be elected.

### **1960: October 13, Senator John F. Kennedy (D) and Vice President Richard M. Nixon (R)**

***Once again, there was no opening statement. The first question, from Frank McGee of NBC focused on American policy toward Taiwan and defense of Kinmen (Quemoy) and Matsu two islands under Taipei's control.***

**McGee:** Senator Kennedy, yesterday you used the words "trigger-happy" in referring to Vice President Richard Nixon's stand on defending the islands of Quemoy and Matsu. Last week on a program like this one, you said the next president would come face to face with a serious crisis in Berlin. So the question is: would you take military action to defend Berlin?

**Kennedy:** Mr. McGee, we have a contractual right to be in Berlin coming out of the conversations at Potsdam and of World War II. That has been reinforced by direct commitments of the president of the United States; it's been reinforced by a number of other nations under NATO. I've stated on many occasions that the United States must meet its commitment on Berlin. It is a commitment that we have to meet if we're going to protect the security of Western Europe. And therefore on this question I don't think that there is any doubt in the mind of any American; I hope there is not any doubt in the mind of any member of the community of West Berlin; I'm sure there isn't any doubt in the mind of the Russians. We will meet our commitments to maintain the freedom and independence of West Berlin.

**Nixon:** Yes. As a matter of fact, the statement that Senator Kennedy made was that - to the effect that there were trigger-happy Republicans, that my stand on Quemoy and Matsu was an indication of trigger-happy Republicans. I resent that comment. I resent it because th- it's an implication that Republicans have been trigger-happy and, therefore, would lead this nation into war. I would remind Senator Kennedy of the past fifty years. I would ask him to name one Republican president who led this nation into war. There were three Democratic presidents who led us into war. I do not mean by that that one party is a war party and the other party is a peace party. But I do say that any statement to the effect that the Republican party is trigger-happy is belied by the record. We had a war when we came into power in 1953. We got rid of that; we've kept out of other wars; and certainly that doesn't indicate that we're trigger-happy. We've been strong, but we haven't been trigger-happy. As far as Berlin is concerned, there isn't any question about the necessity of defending Berlin; the rights of people there to

be free; and there isn't any question about what the united American people - Republicans and Democrats alike - would do in the event there were an attempt by the Communists to take over Berlin.

***Charles von Fremd of CBS continued the focus on Taiwan and raised the question of whether the candidates would use nuclear weapons to defend the Quemoy (Kinmen) and Matsu.***

**Von Fremd:** Mr. Vice President, a two-part question concerning the offshore islands in the Formosa Straits. If you were president and the Chinese Communists tomorrow began an invasion of Quemoy and Matsu, would you launch the uh - United States into a war by sending the Seventh Fleet and other military forces to resist this aggression; and secondly, if the uh - regular conventional forces failed to halt such uh - such an invasion, would you authorize the use of nuclear weapons?

**Nixon:** Mr. Von Fremd, it would be completely irresponsible for a candidate for the presidency, or for a president himself, to indicate the course of action and the weapons he would use in the event of such an attack. I will say this: in the event that such an attack occurred and in the event the attack was a prelude to an attack on Formosa - which would be the indication today because the Chinese Communists say over and over again that their objective is not the offshore islands, that they consider them only steppingstones to taking Formosa - in the event that their attack then were a prelude to an attack on Formosa, there isn't any question but that the United States would then again, as in the case of Berlin, honor our treaty obligations and stand by our ally of Formosa. But to indicate in advance how we would respond, to indicate the nature of this response would be incorrect; it would certainly be inappropriate; it would not be in the best interests of the United States. I will only say this, however, in addition: to do what Senator Kennedy has suggested - to suggest that we will surrender these islands or force our Chinese Nationalist allies to surrender them in advance - is not something that would lead to peace; it is something that would lead, in my opinion, to war. This is the history of dealing with dictators. This is something that Senator Kennedy and all Americans must know. We tried this with Hitler. It didn't work. He wanted first uh - we know, Austria, and then he went on to the Sudetenland and then Danzig, and each time it was thought this is all that he wanted. Now what do the Chinese Communists want? They don't want just Quemoy and Matsu; they don't want just Formosa; they want the world. And the question is if you surrender or indicate in advance that you're not going to defend any part of the free world, and you figure that's going to satisfy them, it doesn't satisfy them. It only whets their appetite; and then the question comes, when do you stop them? I've often heard President Eisenhower in discussing this question, make the statement that if we once start the process of indicating that this point or that point is not the place to stop those who threaten the peace and freedom of the world, where do we stop them? And I say that those of us who stand against surrender of territory - this or any others - in the face of blackmail, in the s- face of force by the Communists are standing for the course that will lead to peace.

**Kennedy:** Yes. The whole th- the United States now has a treaty - which I voted for in the United States Senate in 1955 - to defend Formosa and the Pescadores Island. The islands which Mr. Nixon is discussing are five or four miles, respectively, off the coast of China. Now when Senator Green, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote to the President, he received back on the second of October, 1958 - "neither you nor any other American need feel the U.S. will be involved in military hostilities merely in the defense of Quemoy and Matsu." Now, that is the issue. I believe we must meet our commitment to uh - Formosa. I support it and the Pescadores Island. That is the present American

position. The treaty does not include these two islands. Mr. Nixon suggests uh - that the United States should go to war if these two islands are attacked. I suggest that if Formosa is attacked or the Pescadores, or if there's any military action in any area which indicates an attack on Formosa and the Pescadores, then of course the United States is at war to defend its treaty. Now, I must say what Mr. Nixon wants to do is commit us - as I understand him, so that we can be clear if there's a disagreement - he wants us to be committed to the defense of these islands merely as the defense of these islands as free territory, not as part of the defense of Formosa. Admiral Yarnell, the commander of the Asiatic fleet, has said that these islands are not worth the bones of a single American. The President of the United States has indicated they are not within the treaty area. They were not within the treaty area when the treaty was passed in fifty-five. We have attempted to persuade Chiang Kai-shek as late as January of 1959 to reduce the number of troops he has on them. This is a serious issue, and I think we ought to understand completely if we disagree, and if so, where.

***Nuclear weapons proliferation came up in the next question from Douglass Cater of Reporter magazine. Kennedy mentioned China in his answer. In his answer, Nixon returned to the subject of Quemoy (Kinmen) and Matsu and Kennedy's positions on their defense.***

**Cater:** Senator Kennedy, last week you said that before we should hold another summit conference, that it was important that the United States build its strength. Modern weapons take quite a long time to build. What sort of prolonged period do you envisage before there can be a summit conference? And do you think that there can be any new initiatives on the grounds of nuclear disarmament uh - nuclear control or weapons control d- uh - during this period?

**Kennedy:** ... Now on the question of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, I must say that I feel that another effort should be made by a new Administration in January of 1961, to renew negotiations with the Soviet Union and see whether it's possible to come to some conclusion which will lessen the chances of contamination of the atmosphere, and also lessen the chances that other powers will begin to possess a nuclear capacity. There are indications, because of new inventions, that ten, fifteen, or twenty nations will have a nuclear capacity - including Red China - by the end of the presidential office in 1964. This is extremely serious. There have been many wars in the history of mankind. And to take a chance uh - now be - and not make every effort that we could make to provide for some control over these weapons, I think would be a great mistake. One of my disagreements with the present Administration has been that I don't feel a real effort has been made on this very sensitive subject, not only of nuclear controls, but also of general disarmament....

**Nixon:** ...Yes, we should make a great effort. But under no circumstances must the United States ever make an agreement based on trust. There must be an absolute guarantee. Now, just a comment on Senator Kennedy's last answer. He forgets that in this same debate on the Formosa resolution, which he said he voted for - which he did - that he voted against an amendment, or was recorded against an amendment - and on this particular - or for an amendment, I should say - which passed the Senate overwhelmingly, seventy to twelve. And that amendment put the Senate of the United States on record with a majority of the Senator's own party voting for it, as well as the majority of Republicans - put them on record - against the very position that the Senator takes now of surrendering, of indicating in advance, that the United States will not defend the offshore islands.

***Roscoe Drummond of the New York Herald Tribune followed Nixon's comments with a question on whether or not Nixon was outlining a policy toward Taiwan that was different from that of the Eisenhower administration.***

**Drummond:** Mr. Nixon, I would like to ask eh - one more aspect or raise another aspect of this same question. Uh - it is my understanding that President Eisenhower never advocated that Quemoy and Matsu should be defended under all circumstances as a matter of principle. I heard Secretary Dulles at a press conference in fifty-eight say that he thought that it was a mistake for Chiang Kai-shek to deploy troops to these islands. I would like to ask what has led you to take what appears to be a different position on this subject.

**Nixon:** Well Mr. Drummond, first of all, referring to Secretary Dulles' press conference, I think if you read it all - and I know that you have - you will find that Secretary Dulles also indicated in that press conference that when the troops were withdrawn from Quemoy, that the implication was certainly of everything that he said, that Quemoy could better be defended. There were too many infantrymen there, not enough heavy artillery; and certainly I don't think there was any implication in Secretary Dulles' statement that Quemoy and Matsu should not be defended in the event that they were attacked, and that attack was a preliminary to an attack on Formosa. Now as far as President Eisenhower is concerned, I have often heard him discuss this question. As I uh - related a moment ago, the President has always indicated that we must not make the mistake in dealing with the dictator of indicating that we are going to make a concession at the point of a gun. Whenever you do that, inevitably the dictator is encouraged to try it again. So first it will be Quemoy and Matsu, next it may be Formosa. What do we do then? My point is this: that once you do this - follow this course of action - of indicating that you are not going to defend a particular area, the inevitable result is that it encourages a man who is determined to conquer the world to press you to the point of no return. And that means war. We went through this tragic experience leading to World War II. We learned our lesson again in Korea, We must not learn it again. That is why I think the Senate was right, including a majority of the Democrats, a majority of the Republicans, when they rejected Senator Kennedy's position in 1955. And incidentally, Senator Johnson was among those who rejected that position - voted with the seventy against the twelve. The Senate was right because they knew the lesson of history. And may I say, too, that I would trust that Senator Kennedy would change his position on this - change it; because as long as he as a major presidential candidate continues to suggest that we are going to turn over these islands, he is only encouraging the aggressors - the Chinese Communist and the Soviet aggressors - to press the United States, to press us to the point where war would be inevitable. The road to war is always paved with good intentions. And in this instance the good intentions, of course, are a desire for peace. But certainly we're not going to have peace by giving in and indicating in advance that we are not going to defend what has become a symbol of freedom.

**Kennedy:** I don't think it's possible for Mr. Nixon to state the record in distortion of the facts with more precision than he just did. In 1955, Mr. Dulles at a press conference said: "The treaty that we have with the Republic of China excludes Quemoy and Matsu from the treaty area." That was done with much thought and deliberation. Therefore that treaty does not commit the United States to defend anything except Formosa and the Pescadores, and to deal with acts against that treaty area. I completely sustained the treaty. I voted for it. I would take any action necessary to defend the treaty, Formosa, and the Pescadores Island. What we're now talking about is the Vice President's determination to guarantee

Quemoy and Matsu, which are four and five miles off the coast of Red China, which are not within the treaty area. I do not suggest that Chiang Kai-shek - and this Administration has been attempting since 1955 to persuade Chiang Kai-shek to lessen his troop commitments. Uh - He sent a mission - the President - in 1955 of Mr. uh - Robertson and Admiral Radford. General Twining said they were still doing it in 1959. General Ridgway said - who was Chief of Staff: "To go to war for Quemoy and Matsu to me would seem an unwarranted and tragic course to take. To me that concept is completely repugnant." So I stand with them. I stand with the Secretary of State, Mr. Herter, who said these islands were indefensible. I believe that we should meet our commitments, and if the Chinese Communists attack the Pescadores and Formosa, they know that it will mean a war. I would not hand over these islands under any point of gun. But I merely say that the treaty is quite precise and I sustain the treaty. Mr. Nixon would add a guarantee to islands five miles off the coast of the re- Republic of China when he's never really protested the Communists seizing Cuba, ninety miles off the coast of the United States.

### **1960: October 21, Senator John F. Kennedy (D) and Vice President Richard M. Nixon (R)**

*Candidates were permitted an opening statement in a debate that was to focus on foreign policy. Quemoy (Kinmen) and Matsu again came up.*

**Nixon:** ... Now why were we successful, as our predecessors were not successful? I think there're several reasons. In the first place, they made a fatal error in misjudging the Communists; in trying to apply to them the same rules of conduct that you would apply to the leaders of the free world. One of the major errors they made was the one that led to the Korean War. In ruling out the defense of Korea, they invited aggression in that area. They thought they were going to have peace - it brought war. We learned from their mistakes. And so, in our seven years, we find that we have been firm in our diplomacy; we have never made concessions without getting concessions in return.... That is why President Eisenhower was correct in not apologizing or expressing regrets to Mr. Khrushchev at the Paris Conference, as Senator Kennedy suggested he could have done. That is why Senator wh- President Eisenhower was also correct in his policy in the Formosa Straits, where he declined, and refused to follow the recommendations - recommendations which Senator Kennedy voted for in 1955; again made in 1959; again repeated in his debates that you have heard - recommendations with regard to - again - slicing off a piece of free territory, and abandoning it, if - in effect, to the Communists. Why did the President feel this was wrong and why was the President right and his critics wrong? Because again this showed a lack of understanding of dictators, a lack of understanding particularly of Communists, because every time you make such a concession it does not lead to peace; it only encourages them to blackmail you. It encourages them to begin a war.

**Kennedy:** First uh - let me again try to correct the record on the matter of Quemoy and Matsu. I voted for the Formosa resolution in 1955. I have sustained it since then. I've said that I agree with the Administration policy. Mr. Nixon earlier indicated that he would defend Quemoy and Matsu even if the attack on these islands, two miles off the coast of China, were not part of a general attack on Formosa and the Pescadores. I indicated that I would defend those islands if the attack were directed against Pescadores and Formosa, which is part of the Eisenhower policy. I've supported that policy. In the last week, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I have re-read the testimony of General

Twining representing the Administration in 1959, and the Assistant Secretary of State before the Foreign Relations Committee in 1958, and I have accurately described the Administration policy, and I support it wholeheartedly. So that really isn't an issue in this campaign. It isn't an issue with Mr. Nixon, who now says that he also supports the Eisenhower policy. Nor is the question that all Americans want peace and security an issue in this campaign. The question is: are we moving in the direction of peace and security? Is our relative strength growing? Is, as Mr. Nixon says, our prestige at an all-time high, as he said a week ago, and that of the Communists at an all-time low? I don't believe it is. I don't believe that our relative strength is increasing.... And what about Asia? Is India going to win the economic struggle or is China going to win it? Who will dominate Asia in the next five or ten years? Communism? The Chinese? Or will freedom? The question which we have to decide as Americans - are we doing enough today? Is our strength and prestige rising? Do people want to be identified with us? Do they want to follow United States leadership? I don't think they do, enough. And that's what concerns me. In Africa - these countries that have newly joined the United Nations. On the question of admission of Red China, only two countries in all of Africa voted with us - Liberia and the Union of South Africa. The rest either abstained or voted against us. More countries in Asia voted against us on that question than voted with us.

***Walter Cronkite of CBS asked about American prestige abroad. Support for the U.S. position on not admitting the People's Republic of China to the U.N. was used by Nixon as one measure of America's standing in other countries.***

**Cronkite:** Thank you Quincy. Mr. Vice President, Senator Fulbright and now tonight, Senator Kennedy, maintain that the Administration is suppressing a report by the United States Information Agency that shows a decline in United States prestige overseas. Are you aware of such a report, and if you are aware of the existence of such a report, should not that report, because of the great importance this issue has been given in this campaign, be released to the public?

**Nixon:** Finally, let me say this: as far as prestige is concerned, the first place it would show up would be in the United Nations. Now Senator Kennedy has referred to the vote on Communist China. Let's look at the vote on Hungary. There we got more votes for condemning Hungary and looking into that situation than we got the last year. Let's look at the reaction eh - reaction to Khrushchev and Eisenhower at the last U.N. session. Did Khrushchev gain because he took his shoe off and pounded the table and shouted and insulted? Not at all. The President gained. America gained by continuing the dignity, the decency that has characterized us and it's that that keeps the prestige of America up, not running down America the way Senator Kennedy has been running her down.

***Cronkite also asked the candidates about how the U.S. might challenge communism in the near term.***

**Kennedy:** ... I would say Eastern Europe is the area of vulnerability of the uh - s- of the Soviet Union. Secondly, the relations between Russia and China. They are now engaged in a debate over whether war is the means of Communizing the world or whether they should use subversion, infiltration, economic struggles and all the rest. No one can say what that course of action will be, but I think the next president of the United States should watch it carefully. If those two powers should split, it could have great effects throughout the entire world. Thirdly, I believe that India represents a great area for affirmative action by the free world. India started from about the same place that China did. Chinese

Communists have been moving ahead the last ten years. India under a free society has been making some progress. But if India does not succeed - with her four hundred and fifty million people, if she can't make freedom work - then people around the world are going to determine - particularly in the underdeveloped world - that the only way that they can develop their resources is through the Communist system....

***John Chancellor of NBC took the candidates back to Quemoy (Kinmen) and Matsu, asking if it should be a campaign issue.***

**Chancellor:** Sir, I'd like to ask you another question about Quemoy and Matsu. Both you and Senator Kennedy say you agree with the President on this subject and with our treaty obligations. But the subject remains in the campaign as an issue. Now is - sir, is this because each of you feels obliged to respond to the other when he talks about Quemoy and Matsu, and if that's true, do you think an end should be called to this discussion, or will it stay with us as a campaign issue?

**Nixon:** I would say that the issue will stay with us as a campaign issue just as long as Senator Kennedy persists in what I think is a fundamental error. He says he supports the President's position. He says that he voted for the resolution. Well just let me point this out; he voted for the resolution in 1955 which gave the president the power to use the forces of the United States to defend Formosa and the offshore islands. But he also voted then for an amendment - which was lost, fortunately - an amendment which would have drawn a line and left out those islands and denied the president the right to defend those islands if he thought that it was an attack on Formosa. He repeated that error in 1959, in the speech that he made. He repeated it again in a television debate that we had. Now, my point is this: Senator Kennedy has got to be consistent here. Either he's for the President and he's against the position that those who opposed the President in fifty-five and fifty-nine - and the Senator's position itself, stated the other day in our debate - either he is for the President and against that position or we simply have a disagreement here that must continue to be debated. Now if the Senator in his answer to this question will say "I now will depart, or retract my previous views; I think I was wrong in 1955; I think I was wrong in 1959; and I think I was wrong in our television debate to say that we should draw a line leaving out Quemoy and Matsu - draw a line in effect abandoning these islands to the Communists;" then this will be right out of the campaign because there will be no issue between us. I support the President's position. I have always opposed drawing a line. I have opposed drawing a line because I know that the moment you draw a line, that is an encouragement for the Communists to attack - to step up their blackmail and to force you into the war that none of us want. And so I would hope that Senator Kennedy in his answer today would clear it up. It isn't enough for him to say "I support the President's position, that I voted for the resolution." Of course, he voted for the resolution - it was virtually unanimous. But the point is, what about his error in voting for the amendment, which was not adopted, and then persisting in it in fifty-nine, persisting in it in the debate. It's very simple for him to clear it up. He can say now that he no longer believes that a line should be drawn leaving these islands out of the perimeter of defense. If he says that, this issue will not be discussed in the campaign.

**Kennedy:** Well, Mr. Nixon, to go back to 1955. The resolution commits the president in the United States, which I supported, to defend uh - Formosa, the Pescadores, and if it was his military judgment, these islands. Then the President sent a mission, composed of Admiral Radford and Mr. Robertson, to persuade Chiang Kai-shek in the spring of fifty-five to withdraw from the two islands, because they were

exposed. The President was unsuccessful; Chiang Kai-shek would not withdraw. I refer to the fact that in 1958, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I'm very familiar with the position that the United States took in negotiating with the Chinese Communists on these two islands. General Twining, in January, fifty-nine, described the position of the United States. The position of the United States has been that this build-up, in the words of the president, has been foolish. Mr. Herter has said these islands are indefensible. Chiang Kai-shek will not withdraw. Because he will not withdraw, because he's committed to these islands, because we've been unable to persuade him to withdraw, we are in a very difficult position. And therefore, the President's judgment has been that we should defend the islands if, in his military judgment and the judgment of the commander in the field, the attack on these islands should be part of an overall attack on Formosa. I support that. In view of the difficulties we've had with the islands, in view of the difficulties and disputes we've had with Chiang Kai-shek, that's the only position we can take. That's not the position you took, however. The first position you took, when this matter first came up, was that we should draw the line and commit ourselves, as a matter of principle, to defend these islands. Not as part of the defense of Formosa and the Pescadores. You showed no recognition of the Administration program to try to persuade Chiang Kai-shek for the last five years to withdraw from the islands. And I challenge you tonight to deny that the Administration has sent at least several missions to persuade Chiang Kai-shek's withdrawal from these islands.

## 1976: September 23, Governor Jimmy Carter (D) and President Gerald Ford (R)

*This debate focused on domestic issues. The two candidates did not mention China.*

## 1976: October 6, Governor Jimmy Carter (D) and President Gerald Ford (R)

*Foreign policy was the focus of this debate. Richard Valeriani of NBC asked about normalization of relations with China and providing China with military equipment.*

**Valeriani:** Mr. President, the policy of your administration is to normalize relations with mainland China. And that means establishing at some point full diplomatic relations and obviously doing something about the mutual defense treaty with Taiwan. If you are elected, will you move to establish full diplomatic relations with Peking, and will you abrogate the mutual defense treaty with Taiwan? And, as a corollary, would you provide mainland China with military equipment if the Chinese were to ask for it?

**Ford:** Our relationship with the People's Republic of China is based upon the Shanghai Communique, of 1972, and that communique, calls for the normalization of relations between the United States and the People's Republic. It doesn't set a times schedule. It doesn't uh - make a determination as to how uh - that relationship should be achieved in relationship to our current uhh - diplomatic recognition and obligations to the Taiwanese Government. The Shanghai Communique, does say that the differences between the People's Republic on the one hand and Taiwan on the other shall be settled by peaceful means. The net result is this administration, and during my time as the president for the next four years, we will continue to move for normalization of relations in the traditional sense, and we will insist that the disputes between Taiwan and the People's Republic be settled peacefully, as was agreed in the Shanghai Communique, of 1972. The Ford administration will not let down, will not eliminate or forget our obligation to the people of Taiwan. We feel that there must be a continued obligation to the people, the some nineteen or twenty million people in Taiwan. And as we move during the next four years, those will be the policies of this administration.

**Valeriani:** And sir, the military equipment for the mainland Chinese?

**Ford:** There is no policy of this government to give to the People's Republic, or to sell to the People's Republic of China, military equipment. I do not believe that we, the United States, should sell, give or otherwise transfer military hardware to the People's Republic of China, or any other Communist nation, such as the Soviet Union and the like.

**Carter:** ... In the Far East I think we need to continue to be uh - strong and uh - I would certainly uh - pursue the uh - normalization of uh - relationships with the People's Republic of China. We opened a great opportunity in 1972, which has pretty well been frittered - frit- frittered away under Mr. Ford, that ought to be a constant uh - inclination toward - uh - toward friendship. But I would never let that friendship with the People's Republic of China stand in the way of the preservation of the independence and freedom of the people on Taiwan.

*Max Frankel of the New York Times asked about the Ford administration's policy towards authoritarian governments. In his question he noted the government dealt with China. In his follow-up he mentioned Taiwan. Ford focused on China and the Korean peninsula.*

**Frankel:** Mr. President, just clarify one point: There are lots of majorities in the world that feel they're being pushed around by minority governments. And are you saying they can now expect to look to us for not just good cheer but throwing our weight on their side - in South Africa, or on Taiwan, or in Chile, uh - to help change their governments, as in Rhodesia?

**Ford:** I would hope that as we move to one area of the world from another - and the United States must not spread itself too thinly - that was one of the problems that helped to create the circumstances in Vietnam - but as we as a nation find that we are asked by the various parties, either one nation against another or individuals within a nation, that the United States will take the leadership and try to resolve the differences. Let me take uh - South Korea as an example. I have personally told President Park that the United States does not condone the kind of repressive measures that he has taken in that country. But I think in all fairness and equity we have to recognize the problem that South Korea has. On the north they have North Korea with five hundred thousand well-trained, well-equipped troops - they are supported by the People's Republic of China; they are supported by the Soviet Union. South Korea faces a very delicate situation. Now the United States, in this case, this administration, has recommended a year ago and we have reiterated it again this year, that the United States, South Korea, North Korea and the uh - People's Republic of China sit down at a conference table to resolve the problems of the Korean peninsula. This is a leadership role that the United States under this administration is carrying out, and if we do it, and I think the opportunities and the possibilities are getting better, we will have solved many of the internal domestic problems that exist in South Korea at the present time.

### **1976: October 22, Governor Jimmy Carter (D) and President Gerald Ford (R)**

*The slightest mention of China was made by Carter in responding to a question about his statement that he would not go to war in Yugoslavia even if the Soviet Union invaded. Carter mentioned that he spoke with individuals who had visited the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and China.*

## **1980: October 22, Former Governor Ronald Reagan (R) vs. President Jimmy Carter**

*This was the only debate between Reagan and Carter. Carter declined to take part in an earlier debate that included Congressman John Anderson who had won election as a Republican but ran in the presidential election as an Independent. Even though Carter normalized relations with Beijing at the end of 1978 and Reagan talked about returning to formal diplomatic relations with Taipei, China and Taiwan were not discussed during the debate which took place during the ongoing embassy hostage crisis in Iran and difficult economic times at home.*

**1984: October 7, President Ronald Reagan (R) vs. Former Vice President Walter Mondale (D)**

**1984: October 21, President Ronald Reagan (R) vs. Former Vice President Walter Mondale (D)**

*In neither of the debates was policy specifically toward China discussed.*

**1984: October 11, Vice President George H.W. Bush (R) vs. Representative Geraldine Ferraro (D)**

*One of the questions in the vice presidential debate mentioned that Bush had been head of the U.S. liaison office in Beijing. There was no discussion, however, of policy towards China.*

## **1988: September 25, Vice President George H.W. Bush (R) vs. Governor Michael Dukakis (D)**

*Policy toward China was not discussed in the debate, but Bush referred to China in responding to a question about the Soviet Union.*

**Groer:** Well, Mr. Vice President, you said you've met with Secretary General Gorbachev, you've met with Mr. Shevardnadze, but for the last forty years Americans have been taught to regard the Soviet Union as the enemy. Yet, President Reagan has signed two arms control treaties and he's promised to share Star Wars technology with the very country he once called the evil empire. So, perhaps you can tell us this evening, should we be doing a lot to help the economics and the social development of a country that we have so long regarded as an adversary?

**Bush:** What I think we ought to do is take a look at perestroika and glasnost, welcome them, but keep our eyes open. Be cautious. Because the Soviet change is not fully established yet. Yes, I think it's fine to do business with them. And, so, I'm encouraged with what I see when I talk to Mr. -- what I hear when I talk to Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Shevardnadze, but can they pull it off.

And when they have a --they a --deals that are good for us, as China started to do--the changes in China since Barbara and I lived there is absolutely amazing, in terms of incentive, in partnership and things of this nature. And now the Soviet Union seems to be walking down that same path. We should encourage that. We ought to say this is good....

## **1988: October 13, Vice President George H.W. Bush (R) vs. Governor Michael Dukakis (D)**

*China was not discussed in this debate.*

## **1988: October 11, Senator Dan Quayle (R) vs. Senator Lloyd Bentsen (D)**

*China was not discussed in the vice-presidential debate.*

## 1992: October 11, Governor Bill Clinton (D) vs. President George H.W. Bush (R) vs. Ross Perot (I)

*China loomed larger in 1992 than it had in recent history. For the first time, three candidates participated in the debate. John Mashek of the Boston Globe asked what the U.S. could do to influence China.*

**Mashek:** Governor Clinton, you accused the President of coddling tyrants, including those in Beijing. As President, how would you exert U.S. power to influence affairs in China.

**Clinton:** I think our relationships with China are important and I don't want to isolate China, but I think it is a mistake for us to do what this Administration did when all those kids went out there carrying the Statue of Liberty in Tiananmen Square. Mr Bush sent two people in secret to toast the Chinese leaders and basically tell them not to worry about it. They rewarded him by opening negotiations with Iran to transfer nuclear technology. That was their response to that sort of action. Now that the voices in the Congress and throughout the country have insisted that we do something about China, look at what has happened. China has finally agreed to stop sending us products made with prison labor. Not because we coddled them, but because the Administration was pushed into doing something about it. And recently the Chinese have announced they are going to lower some barriers to our products, which they ought to do since they have a \$15 billion trade surplus with the United States under Mr. Bush. The second biggest surplus next to Japan. So I would be firm. I would say if you want to continue as Most Favored Nation status for your government owned industries as well as your private ones, observe human rights in the future. Open your society. Recognize the legitimacy of those kids that were carrying the Statue of Liberty. If we can stand up for our economics, we ought to be able to preserve the democratic interests of the people of China. And over the long run they will be more reliable partners.

**Bush:** Well, the Administration was the first major country to stand up to the abuse in Tiananmen Square. We are the one that worked out the prison labor deal. We are the ones that lowered the barrier to products with Carla Hill's negotiation. I am the one that said let's keep the M.F.N. because you see China moving towards a free market economy. To do what the Congress and Governor Clinton is suggesting, you'd isolate and ruin Hong Kong. They are making some progress, not enough for us. We were the first ones to put sanctions on. We still have them on, on some things. But Governor Clinton's philosophy is isolate them. He says don't do it, but the policies he's expounding of putting conditions on M.F.N. and kind of humiliating them is not the way you make the kind of progress we are getting. And I've stood up with these people, and I understand what you have to do to be strong in this situation, and it's moving, not as fast as we'd like. But you isolate China and turn them inward, and then we've made a tremendous mistake. And I'm not going to do it. And I've had to fight a lot of people that were saying human rights, and we're the ones that put the sanctions on and stood for it. And he can insult General Scowcroft if he wants to. They didn't go over to coddle. He went over to say [they] must make the very changes they're making now.

**Perot:** All right, it's huge. China, is a huge country, broken into many provinces. It has some very elderly leaders that will not be around too much longer. Capitalism is growing and thriving across big portions of China. Asia will be our largest trading partner in the future. It will be a growing and a closer

relationship. We have a delicate, tight-wire walk that we must go through at the present time to make sure that we do not cozy up to tyrants, to make sure that they don't get the impression that they can suppress their people. But time is our friend there, because their leaders will change in not too many years, worst case, and their country is making great progress. One last point on the missiles. I don't want the American people to be confused. We have written agreements and we have some missiles that have been destroyed, but we have a huge number of intercontinental ballistic missiles that are still in place in Russia. The fact that you have an agreement is one thing. Till they're destroyed, some crazy person can either sell them or use them.

### **1992: October 15, Governor Bill Clinton (D) vs. President George H.W. Bush (R) vs. Ross Perot (I)**

*One of the candidates included China in his response to a question from moderator Carole Simpson.*

**Simpson:** Mr. Perot, what about your plans for the cities? You want to tackle the economy and the deficit first.

**Perot:** Let me say in my case, if I'm out of work, I'll cut grass tomorrow to take care of my family; I'll be happy to make shoes, I'll be happy to make clothing, I'll make sausage. You just give me a job. Put those jobs in the inner cities instead of doing diplomatic deals and shipping them to China where prison labor does the work.

*Later, Simpson asked Clinton about Saddam Hussein. He mentioned China in his response.*

**Simpson:** Governor Clinton, the president mentioned Saddam Hussein. Your vice president and you have had some words about the president and Saddam Hussein. Would you care to comment?

**Clinton:** ... [W]e need to be a force for freedom and democracy and we need to use our unique position to support freedom, whether it's in Haiti or in China or in any other place, wherever the seeds of freedom are sprouting. We can't impose it, but we need to nourish it and that's the kind of thing that I would do as president -- follow those three commitments into the future.

### **1992: October 19, Governor Bill Clinton (D) vs. President George H.W. Bush (R) vs. Ross Perot (I)**

*Policy toward China did not come up in this debate.*

### **1992: October 13, Senator Al Gore (D) vs. Vice President Dan Quayle (R) vs. Admiral James Stockdale (I)**

*The vice presidential debate did not include discussion of China.*

## **1996: October 6, President Bill Clinton (D) vs. Senator Bob Dole (R)**

*Responding to a question from moderator Jim Lehrer about use of military force, Clinton referred to having deployed the U.S. Navy near the Taiwan strait in response to Chinese missile tests at the time of Taiwan's first direct presidential election.*

**Lehrer:** Senator Dole, if elected president, what criteria would you use to decide when to send U.S. troops into harm's way.

**Clinton:** You ask when do you decide to deploy them. The interests of the American people must be at stake. Our values must be at stake. We have to be able to make a difference. And frankly we have to consider what the risks are to our young men and women in uniform. But I believe the evidence is that our deployments have been successful, in Haiti, in Bosnia, when we moved to Kuwait to repel Saddam Hussein's threatened invasion of Kuwait. When I have sent the fleet into the Taiwan straits. When we've worked hard to end the Northern Korean nuclear threat....

## **1996: October 16, President Bill Clinton (D) and Senator Bob Dole (R)**

*This debate used a town hall format. Clinton referred to China in a response to a trade question.*

**Smith:** Good evening. I'm Michael Smith. I'm an electronics technician in the Navy. My question was how you plan to deal with the trade deficit with Japan.

**Clinton:** Let me say again, we've had over 200 separate trade agreements in the last four years. By far, the largest number in American history -- not just the big ones you read about, but a lot of smaller ones. And now what we have to do is to focus on those things we're real good at and make sure we're getting a fair deal. We just had a pretty serious dispute with China because they were copying our CDs, and costing thousands of jobs in places like California. So we have -- as we said, if you want to keep doing business and selling your products over here, you're going to have to quit pirating our CDs, and they agreed to do things and verify that they had done it, which will make the problem much better. There is not a simple answer. You have to work on this day in and day out, every month, every year, every issue, to make sure that we have not only free trade but fair trade. I'm proud that we're better off on that than we were four years ago.

## **1996: October 9, Vice President Al Gore (D) vs. Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp (R)**

*The vice presidential debate did not include discussion of policy toward China.*

**2000: October 3, Governor George W. Bush (R) vs. Vice President Al Gore (D)**

*China did not come up in the debate.*

**2000: October 11, Governor George W. Bush (R) vs. Vice President Al Gore (D)**

*The question came from moderator Jim Lehrer of PBS.*

**Lehrer:** What about global warming?

**Bush:** I think it's an issue that we need to take very seriously. But I don't think we know the solution to global warming yet. And I don't think we've got all the facts before we make decisions. I tell you one thing I'm not going to do is I'm not going to let the United States carry the burden for cleaning up the world's air. Like Kyoto Treaty would have done. China and India were exempted from that treaty. I think we need to be more even-handed, as evidently 99 senators -- I think it was 99 senators supported that position.

**2000: October 17, Governor George W. Bush (R) vs. Vice President Al Gore (D)**

*China was not discussed in the debate.*

**2000: October 5, Former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney (R) vs. Senator Joe Lieberman (D)**

*The vice presidential debate did not include discussion of policy toward China.*

## 2004: September 30, President George W. Bush (R) vs. Senator John Kerry (D)

*Bush mentioned China and Jiang Zemin, whom he met when Jiang was the president of China, in his response to a question about nuclear weapons proliferation. The question came from Jim Lehrer of PBS, the moderator.*

**Lehrer:** Mr. President. Do you believe that diplomacy and sanctions can resolve the nuclear problems with North Korea and Iran? Take them in any order you would like.

**Bush:** North Korea, first, I do. Let me say -- I certainly hope so. Before I was sworn in, the policy of this government was to have bilateral negotiations with North Korea.

And we signed an agreement with North Korea that my administration found out that was not being honored by the North Koreans.

And so I decided that a better way to approach the issue was to get other nations involved, just besides us. And in Crawford, Texas, Jiang Zemin and I agreed that the nuclear-weapons-free peninsula, Korean Peninsula, was in his interest and our interest and the world's interest.

And so we began a new dialogue with North Korea, one that included not only the United States, but now China. And China's got a lot of influence over North Korea, some ways more than we do.

As well, we included South Korea, Japan and Russia. So now there are five voices speaking to Kim Jong Il, not just one.

And so if Kim Jong Il decides again to not honor an agreement, he's not only doing injustice to America, he'd be doing injustice to China, as well....

*The subject of North Korea and nuclear weapons came up again near the end of the debate. Kerry argued for direct talks with North Korea. Bush pushed the five-party talks which included China.*

**Bush:** Again, I can't tell you how big a mistake I think that is, to have bilateral talks with North Korea. It's precisely what Kim Jong Il wants. It will cause the six-party talks to evaporate. It will mean that China no longer is involved in convincing, along with us, for Kim Jong Il to get rid of his weapons. It's a big mistake to do that.

We must have China's leverage on Kim Jong Il, besides ourselves.

*In the last question, Lehrer focused on Russia. Kerry included mention of China in his response.*

**Kerry:** Now, I'd like to come back for a quick moment, if I can, to that issue about China and the talks. Because that's one of the most critical issues here: North Korea.

Just because the president says it can't be done, that you'd lose China, doesn't mean it can't be done. I mean, this is the president who said "There were weapons of mass destruction," said "Mission accomplished," said we could fight the war on the cheap -- none of which were true.

We could have bilateral talks with Kim Jong Il. And we can get those weapons at the same time as we get China. Because China has an interest in the outcome, too.

## **2004: October 8, President George W. Bush (R) vs. Senator John Kerry (D)**

***Bush referred to China in response to a question about nuclear weapons proliferation. A member of the audience, Rande Jacobs, asked the question in the town hall style debate. Kerry responded first and did not mention China.***

**Jacobs:** Iran sponsors terrorism and has missiles capable of hitting Israel and southern Europe. Iran will have nuclear weapons in two to three years time.

In the event that U.N. sanctions don't stop this threat, what will you do as president?

**Bush:** ... Let me talk about North Korea.

It is naive and dangerous to take a policy that [Kerry] suggested the other day, which is to have bilateral relations with North Korea. Remember, he's the person who's accusing me of not acting multilaterally. He now wants to take the six-party talks we have -- China, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, Japan and the United States -- and undermine them by having bilateral talks.

That's what President Clinton did. He had bilateral talks with the North Koreans. And guess what happened?

[Kim Jong-il] didn't honor the agreement. He was enriching uranium. That is a bad policy.

Of course, we're paying attention to these. It's a great question about Iran. That's why in my speech to the Congress I said: There's an "Axis of Evil," Iraq, Iran and North Korea, and we're paying attention to it. And we're making progress.

***Kerry made reference to China as part of his response to a question about manufacturing from audience member Jane Barlow.***

**Barlow:** Senator Kerry, how can the U.S. be competitive in manufacturing given -- in manufacturing, excuse me -- given the wage necessary and comfortably accepted for American workers to maintain the standard of living that they expect?

**Kerry:** ... And that's how we're going to be more competitive, by making sure our kids are graduating from school and college.

China and India are graduating more graduates in technology and science than we are.

We've got to create the products of the future. ...

***Later in the debate, the moderator, Charles Gibson of ABC, asked Kerry to discuss economic pressures that lead to outsourcing. The question cited wages in China.***

**Gibson:** Senator, I want to extend for a minute, you talk about tax credits to stop outsourcing. But when you have IBM documents that I saw recently where you can hire a programmer for \$12 in China, \$56 an hour here, tax credits won't cut it.

**Kerry:** You can't stop all outsourcing, Charlie. I've never promised that. I'm not going to, because that would be pandering. You can't.

But what you can do is create a fair playing field, and that's what I'm talking about....

### **2004: October 13, President George W. Bush (R) vs. Senator John Kerry (D)**

***Kerry argued that Bush's tax policies favored some, including those importing from China. Moderator Bob Schieffer of CBS asked the question that sparked the reply. Bush did not mention China during the debate.***

**Schieffer:** Senator Kerry, a new question. Let's talk about economic security. You pledged during the last debate that you would not raise taxes on those making less than \$200,000 a year. But the price of everything is going up, and we all know it. Health-care costs, as you are talking about, is skyrocketing, the cost of the war.

My question is, how can you or any president, whoever is elected next time, keep that pledge without running this country deeper into debt and passing on more of the bills that we're running up to our children?

**Kerry:** I'll tell you exactly how I can do it: by reinstating what President Bush took away, which is called pay as you go....

President Bush has taken -- he's the only president in history to do this. He's also the only president in 72 years to lose jobs -- 1.6 million jobs lost. He's the only president to have incomes of families go down for the last three years; the only president to see exports go down; the only president to see the lowest level of business investment in our country as it is today....

We shut the loophole which has American workers actually subsidizing the loss of their own job. They just passed an expansion of that loophole in the last few days: \$43 billion of giveaways, including favors to the oil and gas industry and the people importing ceiling fans from China....

***Kerry again mentioned China in response to a question about the economy.***

**Schieffer:** New question to you, Senator Kerry, two minutes. And it's still on jobs. You know, many experts say that a president really doesn't have much control over jobs. For example, if someone invents a machine that does the work of five people, that's progress. That's not the president's fault.

So I ask you, is it fair to blame the administration entirely for this loss of jobs?

**Kerry:** I don't blame them entirely for it. I blame the president for the things the president could do that has an impact on it.

Outsourcing is going to happen. I've acknowledged that in union halls across the country. I've had shop stewards stand up and say, "Will you promise me you're going to stop all this outsourcing?" And I've looked them in the eye and I've said, "No, I can't do that."

What I can promise you is that I will make the playing field as fair as possible, that I will, for instance, make certain that with respect to the tax system that you as a worker in America are not subsidizing the loss of your job.

Today, if you're an American business, you actually get a benefit for going overseas. You get to defer your taxes....

... I don't want American workers subsidizing the loss of their own job. And when I'm president, we're going to shut that loophole in a nanosecond and we're going to use that money to lower corporate tax rates in America for all corporations, 5 percent. And we're going to have a manufacturing jobs credit and a job hiring credit so we actually help people be able to hire here.

The second thing that we can do is provide a fair trade playing field. This president didn't stand up for Boeing when Airbus was violating international rules and subsidies....

The fact is that the president had an opportunity to stand up and take on China for currency manipulation. There are companies that wanted to petition the administration. They were told: Don't even bother; we're not going to listen to it.

The fact is that there have been markets shut to us that we haven't stood up and fought for. I'm going to fight for a fair trade playing field for the American worker....

## **2004: October 5, Vice President Dick Cheney (r) vs. Senator John Edwards (D)**

***Moderator Gwen Ifill of PBS mentioned China in a question about AIDS, but focused her question on what the next administration would do about the epidemic in the United States. There were no other mentions of China in the debate.***

## 2008: September 26, Senator Barack Obama (D) vs. Senator John McCain (R)

**Obama referred to China in responding to a question about programs that might need to be sacrificed in order to pay for the rescue of the financial system. Moderator Jim Lehrer of PBS asked the question.**

**Lehrer:** As president, as a result of whatever financial rescue plan comes about and the billion, \$700 billion, whatever it is it's going to cost, what are you going to have to give up, in terms of the priorities that you would bring as president of the United States, as a result of having to pay for the financial rescue plan?

**Obama:** ... But there's no doubt that we're not going to be able to do everything that I think needs to be done. There are some things that I think have to be done....

The third thing we have to do is we've got to make sure that we're competing in education. We've got to invest in science and technology. China had a space launch and a space walk. We've got to make sure that our children are keeping pace in math and in science.

**Lehrer returned to the question again, asking what the candidates would give up to pay for the spending to meet the financial crisis. McCain mentioned China in his response.**

**McCain:** ...[S]pending restraint has got to be a vital part of that. And the reason, one of the major reasons why we're in the difficulties we are in today is because spending got out of control. We owe China \$500 billion. And spending, I know, can be brought under control because I have fought against excessive spending my entire career. And I got plans to reduce and eliminate unnecessary and wasteful spending and if there's anybody here who thinks there aren't agencies of government where spending can be cut and their budgets slashed they have not spent a lot of time in Washington.

**Obama mentioned China in response to a question from Lehrer on dealing with the security threat posed by Iran.**

**Obama:** ... Senator McCain is absolutely right, we cannot tolerate a nuclear Iran. It would be a game changer....

Now here's what we need to do. We do need tougher sanctions. I do not agree with Senator McCain that we're going to be able to execute the kind of sanctions we need without some cooperation with countries like Russia and China that are, I think Senator McCain would agree, not democracies, but have extensive trade with Iran but potentially have an interest in making sure Iran doesn't have a nuclear weapon....

**McCain:** Senator Obama twice said in debates he would sit down with Ahmadinejad, Chavez and Raul Castro without precondition....

The point is that throughout history, whether it be Ronald Reagan, who wouldn't sit down with Brezhnev, Andropov or Chernenko until Gorbachev was ready with glasnost and perestroika.

Or whether it be Nixon's trip to China, which was preceded by Henry Kissinger, many times before he went. Look, I'll sit down with anybody, but there's got to be pre-conditions. Those pre-conditions would apply that we wouldn't legitimize with a face to face meeting, a person like Ahmadinejad. Now, Senator Obama said, without preconditions.

***Later in the debate, Lehrer asked about the danger of another terrorist attack in the U.S. After both discussed threats posed by terrorists, Obama moved to discuss problems beyond terrorism.***

**Obama:** ... [W]e've got challenges, for example, with China, where we are borrowing billions of dollars. They now hold a trillion dollars' worth of our debt. And they are active in countries like -- in regions like Latin America, and Asia, and Africa. They are -- the conspicuousness of their presence is only matched by our absence, because we've been focused on Iraq.

### **2008: October 7, Senator Barack Obama (D) vs. Senator John McCain (R)**

***In a town hall style debate, audience member Alan Schaefer asked about turning the economy around.***

**Schaefer:** With the economy on the downturn and retired and older citizens and workers losing their incomes, what's the fastest, most positive solution to bail these people out of the economic ruin?

**McCain:** ... We obviously have to stop this spending spree that's going on in Washington. Do you know that we've laid a \$10 trillion debt on these young Americans who are here with us tonight, \$500 billion of it we owe to China? We've got to have a package of reforms and it has got to lead to reform prosperity and peace in the world. And I think that this problem has become so severe, as you know, that we're going to have to do something about home values....

***Audience member Ingrid Jackson asked about what the candidates would do with regard to environmental issues.***

**Jackson:** ... [W]e saw that Congress moved pretty fast in the face of an economic crisis. I want to know what you would do within the first two years to make sure that Congress moves fast as far as environmental issues, like climate change and green jobs?

**Obama:** ... We're going to have to come up with alternatives, and that means that the United States government is working with the private sector to fund the kind of innovation that we can then export to countries like China that also need energy and are setting up one coal power plant a week....

***Audience member Theresa Finch asked how, since both parties contributed to the financial crisis, either could be trusted with taxpayer's money. Obama included China in his response.***

**Obama:** ... I understand your frustration and your cynicism...

We are going to have to deal with energy because we can't keep on borrowing from the Chinese and sending money to Saudi Arabia. We are mortgaging our children's future. We've got to have a different energy plan....

***Audience member Terry Chary asked if the candidates would support Israel if it is attacked by Iran. McCain referred to China in his response.***

**McCain:** ... let me say that we obviously would not wait for the United Nations Security Council. I think the realities are that both Russia and China would probably pose significant obstacles....

### **2008: October 15, Senator Barack Obama (D) vs. Senator John McCain (R)**

***As part of an open discussion of asked about spending priorities and what would need to be cut, Obama and McCain both referred to China.***

**Obama:** ... If we invest in a serious energy policy, that will save in the amount of money we're borrowing from China to send to Saudi Arabia....

**McCain:** ... Government spending has gone completely out of control; \$10 trillion dollar debt we're giving to our kids, a half-a-trillion dollars we owe China....

***Moderator Bob Schieffer of CBS asked the candidates how they would reduce oil imports.***

**McCain:** ... By the way, when Senator Obama said he would unilaterally renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Canadians said, "Yes, and we'll sell our oil to China."

You don't tell countries you're going to unilaterally renegotiate agreements with them.

**Obama:** ... [T]his is the most important issue that our future economy is going to face. Obviously, we've got an immediate crisis right now. But nothing is more important than us no longer borrowing \$700 billion or more from China and sending it to Saudi Arabia. It's mortgaging our children's future....

... Now I just want to make one last point because Senator McCain mentioned NAFTA and the issue of trade and that actually bears on this issue. I believe in free trade. But I also believe that for far too long, certainly during the course of the Bush administration with the support of Senator McCain, the attitude has been that any trade agreement is a good trade agreement. And NAFTA doesn't have -- did not have enforceable labor agreements and environmental agreements.

And what I said was we should include those and make them enforceable. In the same way that we should enforce rules against China manipulating its currency to make our exports more expensive and their exports to us cheaper....

### **2008: October 2, Senator Joe Biden (D) vs. Governor Sarah Palin (R)**

***Moderator Gwen Ifill of PBS asked about energy production and climate change. Biden referred to China in his response.***

**Biden:** ... China is building one to three new coal-fired plants burning dirty coal per week. It's polluting not only the atmosphere but the West Coast of the United States. We should export the technology by investing in clean coal technology.

***As the discussion progressed to include policies towards "clean coal" energy generation, Biden again referred to China.***

**Biden:** ... My record for 25 years has supported clean coal technology. A comment made in a rope line was taken out of context. I was talking about exporting that technology to China so when they burn their dirty coal, it won't be as dirty, it will be clean....

## 2012: October 3, President Barack Obama (D) and Former Governor Mitt Romney (R)

*Moderator Jim Lehrer of PBS opened the debate asking each candidate to discuss how they intend to create jobs. Romney's answer made reference to China.*

**Romney:** ... My plan has five basic parts. One, get us energy independent, North American energy independent. That creates about 4 million jobs.

Number two, open up more trade, particularly in Latin America. Crack down on China, if and when they cheat...

*Lehrer subsequently asked what programs the candidates would cut in order to reduce the federal budget deficit and the federal debt. Romney's response referred to U.S. debt held by China.*

**Romney:** ... What things would I cut from spending? Well, first of all, I will eliminate all programs by this test, if they don't pass it: Is the program so critical it's worth borrowing money from China to pay for it? And if not, I'll get rid of it. Obamacare's on my list....

... I'm sorry, Jim, I'm going to stop the subsidy to PBS. I'm going to stop other things. I like PBS, I love Big Bird. Actually like you, too. But I'm not going to -- I'm not going to keep on spending money on things to borrow money from China to pay for. That's number one....

## 2012: October 16, President Barack Obama (D) and Former Governor Mitt Romney (R)

*Candy Crowley of CNN served as moderator for the town hall style debate. Audience member Phillip Tricolla asked about gas prices and whether or not it was the job of the U.S. Department of Energy to reduce gas prices. Obama's response included mention of China.*

**Obama:** ... Now, Governor Romney will say he's got an all-of-the-above plan, but basically his plan is to let the oil companies write the energy policies. So he's got the oil and gas part, but he doesn't have the clean energy part. And if we are only thinking about tomorrow or the next day and not thinking about 10 years from now, we're not going to control our own economic future. Because China, Germany, they're making these investments. And I'm not going to cede those jobs of the future to those countries. I expect those new energy sources to be built right here in the United States....

*Audience member Mary Follano asked if Romney would retain tax deductions that are important to middle class people. In an extended exchange, Romney made mention of policy toward China.*

**Romney:** ... We can get this economy going again. My five-point plan does it. Energy independence for North America in five years. Opening up more trade, particularly in Latin America. Cracking down on China when they cheat. Getting us to a balanced budget. Fixing our training programs for our workers. And finally, championing small business....

*Audience member Susan Katz asked Romney to identify ways in which his economic policies differed from those of former President George W. Bush. Both candidates' responses included mention of China.*

**Romney:** ... Number two, trade -- I'll crack down on China, President Bush didn't. I'm also going to dramatically expand trade in Latin America. It's been growing about 12 percent per year over a long period of time. I want to add more free trade agreements so we'll have more trade....

**Obama:** ... [W]hen Governor Romney says that he has a very different economic plan, the centerpiece of his economic plan are tax cuts. That's what took us from surplus to deficit. When he talks about getting tough on China, keep in mind that Governor Romney invested in companies that were pioneers of outsourcing to China, and is currently investing in countries -- in companies that are building surveillance equipment for China to spy on its own folks.

That's -- Governor, you're the last person who's going to get tough on China. And what we've done when it comes to trade is not only sign three trade deals to open up new markets, but we've also set up a task force for trade that goes after anybody who is taking advantage of American workers or businesses and not creating a level playing field. We've brought twice as many cases against unfair trading practices than the previous administration and we've won every single one that's been decided.

When I said that we had to make sure that China was not flooding our domestic market with cheap tires, Governor Romney said I was being protectionist; that it wouldn't be helpful to American workers. Well, in fact we saved 1,000 jobs. And that's the kind of tough trade actions that are required....

*During a discussion of immigration policy, Romney took time to make a point about his investments and those of the President.*

**Romney:** ... Let me mention something else the president said. It was a moment ago and I didn't get a chance to, when he was describing Chinese investments and so forth....

**Romney:** Just going to make a point. Any investments I have over the last eight years have been managed by a blind trust. And I understand they do include investments outside the United States, including in -- in Chinese companies.

Mr. President, have you looked at your pension? Have you looked at your pension?

**Obama:** I've got to say...

**Romney:** Mr. President, have you looked at your pension?

**Obama:** You know, I -- I don't look at my pension. It's not as big as yours so it doesn't take as long.

**Romney:** Well, let me give you some advice.

**Obama:** I don't check it that often.

**Romney:** Let me give you some advice. Look at your pension. You also have investments in Chinese companies. You also have investments outside the United States. You also have investments through a Cayman's trust.

*Audience member Carol Goldberg asked about outsourcing and what the candidates would do to keep jobs and to bring lost jobs back to America.*

**Romney:** Boy, great question and important question, because you're absolutely right. The place where we've seen manufacturing go has been China. China is now the largest manufacturer in the world. It used to be the United States of America. A lot of good people have lost jobs. A half a million manufacturing jobs have been lost in the last four years. That's total over the last four years.

One of the reasons for that is that people think it's more attractive in some cases to go offshore than to stay here....

Now, we're going to have to make sure that as we trade with other nations that they play by the rules. And China hasn't. One of the reasons -- or one of the ways they don't play by the rules is artificially holding down the value of their currency. Because if they put their currency down low, that means their prices on their goods are low. And that makes them advantageous in the marketplace.

We lose sales. And manufacturers here in the U.S. making the same products can't compete. China has been a currency manipulator for years and years and years. And the president has a regular opportunity to label them as a currency manipulator, but refuses to do so.

On day one, I will label China a currency manipulator, which will allow me as president to be able to put in place, if necessary, tariffs where I believe that they are taking unfair advantage of our manufacturers.

So we're going to make sure that people we trade with around the world play by the rules. But let me -- let me not just stop there. Don't forget, what's key to bringing back jobs here is not just finding someone else to punish, and I'm going to be strict with people who we trade with to make sure they -- they follow the law and play by the rules, but it's also to make America the most attractive place in the world for businesses of all kinds. That's why I want to down the tax rates on small employers, big employers, so they want to be here. Canada's tax rate on companies is now 15 percent. Ours is 35 percent. So if you're starting a business, where would you rather start it? We have to be competitive if we're going to create more jobs here.

Regulations have quadrupled....

... I know what it takes to get this to happen, and my plan will do that, and one part of it is to make sure that we keep China playing by the rules.

**Obama:** ... We need to create jobs here. And both Governor Romney and I agree actually that we should lower our corporate tax rate. It's too high. But there's a difference in terms of how we would do it. I want to close loopholes that allow companies to deduct expenses when they move to China; that allow them to profit offshore and not have to get taxed, so they have tax advantages offshore.

All those changes in our tax code would make a difference.

Now, Governor Romney actually wants to expand those tax breaks. One of his big ideas when it comes to corporate tax reform would be to say, if you invest overseas, you make profits overseas, you don't have to pay U.S. taxes.

But, of course, if you're a small business or a mom-and-pop business or a big business starting up here, you've got to pay even the reduced rate that Governor Romney's talking about.

And it's estimated that that will create 800,000 new jobs. The problem is they'll be in China. Or India. Or Germany.

That's not the way we're going to create jobs here. The way we're going to create jobs here is not just to change our tax code, but also to double our exports. And we are on pace to double our exports, one of the commitments I made when I was president. That's creating tens of thousands of jobs all across the country. That's why we've kept on pushing trade deals, but trade deals that make sure that American workers and American businesses are getting a good deal.

Now, Governor Romney talked about China, as I already indicated. In the private sector, Governor Romney's company invested in what were called pioneers of outsourcing. That's not my phrase. That's what reporters called it.

And as far as currency manipulation, the [Chinese] currency has actually gone up 11 percent since I've been president because we have pushed them hard. And we've put unprecedented trade pressure on China. That's why exports have significantly increased under my presidency. That's going to help to create jobs here.

*Moderator Crowley asked that if labor is so much cheaper in China, how can American companies be encouraged to bring manufacturing back to the U.S.*

**Romney:** The answer is very straightforward. We can compete with anyone in the world as long as the playing field is level. China's been cheating over the years. One by holding down the value of their currency. Number two, by stealing our intellectual property; our designs, our patents, our technology. There's even an Apple store in China that's a counterfeit Apple store, selling counterfeit goods. They hack into our computers. We will have to have people play on a fair basis, that's number one....

## **2012: October 16, President Barack Obama (D) and Former Governor Mitt Romney (R)**

*Bob Schieffer of CBS moderated the debate. China came up when discussion turned to economic policies.*

**Romney:** ... Number two, we're going to increase our trade. Trade grows about 12 percent year. It doubles about every -- every five or so years. We can do better than that, particularly in Latin America. The opportunities for us in Latin America we have just not taken advantage of fully. As a matter of fact,

Latin America's economy is almost as big as the economy of China. We're all focused on China. Latin America is a huge opportunity for us -- time zone, language opportunities....

*Schieffer asked about military spending. Obama's response included mention of China.*

**Obama:** ... [O]ur military spending has gone up every single year that I've been in office. We spend more on our military than the next 10 countries combined; China, Russia, France, the United Kingdom, you name it. The next 10. And what I did was work with our joint chiefs of staff to think about, what are we going to need in the future to make sure that we are safe?...

*Schieffer asked about a deal between Iran and United Nations to discuss Iran's nuclear program. Obama's response included mention of China.*

**Obama:** ... [T]he work involved in setting up these crippling sanctions is painstaking. It's meticulous. We started from the day we got into office. And the reason is was so important -- and this is a testament to how we've restored American credibility and strength around the world -- is we had to make sure that all the countries participated, even countries like Russia and China. Because if it's just us that are imposing sanctions -- we've had sanctions in place a long time. It's because we got everybody to agree that Iran is seeing so much pressure. And we've got to maintain that pressure....

Romney argued Obama would not impose tough sanctions on Iran. Obama's response mentioned a Romney investment.

**Obama:** ... And when it comes to tightening sanctions, look, as I said before, we've put in the toughest, most crippling sanctions ever. And the fact is, while we were coordinating an international coalition to make sure these sanctions were effective, you were still invested in a Chinese state oil company that was doing business with the Iranian oil sector.

*Romney declined to answer Schieffer's question about what he would do if notified that Israel planned to bomb Iran. He chose to focus on problems in the world. His response included mention of China.*

**Romney:** ... I see Syria with 30,000 civilians dead, Assad still in power. I see our trade deficit with China, larger than it's -- growing larger every year, as a matter of fact....

*Near the end of the debate, Schieffer focused on China.*

**Schieffer:** Let's go to the next segment, because it's a very important one. It is the rise of China and future challenges for America. What do you believe is the greatest future threat to the national security of this country?

**Obama:** Well, I think it will continue to be terrorist networks. We have to remain vigilant, as I just said. But with respect to China, China is both an adversary, but also a potential partner in the international community if it's following the rules. So my attitude coming into office was that we are going to insist that China plays by the same rules as everybody else.

I know Americans had seen jobs being shipped overseas; businesses and workers not getting a level playing field when it came to trade. And that's the reason why I set up a trade task force to go after cheaters when it came to international trade. That's the reason why we have brought more cases against China for violating trade rules than the other -- the previous administration had done in two terms. And we've won just about every case that we've filed, that has been decided.

In fact, just recently steelworkers in Ohio and throughout the Midwest -- Pennsylvania -- are in a position now to sell steel to China because we won that case. We had a tire case in which they were flooding us with cheap domestic tires -- or -- or cheap Chinese tires. And we put a stop to it and as a consequence saved jobs throughout America. I have to say that Governor Romney criticized me for being too tough in that tire case; said this wouldn't be good for American workers and that it would be protectionist.

But I tell you, those workers don't feel that way. They feel as if they had finally an administration who was going to take this issue seriously.

Over the long term, in order for us to compete with China, we've also got to make sure, though, that we're taking -- taking care of business here at home. If we don't have the best education system in the world, if we don't continue to put money into research and technology that will allow us to create great businesses here in the United States, that's how we lose the competition. And, unfortunately, Governor Romney's budget and his proposals would not allow us to make those investments.

**Romney:** Well, first of all, it's not government that makes business successful. It's not government investments that makes businesses grow and hire people.

Let me also note that the greatest threat that the world faces, the greatest national security threat is a nuclear Iran.

Let's talk about China. China has an interest that's very much like ours in one respect, and that is they want a stable world. They don't want war. They don't want to see protectionism. They don't want to see the world break out into -- into various forms of chaos, because they have to -- they have to manufacture goods and put people to work and they have about 20,000 -- 20 million, rather, people coming out of the farms every year coming into the cities, needing jobs.

So they want the economy to work and the world to be free and open. And so we can be a partner with China. We don't have to be an adversary in any way, shape or form. We can work with them, we can collaborate with them, if they're willing to be responsible.

Now, they look at us and say, Is it a good idea to be with America? How strong are we going to be? How strong is our economy? They look at the fact that we owe 'em a trillion dollars and owe other people \$16 trillion in total, including that.

They look at our -- our decision to -- to cut back on our military capabilities. A trillion dollars. The secretary of defense called these trillion dollars of cuts to our military devastating. It's not my term, it's the president's own secretary of defense called these trillion dollars of cuts to our military devastating. It's not my term, it's the president's own Secretary of Defense, called them devastating.

They look at America's commitments around the world and they see what's happening, and they say, well, OK. Is America going to be strong? And the answer is, yes, if I'm president, America will be very strong.

We'll also make sure that we have trade relations with China that work for us. I've watched year in and year out as companies have shut down and people have lost their jobs because China has not played by the same rules, in part by holding down artificially the value of their currency. It holds down the prices of their goods. It means our goods aren't as competitive and we lose jobs. That's got to end.

They're making some progress; they need to make more. That's why on day one, I will label them a currency manipulator, which allows us to apply tariffs where they're taking jobs. They're stealing our intellectual property, our patents, our designs, our technology, hacking into our computers, counterfeiting our goods.

They have to understand we want to trade with them. We want a world that's stable. We like free enterprise, but you got to play by the rules.

*Schieffer asked about Romney's plan to label China a currency manipulator and wondered if that might cause a trade war.*

**Romney:** Well, they sell us about this much stuff every year, and we sell them about this much stuff every year. So it's pretty clear who doesn't want a trade war. And there's one going on right now, which we don't know about it. It's a silent one. And they're winning.

We have enormous trade imbalance with China, and it's worse this year than last year, and it's worse last year than the year before. And so we have to understand that we can't just surrender and lose jobs year in and year out. We have to say to our friend in China, look, you guys are playing aggressively. We understand it. But this can't keep on going. You can't keep on holding down the value of your currency, stealing our intellectual property, counterfeiting our products, selling them around the world, even to the United States.

I was with one company that makes valves and -- and process industries and they said, look, we were -- we were having some valves coming in that -- that were broken and we had to repair them under warranty and we looked them and -- and they had our serial number on them. And then we noticed that there was more than one with that same serial number. They were counterfeit products being made overseas with the same serial number as a U.S. company, the same packaging, these were being sold into our market and around the world as if they were made by the U.S. competitor. This can't go on.

I want a great relationship with China. China can be our partner, but -- but that doesn't mean they can just roll all over us and steal our jobs on an unfair basis.

**Obama:** Well, Governor Romney's right, you are familiar with jobs being shipped overseas because you invested in companies that were shipping jobs overseas.

And, you know, that's -- your right. I mean that's how our free market works. But I've made a different bet on American workers.

If we had taken your advice Governor Romney about our auto industry, we'd be buying cars from China instead of selling cars to China.

If we take your advice with respect to how we change our tax codes so that companies that earn profits overseas don't pay U.S. taxes compared to companies here that are paying taxes. Now that's estimated to create 800,000 jobs, the problem is they won't be here, they'll be in places like China.

And if we're not making investments in education and basic research, which is not something that the private sector is doing at a sufficient pace right now and has never done, then we will lose the (inaudible) in things like clean energy technology.

Now with respect to what we've done with China already, U.S. exports have doubled since I came into office, to China and actually currencies are at their most advantageous point for U.S. exporters since 1993.

We absolutely have to make more progress and that's why we're going to keep on pressing.

And when it comes to our military and Chinese security, part of the reason that we were able to pivot to the Asia-Pacific region after having ended the war in Iraq and transitioning out of Afghanistan, is precisely because this is going to be a massive growth area in the future.

And we believe China can be a partner, but we're also sending a very clear signal that America is a Pacific power; that we are going to have a presence there. We are working with countries in the region to make sure, for example, that ships can pass through; that commerce continues. And we're organizing trade relations with countries other than China so that China starts feeling more pressure about meeting basic international standards.

That's the kind of leadership we've shown in the region. That's the kind of leadership that we'll continue to show.

*Later, during a discussion of competitiveness, Obama returned the discussion to China.*

**Obama:** ... Cutting our education budget, that's not a smart choice. That will not help us compete with China.

Cutting our investments in research and technology, that's not a smart choice. That will not help us compete with China....

## **2012: October 11, Vice President Joe Biden (D) and Representative Paul Ryan (R)**

*In response to a question from moderator Martha Raddatz about dealing with threats from terrorists and others, Biden mentioned China.*

**Biden:** ... [T]his is a president who's gone out and done everything he has said he was going to do. This is a guy who's repaired our alliances so the rest of the world follows us again. This is the guy who brought the entire world, including Russia and China, to bring about the most devastating -- most devastating -- the most devastating efforts on Iran to make sure that they in fact stop....

***Biden again referred to China in responding to a question about nuclear weapons proliferation.***

**Biden:** ... imagine had we let the Republican Congress work out the sanctions. You think there's any possibility the entire world would have joined us, Russia and China, all of our allies? These are the most crippling sanctions in the history of sanctions, period....

***Raddatz asked if Ryan had sought stimulus money for his district. Ryan acknowledged that he had but also charged that other stimulus funds were misused.***

**Ryan:** Was it a good idea to spend taxpayer dollars on electric cars in Finland, or on windmills in China?

**Biden:** Look...

**Ryan:** Was it a good idea to borrow all this money from countries like China and spend it on all these various different interest groups?

**Biden:** Let me tell you what was a good idea. It was a good idea, Moody's and others said that this was exactly what we needed to stop this from going off the cliff.

***Raddatz noted that both vice presidential candidates were Catholic and asked how their religion affected their personal views on abortion.***

**Ryan:** ... Our church should not have to sue our federal government to maintain their religious liberties. And with respect to abortion, the Democratic Party used to say they wanted it to be safe, legal and rare. Now they support it without restriction and with taxpayer funding. Taxpayer funding in Obamacare, taxpayer funding with foreign aid. The vice president himself went to China and said that he sympathized and wouldn't second guess their one child policy of forced abortions and sterilizations. That to me is pretty extreme.

**Biden:** My religion defines who I am, and I've been a practicing Catholic my whole life. And has particularly informed my social doctrine. The Catholic social doctrine talks about taking care of those who -- who can't take care of themselves, people who need help. With regard to -- with regard to abortion, I accept my church's position on abortion as a -- what we call a (inaudible) doctrine. Life begins at conception in the church's judgment. I accept it in my personal life.

But I refuse to impose it on equally devout Christians and Muslims and Jews, and I just refuse to impose that on others, unlike my friend here, the -- the congressman. I -- I do not believe that we have a right to tell other people that -- women they can't control their body.

## 2016: September 26, Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (D) and Donald Trump (R)

*Lester Holt of NBC served as moderator and asked about job creation. Trump's response included mention of China.*

**Trump:** Our jobs are fleeing the country. They're going to Mexico they're going to many other countries. You look at what China is doing for country in terms of making our product, they're devaluing their currency and there's nobody in our government to fight them.

And we have a very good fight and we have a winning fight. Because they're using our country as a piggy bank to rebuild China and many other countries are doing the same thing. So we are losing our good jobs, so many of them. When you look at what's happening in Mexico, a friend of mine who builds plants, said it's the eighth wonder of the world. They're building some of the biggest plants anywhere in the world, some of the most sophisticated, some of the best plants. With the United States, as he said, not so much. So Ford is leaving, you see that their small car division, leaving. Thousands of jobs leaving Michigan, leaving Ohio, they're all leaving.

*Holt asked how Trump would get companies to return manufacturing to the U.S.*

**Trump:** ... Our country is in deep trouble. We don't know what we're doing when it comes to devaluations and all of these countries all over the world, especially China. They're the best the best ever at it. What they're doing to us is a very very sad thing. So we have to do that. We had to renegotiate our trade deals and Lester, they're taking our jobs. They're giving incentives, they're doing things that frankly we don't do....

**Clinton:** ... We're going to enforce the trade deals we have and we're going to hold people accountable. When I was Secretary of State, we actually increased American exports globally thirty percent. We increased them to China fifty percent. So I know how to really work to get new jobs and to get exports that help to create more new jobs....

*After discussion of Trump's tax returns and Clinton's use of a private email server, Trump turned to discussion of American infrastructure, mentioning China.*

**Trump:** ... When we had twenty twelve trillion dollars in debt in our country is a mess -- you know is one thing to have twenty trillion debt and our roads are good and our bridges are good everything is in great shape. Our airports are like from a Third World country. You land at LaGuardia, you land at Kennedy, you land at LAX, you land at Newark and you come in from Dubai and Qatar and you see these incredible -- you come in from China -- you see these incredible airports and you land... we become a Third World country. So the worst of all things has happened. We owe twenty trillion dollars and we are a mess. We haven't even started....

*Holt asked about who is conducting cyberespionage and what the U.S. should do about it.*

**Clinton:** ... We need to make it very clear, whether it's Russia, China, Iran or anybody else, the United States has much greater capacity.

And we are not going to sit idly by and permit state actors to go after our information. Our private-sector information or our public-sector information. And were going to have to make it clear that we don't want to use the kinds of tools that we have. We don't want to engage in a different kind of warfare, but we will defend the citizens of this country.

**Trump:** ... As far as the cyber, I agree to parts of what Secretary Clinton said. We should be better than anybody else and perhaps we're not. I don't think anybody knows that it was Russia that broke into the DNC. She saying Russia, Russia, Russia. I don't -- maybe it was. I mean, it could be Russia, but it could also be China, it could also be lots of other people. It also could be somebody sitting on their bed who weighs 400 pounds, ok?

... Now, whether that was Russia, whether that was China, whether it was another country, we don't know because the truth is under President Obama, we've lost control of things that we used to have control over. We came in with the Internet. We came up with the Internet. And I think Secretary Clinton and myself would agree very much when you look at what ISIS is doing with the Internet, they're beating us at our own game. ISIS. So we had to get very very tough on cyber and cyber warfare. It is a huge problem. I have a son -- he's ten years old. He has computers. He is so good with these computers. It's unbelievable....

**Holt asked about judgment. Clinton mentioned China in her response.**

**Clinton:** ... With respect to Iran, when I became Secretary of State, Iran was weeks away from having enough nuclear material to form a bomb. They had mastered the nuclear fuel cycle under the Bush administration. ... And we had sanctioned them. I voted for every sanction against Iran when I was in the Senate. But it wasn't enough. So I spent a year and a half putting together a coalition that included Russia and China to impose the toughest sanctions on Iran. And we did drive them to the negotiating table. And my successor John Kerry and President Obama got a deal that put a lid on Iran's nuclear program. Without firing a single shot. That's diplomacy. That's coalition-building....

**Asked for his views on first use of nuclear weapons, Trump included China in his response.**

**Trump:** ... We are not we are not keeping up with other countries I would like everybody to end it, just get rid of it but I would certainly not do for a strike. I think that once the nuclear alternative happens, it's over. At the same time we have to be prepared. I can't take anything off the table because you look at some of these countries. You look at North Korea we're doing nothing there. China should solve the problem for us. China should go into North Korea. China is totally powerful as it relates to North Korea....

## **2016: October 9, Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (D) and Donald Trump (R)**

***Anderson Cooper of CNN and Martha Raddatz of ABC served as moderators of this debate held at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. This was a town hall-style debate with questions from audience members, the moderators, and from those submitted online.***

***An audience member asked how tax law should be changed to ensure that the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share. Trump mentioned China in his answer.***

**Trump:** ... We are going to be thriving again. We have no growth in this country. There's no growth. If China has a GDP of 7 percent, it's like a national catastrophe. We're down at 1 percent. And that's, like, no growth. And we're going lower, in my opinion....

***Another audience member asked about the policies the candidates planned to adopt to meet our energy needs in an environmentally-friendly way, while minimizing job losses for those working to produce fossil fuels. Trump referred to China in his response and Clinton commented on that.***

**Trump:** ... You take a look at what's happening to steel and the cost of steel and China dumping vast amounts of steel all over the United States, which essentially is killing our steelworkers and our steel companies. We have to guard our energy companies. We have to make it possible.

**Clinton:** And actually—well, that was very interesting. First of all, China is illegally dumping steel in the United States and Donald Trump is buying it to build his buildings, putting steelworkers and American steel plants out of business. That's something that I fought against as a senator and that I would have a trade prosecutor to make sure that we don't get taken advantage of by China on steel or anything else.

You know, because it sounds like you're [the audience member] in the business or you're aware of people in the business—you know that we are now for the first time ever energy-independent....

## **2016: October 19, Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (D) and Donald Trump (R)**

***The third and final debate between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump took place at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. Chris Wallace of Fox served as moderator.***

***Clinton included China near the end of an exchange prompted by Wallace's question about appointing Supreme Court justices who would overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 case which legalized abortion in the U.S.***

**Clinton:** You know, I've had the great honor of traveling across the world on behalf of our country. I've been to countries where governments either forced women to have abortions, like they used to do in China, or forced women to bear children, like they used to do in Romania. And I can tell you: The government has no business in the decisions that women make with their families in accordance with their faith, with medical advice. And I will stand up for that right.

***Trump referred to China in a question where Wallace challenged the candidate's economic plan's projections of economic growth and job creation. Clinton picked up on those China references in her comments.***

**Trump:** ... So I just left some high representatives of India. They're growing at 8 percent. China is growing at 7 percent. And that for them is a catastrophically low number....

Look, our country is stagnant. We've lost our jobs. We've lost our businesses. We're not making things anymore, relatively speaking. Our product is pouring in from China, pouring in from Vietnam, pouring in from all over the world....

**Clinton:** ... There's only one of us on this stage who's actually shipped jobs to Mexico, because that's Donald. He's shipped jobs to 12 countries, including Mexico.

But he mentioned China. And, you know, one of the biggest problems we have with China is the illegal dumping of steel and aluminum into our markets. I have fought against that as a senator. I've stood up against it as secretary of state.

Donald has bought Chinese steel and aluminum. In fact, the Trump Hotel right here in Las Vegas was made with Chinese steel. So he goes around with crocodile tears about how terrible it is, but he has given jobs to Chinese steelworkers, not American steelworkers.

***Later, Clinton mentioned going to China as first lady after Trump argued she'd accomplished nothing.***

**Clinton:** ... But I think it's really an important issue. He raised the 30 years of experience, so let me just talk briefly about that....

In the 1980s, I was working to reform the schools in Arkansas. He was borrowing \$14 million from his father to start his businesses. In the 1990s, I went to Beijing and I said women's rights are human rights. He insulted a former Miss Universe, Alicia Machado, called her an eating machine....

***Wallace asked how the candidates proposed reducing the nation's deficit and its debt. Trump was further asked to explain why his economic plan wouldn't exacerbate the problem.***

**Trump:** Well, I say they're [the economists who said his plan would increase the debt] wrong, because I'm going to create tremendous jobs. And we're bringing GDP from, really, 1 percent, which is what it is now, and if she got in, it will be less than zero. But we're bringing it from 1 percent up to 4 percent. And I actually think we can go higher than 4 percent. I think you can go to 5 percent or 6 percent....

We've had people that are political hacks making the biggest deals in the world, bigger than companies....

We use political hacks. We use people that get the position because they gave—they made a campaign contribution and they're dealing with China and people that are very much smarter than they are. So we have to use our great people.

## 2016: October 4, Senator Tim Kaine (D) vs. Governor Mike Pence (R)

*The debate between Tom Kaine and Mike Pence was held in Farmville, Virginia at Longwood University. Elaine Quijano of CBS was the moderator.*

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*Quijano asked about fighting in Syria and if the U.S. had a responsibility to protect civilians and prevent mass casualties. Pence referred to Chinese defense spending as part of his response.*

**Pence:** ... And the small and bullying leader of Russia is now dictating terms to the United States to the point where all the United States of America — the greatest nation on Earth — just withdraws from talks about a cease-fire while Vladimir Putin puts a missile defense system in Syria while he marshals the forces and begins — look, we have got to begin to lean into this with strong, broad-shouldered American leadership.

It begins by rebuilding our military. And the Russians and the Chinese have been making enormous investments in the military. We have the smallest Navy since 1916. We have the lowest number of troops since the end of the Second World War. We've got to work with Congress, and Donald Trump will, to rebuild our military and project American strength in the world.

*The vice presidential candidates mentioned China when asked what should be done to keep North Korea from having the ability to reach the U.S. with nuclear-armed missiles.*

**Pence:** Well, first, we need to — we need to make a commitment to rebuild our military, including modernizing our nuclear forces. And we also need — we also need an effective American diplomacy that will marshal the resources of nations in the Asian Pacific Rim to put pressure on North Korea, on Kim Jong-un, to abandon his nuclear ambitions....

And when Donald Trump is president of the United States, we're — we're not going to have the — the kind of posture in the world that has Russia invading Crimea and Ukraine, that has the Chinese building new islands in the South China Sea, that has literally the world, including North Korea, flouting American power. We're going to — we're going to go back to the days of peace through strength....

*After Pence and Kaine argued over the charitable foundations run by the presidential candidates, Quijano asked Kaine what the U.S. should do if it knew that North Korea was about to launch a nuclear-missile that could reach the U.S. Kaine responded and also questioned Trump's ability to deal with China.*

**Kaine:** ... a president should take action to defend the United States against imminent threat. You have to. A president has to do that. Now exactly what action, you would have to determine what your intelligence was, how certain you were of that intelligence, but you would have to take action.

You asked the question about how do we deal with a North Korea. I'm on the Foreign Relations Committee. We just did an extensive sanctions package against North Korea. And interestingly enough, Elaine, the U.N. followed and did this — virtually the same package. Often China will use their veto in the Security Council to veto a package like that. They're starting to get worried about North Korea, too. So they actually supported the sanctions package, even though many of the sanctions are against Chinese firms, Chinese financial institutions.

So we're working together with China, and we need to. China's another one of those relationships where it's competitive, it's also challenging, and in times like North Korea, we have to be able to cooperate. Hillary understands that very well. She went once famously to China and stood up at a human rights meeting and looked them in the eye and said, "Women's rights are human rights." They didn't want her to say that, but she did.

But she's also worked on a lot of diplomatic and important diplomatic deals with China. And that's what it's going to take.

The thing I would worry a little bit about is that Donald Trump owes about \$650 million to banks, including the Bank of China. I'm not sure he could stand up so tough to the people who have loaned him money.