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MEDIA ADVISORY:

UNH expert on Chinese-U.S. relations says holding of spy plane crew will force Bush administration to decide position

By [Erika Mantz](#)
UNH News Bureau

April 2, 2001

The decision of Chinese authorities to hold the 24 members of a downed spy plane after it made an emergency landing in China is going to force the Bush administration to resolve internal problems about how to deal with the Chinese, says a University of New Hampshire expert in Chinese-U.S. affairs.

Chris Reardon, UNH associate professor of political science, points out that the Bush administration's position has been unclear, because of internal divisions, about whether to cooperate with the Chinese or consider them the next Cold War enemy.

"In the last 10 years, there have actually been closer connections between the U.S. and Chinese military to prevent problems like these from escalating," Reardon says. "It will be up to the U.S. administration and Chinese leaders to make sure this situation does not escalate."

"Also hovering above all of this is the decision this spring about whether the United States will sell advanced defense equipment to the Taiwanese," Reardon says. "It's well known that the Taiwanese want the most advanced equipment, even though it might not be the most appropriate. The Chinese have objected to our selling of increasingly sophisticated weapons to Taiwan, which they regard as a "renegade province" and we regard as a friendly economy, but don't recognize as an independent country."

Reardon says China's Hainan Island, where the plane made its emergency landing, is a special economic zone. Traditionally, it has been controlled by the

military, but over the past 15 years, it's been opened to the outside world. It is an island, about the size of Taiwan, that was given special rights and privileges to retain foreign exchange and experiment with western management techniques. Reardon spent about a month on the island in 1985 serving as a translator.

Professor Reardon can be reached for further comment at (603) 862-1858. Or, call Erika Mantz in the UNH News Bureau at (603) 862-1567.

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