

SECTION 15

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Chinese Communist
Intentions and Probable Courses of
Action in the Taiwan Strait Area

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**CHINESE COMMUNIST INTENTIONS AND
PROBABLE COURSES OF ACTION IN
THE TAIWAN STRAIT AREA**

Submitted by the
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and The Joint Staff.

Concurred in by the
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

on 13 March 1959. Concurring were The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Intelligence, Department of the Navy; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; the Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff; the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, Special Operations; and the Director of the National Security Agency. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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CHINESE COMMUNIST INTENTIONS AND PROBABLE COURSES OF ACTION IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT AREA

THE PROBLEM

To assess Communist China's capabilities, intentions, and probable courses of action with respect to the Taiwan Strait area over the next year.

CONCLUSIONS

1. We believe that Communist China broke off the Taiwan Strait crisis last October primarily because it believed that to increase military pressures to the point necessary for a successful interdiction effort against Chinmen carried unacceptable risk of hostilities with the US. Furthermore, relations between the US and the Government of the Republic of China (GRC) had not been impaired, Nationalist morale remained high, and the tensions created by Peiping's actions were proving damaging to Communist China's international prestige. Peiping was also concerned over moves by some Asian countries toward compromise proposals it considered unacceptable. (*Paras. 15-18*)

2. There has actually been little change since last October in the military picture in the Taiwan Strait area. The Chinese Communists do not have the capability to prevent resupply of the Matsus or Big and Little Chinmen by artillery fire alone. They could at any time create considerably greater havoc on the Chinmen group than they did during the previous crisis should they choose to exercise their full

artillery capability. Moreover, by supplementing artillery bombardment with attacks by aircraft and motor torpedo boats, possibly along with offensive mine-warfare, they could make resupply and reinforcement of the Chinmen and Matsu garrisons virtually impossible unless US air and naval forces were committed to keeping the supply lines open. The Chinese Communist forces remain capable of taking any of the smaller coastal islands quickly and with little or no warning. Barring US intervention, they also could seize the larger coastal islands. (*Paras. 23-25, 27*)

3. There are presently no indications of any Chinese Communist preparations for increased military pressures in the Taiwan Strait. There is no firm evidence that additional troops, heavier artillery, missiles, additional aircraft, additional motor torpedo boats, or minecraft have been moved into the Strait area. However, Communist forces could be quickly and heavily reinforced, and quite possibly without detection prior to their employment. (*Para. 31*)

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4. The Chinese Communists will almost certainly seek to avoid hostilities with the US. We believe that they will not attempt to seize Chinmen or undertake an all-out effort to prevent its resupply. We also believe such actions unlikely against the Matsus, though the Chinese Communists may in this case be somewhat less certain of US intentions and possible reactions. However, we believe that the Chinese Communists will continue to employ military pressures in support of their essentially political and psychological campaign in the Taiwan Strait. They will probably attempt to keep the Strait issue alive and probably will not relax their military pressures to such a degree as to permit the situation to become quiescent over an extended period of time. (Para. 37)

5. There are a number of military pressures open to the Chinese Communists. They may engage in periodic heavy shelling and limited air and/or sea operations to harass the Nationalists in the Chinmen and Matsu areas; if the CCAF improves its proficiency, it might more aggressively engage the CAF. The Chinese Communists might attempt to seize one or more of the small, lightly-held offshore islands, particularly Ta-tan and Erh-tan, which could probably be taken by a surprise operation before effective

counteraction could be mounted. (Paras. 38-39)

6. In the course of the Berlin crisis the Chinese Communists may exercise their ability to heighten tensions in the Taiwan Strait, either as a part of co-ordinated Bloc strategy or in furtherance of their own objectives in the Far East. We believe that the Chinese Communists would not heighten tensions without prior consultation with the Soviets. In either case, the Soviet position would almost certainly depend on the course of the negotiations or on events in the Berlin crisis itself. The Soviets will probably desire to keep tensions in the Far East about as they are at present so long as they judge that the Berlin situation is progressing according to their liking. Should the Soviets estimate that the Berlin situation is going badly for them, they may advise the Chinese Communists to increase tensions in the Far East. The Chinese Communist response to such Soviet advice would be influenced not only by the Berlin situation and Soviet desires but also by Peiping's own estimate of the advantages or disadvantages of heightening tensions in the Taiwan Strait or possibly elsewhere in the Far East. Any moves to heighten tension in the Taiwan Strait, however, would almost certainly be calculated to fall short of provoking major hostilities. (Para. 34)

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DISCUSSION

I. INTRODUCTION

7. The past few months have seen a shift in the apparent mood of Chinese Communist foreign policy. During most of 1958, Peiping's over-all conduct of foreign policy was marked by truculence and toughness, and in August Communist China suddenly undertook the most aggressive action in the Taiwan Strait since 1949. Peiping has let up on its military pressures in the Strait since last October, however, and has softened the belligerent tone of its foreign policy pronouncements.

8. Nevertheless, the issues involved in the Taiwan Strait crisis have not been resolved. Communist China's basic objectives in the Taiwan Strait area remain unchanged: to eliminate US influence and power, to destroy the GRC, and to assume control of all Nationalist-held territories. The purpose of this paper is to examine the initiation and the course of the 1958 Strait crisis, the Chinese Communist breaking off of the crisis, and the developments which have occurred since that time to see what light they throw on Communist China's probable courses of action in the Strait area over the next year.

II. THE 1958 TAIWAN STRAIT CRISIS

9. We believe that a number of considerations were behind the Chinese Communist decision to step up their military activity in the Taiwan Strait in August 1958. In the most general sense, the operation reflected the apparent confidence with which the regime viewed the external situation during 1958. Under the impact of Soviet progress in rocketry, Peiping's leaders appeared to have been convinced that a decisive shift in the world balance of power had occurred in the Bloc's favor. Peiping's propaganda appeared to reflect some impatience to move more forcefully to exploit the Bloc's favorable power position. Its "peaceful coexistence" line had failed to advance Communist China's interests in the Taiwan Strait; this line had in fact contributed to a sense of international

complacency and a tendency in world opinion to accept a *de facto* "two Chinas" situation.

10. In this general atmosphere Peiping's leaders probably believed that the time was ripe for a new blow at the GRC. Communist China probably estimated that the US would be diplomatically isolated on the offshore island question, and that the USSR's progress in advanced weapons might deter the US from accepting great risks in local war situations. Accordingly, Peiping probably believed that the US, already committed at the time in the Middle East, might be unwilling or unable to prevent the loss of the offshore islands. Peiping apparently set out to test this estimate by probing US reactions, in the expectation that if the US did not intervene, the offshore islands could be gained through interdiction, evacuation, or, perhaps, mass defections. The fall of these islands, Peiping believed, would seriously undermine the morale and staying power of the GRC on Taiwan, drive a wedge between the US and the GRC, and cause the US to suffer a major loss of prestige and influence in Asia.

11. Peiping probably anticipated that it could not lose in such a probing action, believing that even if the US did make a firm stand in the Strait, the resulting tension would create serious problems for the US in its relations with its allies and with the neutral nations of Asia, increase pressures for world acceptance of Communist China, and halt any tendency toward world acceptance of a *de facto* "two Chinas" situation.

12. In any event, Communist China's leaders probably did not intend to take measures which would seriously risk US counterattack against the mainland. Intense artillery bombardment was probably considered to be the principal arm which could be safely employed. The extent to which other military means would be committed was probably contingent upon US and GRC responses.

13. We continue to believe that foreign and Bloc policy considerations were primary in

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Communist China's decision to initiate hostilities in the Taiwan Strait. However, the regime must have considered the interplay between such a military crisis and its domestic "leap forward" and commune programs in its planning. The Strait venture proved a useful instrument in pressing for accelerated economic efforts and in organizing the populace into communes. The regime probably had planned to take advantage of the Strait action to push these domestic programs, but we do not believe that this action was undertaken because of any compelling internal need.

14. The role of the USSR in the 1958 Strait crisis is still not clear, though we continue to believe that the USSR did not initiate the crisis by encouraging the Chinese, but, instead, acquiesced in and supported Chinese initiative. We are confident that the idea of the thrust in the Strait was Chinese, that it had been in the process of planning and maturing for some time, and that some kind of timetable existed for its activation. The fact that Khrushchev left Moscow for a trip to Peiping at the height of the Middle East crisis seems to indicate that the two allies felt a need at the time for closer over-all coordination of Sino-Soviet policies. The subsequent events of August suggest that there was agreement with the USSR on the timing of the Strait venture and on the extent to which it would be pushed. The Mao-Khrushchev meeting may also have included an agreement that diversionary pressures in the Strait could advance Bloc interests in the Middle East, and that a high state of tension might be maintained simultaneously on two fronts, Far East and Middle East.

III. COMMUNIST CHINA'S BREAKING OFF OF THE TAIWAN STRAIT CRISIS

15. *Peiping's Assessment of the Crisis.* We believe that Communist China broke off the crisis last October primarily because it had found that to increase military pressures to the point necessary for a successful interdiction effort carried unacceptable risks of hostilities with the US. Furthermore, relations between the US and the GRC had not been impaired, and the tensions created by the push were proving damaging to Communist

China's international prestige. In sum, Communist China's leaders had found their venture in the Strait politically and militarily unrewarding, and the problem at hand had become one of how to disengage as gracefully as possible and to find new ways and means of advancing their aims in the Taiwan Strait area.

16. Communist China's leaders were undoubtedly impressed with the rapidity, scale, and nature of the US military response. Where the US intentions with respect to the offshore islands probably had earlier seemed unclear to Peiping's leaders, it probably now looked to them as if the US would intervene rather than permit Chinmen to be captured or starved out. Only with respect to the Matsus and some of the lesser offshore islands were US intentions not clearly manifested.

17. Peiping also found that it had underestimated Nationalist nerve, morale, and military capabilities. The CCAF was no match for the greater skill of CAF pilots, who, after the beginning of the intensive Chinese Communist bombardment, shot down about 30 Communist MIG's with the loss of only one or possibly two F-86's. The CAF advantage was increased with the introduction of Sidewinders. The Chinese Communists also found that artillery bombardment alone could neither elicit Nationalist defections nor prevent resupply of Chinmen against the support measures which the US/GRC had brought to bear.¹ There were no defections from the offshore island garrisons or on Taiwan, and in fact Nationalist morale seemed to improve.

18. The Chinese Communists were probably surprised to learn that a number of Asian

¹ The Chinese Communists found that artillery fire could be effective for temporary neutralization only and could not be decisive unless employed in conjunction with other means; that Communist fire direction means and procedures were inadequate for the reduction of Nationalist fortifications and counterbattery capability; that indirect fire techniques were inadequate to interdict determined amphibious resupply operations executed with modern equipment; and that Communist fortifications offered inadequate protection against accurate Nationalist counterbattery fire.

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leaders condoned the US counteractions and considered the onus of aggression to be on Communist China. Peiping was concerned over moves by some Asian countries towards compromise proposals it considered unacceptable. Its leaders also found that its military activities in the Strait were having a damaging effect on its influence in Asia, especially since its aggressive action occurred at a time when its commune revolution and its generally tough foreign policy were encountering adverse reactions in Asia.

19. *Peiping's Tactics Since the Crisis.* Communist China's retreat from its earlier military and psychological warfare pressures has almost restored the general pattern of pre-crisis activity. The principal differences are that the coastal airfields are now occupied and that the level of artillery effort is somewhat greater than that in the weeks immediately preceding the crisis.

20. The principal Chinese Communist effort with respect to the Strait since October has been the attempt to undermine Nationalist morale and to induce Nationalist defections, through sporadic shellings, propaganda appeals, negotiation offers, and the covert passing of letters to contacts and old friends in Taiwan. The present campaign, like similar ones in the past, seeks: (a) to separate by any means the close alliance and defense relationship between the US and Nationalist China—primarily by implying that each is being undercut or sold out by the other; (b) to weaken popular confidence in Nationalist long-term ability to survive as contrasted to Communist China's growing might and "inevitable" victory; (c) to convince officials and technicians on Taiwan that there is a place for them in the "New China"; and (d) to convince the world that Communist China will never accept a "two Chinas" solution and that Communist China's growing strength dictates acceptance of the Communist solution for ending the continuing crisis: US withdrawal from the Taiwan area and no outside interference in the "domestic" struggle between Peiping and Taipei.

21. We have no evidence that the Nationalists are receptive to these Communist overtures or

have made clandestine responses to them. We do not believe that the Communist campaign has in fact made much headway. The Nationalists are aware of the many unattractive aspects of communal life on the mainland, the limited role permitted non-Communists there, the greater freedom and the higher standard of life on Taiwan, and the continuing support which Taiwan is receiving from the US. It is possible, however, that some two-way communication, between individuals, may be going on unknown to us.

22. In continuing the Warsaw ambassadorial talks, Communist China has almost certainly not anticipated that they would lead to a surrender of the offshore islands. It has probably continued these talks to create the impression that it is willing to negotiate outstanding issues, and to avoid the onus of breaking off the talks. It probably also hopes to create doubts about the US in the mind of the Chinese Nationalists, and to extract whatever prestige value there may be in holding direct negotiations with the US.

IV. CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES²

23. There has actually been little change since last October in the military picture in the Taiwan Strait area. Both the Communists and the Nationalists have increased their air strength slightly, and the Nationalists have reinforced their artillery on Chinmen, but the balance of forces remains about the same as it was in August-September. Perhaps the most important change has been an improvement in Chinese Communist resupply and reinforcement capabilities opposite the Matsus as a result of the completion of the rail line to Foochow.

24. Assuming no US intervention, we believe that the Chinese Communists could seize the Matsus or the Guimens,³ although at considerable cost. A successful assault against the Matsu Islands could be mounted with the troops already stationed in the Foochow area (an estimated 47,600). We estimate that the

² See Military Annex and maps (Figures 1-6).

³ For details concerning the various offshore islands, see maps and paragraph A1 of the Military Annex.

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Chinese Communists would consider that 200,000 combat troops would be required for a successful attack on the Chinmens. Although this would necessitate the movement of more than 100,000 additional ground force troops into the Amoy area, such a movement could be made quickly and quite possibly without detection. The degree and nature of US military involvement would be the decisive factor in the outcome of a battle for the larger coastal islands.

25. The Chinese Communists do not have the capability to prevent resupply of Big and Little Chinmen by artillery fire alone.⁴ However, the Chinese Communists could make resupply much more difficult and could create considerably greater havoc on the Chinmen group than at any time in the previous crisis should they choose to undertake the intensive and all-target bombardments of which they were and are capable. There are no major logistic limitations to effective resupply of the Communist artillery in the Amoy area.

26. The Chinese Communists do not have the capability to prevent resupply of the Matsus by artillery fire alone. Although the Chinese Communists have an estimated 90 artillery pieces capable of reaching the three northernmost islands, limited observation even during periods of good visibility would preclude effective interdiction.

27. The Chinese Communists could seize any of the small, isolated offshore islands quickly and with little or no warning: specifically, Tung-ting, the Wu-chiu's, and the Tung-yins. Although the Nationalists could support the defense of the Tan Islands (in the Chinmen complex) more effectively than in the case of the more isolated islands, the Chinese Commu-

⁴ The supply situation on the Chinmens at no time reached a dangerous stage during the Taiwan Strait crisis, quantities even of critical items always remaining at about 30 days supply. By the time of the cease-fire, deliveries by sea and air, except as limited by weather, had risen to tonnages exceeding the minimum daily requirements. The supply situation on the Chinmens has been further improved since October. See also Military Annex.

nists could seize the Tans and deny them to Nationalist recapture. Should Peiping decide to garrison the Tan islands, the Nationalists could seriously harass the defenders.

28. Given the demonstrated superiority of the CAF fighter units, Peiping would have to be prepared to accept disproportionate losses in any air engagements with the Nationalists unless the quality of the Communist fighter units had improved. These losses could become very costly if the battle were prolonged. Despite this qualitative difference, the great numerical advantage of the Chinese Communists over the GRC in aircraft, along with the large number of airfields in close proximity to the offshore islands, give the CCAF the capability to effectively attack Nationalist resupply operations in the offshore island area. The Chinese Communists also have the capability to protect their own surface operations in the area from decisive interference by the Nationalist Air Force. The introduction of Soviet air-to-air missiles and appropriate training would lessen the qualitative difference.

29. By supplementing artillery bombardment with attacks by aircraft and motor torpedo boats, possibly along with offensive minewarfare, the Chinese Communists could make resupply and reinforcement of the offshore island garrisons virtually impossible unless US air and naval forces were committed to keeping the supply lines open.

30. The Chinese Communists have the capability to launch an air or amphibious attack against Taiwan or the Penghus (Pescadores), but could not neutralize or seize these islands against US resistance.

31. There are presently no indications of any Chinese Communist preparations for increased military pressures in the Taiwan Strait. There is no firm evidence that additional troops, heavier artillery, missiles, additional aircraft, additional motor torpedo boats, or minecraft have been moved into the Strait area. However, troops, ships, and aircraft could at any time be committed quickly to operations against the offshore islands, quite possibly without prior detection.

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V. PROBABLE CHINESE COMMUNIST COURSES OF ACTION

A. General Considerations

32. We believe that Communist China's basic objectives in the Taiwan Strait area will remain unchanged. After the experience of last year's crisis, however, Communist China's leaders may well estimate that no feasible course of action is likely to lead to an early achievement of their principal objectives. Yet they almost certainly believe that time is on their side and that they will be able to exploit new opportunities which may arise in the Taiwan Strait area in the normal course of events or which may result from their continued pressures.

33. Meanwhile, the present situation must seem to them to offer at least some advantages. They can increase or decrease tension in the Strait area to capitalize on international developments or to serve domestic needs. Their post-October insistence that the offshore islands and Taiwan constitute a single problem which must be solved at one time is probably designed in part to rationalize their inability to capture the islands; clearly they are sensitive to the charge that they backed down during last year's crisis. Nevertheless, they probably also believe, as they have stated, that as long as the Nationalists hold the offshore islands the Taiwan Strait does not form a natural dividing line which might appeal to world sentiment as a basis for a "two Chinas" solution. They may also consider that the present situation contains some opportunities for undermining Nationalist morale and for disturbing US-GRC relations.

34. In the course of the Berlin crisis the Chinese Communists may exercise their ability to heighten tensions in the Taiwan Strait, either as a part of co-ordinated Bloc strategy or in furtherance of their own objectives in the Far East. We believe that the Chinese Communists would not heighten tensions without prior consultation with the Soviets. In either case, the Soviet position would almost certainly depend on the course of the negotia-

tions or on events in the Berlin crisis itself. The Soviets will probably desire to keep tensions in the Far East about as they are at present so long as they judge that the Berlin situation is progressing according to their liking. Should the Soviets estimate that the Berlin situation is going badly for them, they may advise the Chinese Communists to increase tensions in the Far East. The Chinese Communist response to such Soviet advice would be influenced not only by the Berlin situation and Soviet desires but also by Peiping's own estimate of the advantages or disadvantages of heightening tensions in the Taiwan Strait or possibly elsewhere in the Far East. Any moves to heighten tensions in the Taiwan Strait, however, would almost certainly be calculated to fall short of provoking major hostilities.

35. We do not believe that domestic considerations would by themselves cause Communist China to go so far as to undertake a major military effort in the Strait area during the next year. However, Peiping could create greater tension in the Strait area at any time as a means of rallying greater public sacrifice and enthusiasm for its domestic programs of rapid, forced economic development and the communalization of society.

36. Several other factors may influence Peiping's course of action in the Taiwan area. Despite some moderation in recent months of the bellicose tenor of Peiping's general foreign policy statements, some of the assertiveness which characterized its outlook during 1958 is still present. The Taiwan Strait situation provides the easiest outlet for this assertiveness, but if the Chinese Communists saw such opportunities elsewhere, they might feel less inclined to increase pressure in the Strait area. Peiping's action would of course also be affected by any developments which might lead it to see an increased likelihood of a change in US or GRC policies. Continuation of the Warsaw talks might inhibit but will not prevent the Chinese Communists from taking more forceful actions should they so choose.

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B. Probable Courses of Action

37. The Chinese Communists will almost certainly seek to avoid hostilities with the US. We believe that they will not attempt to seize Chinmen or undertake an all-out effort to prevent its resupply. We also believe such actions unlikely against the Matsus, though the Chinese Communists may in this case be somewhat less certain of US intentions and possible reactions. However, we believe that the Chinese Communists will continue to employ military pressures in support of their essentially political and psychological campaign in the Taiwan Strait. These pressures will probably not repeat the pattern of last year's unrewarding military activities. However, Peiping will probably attempt to keep the Strait issue alive, and will probably not relax its military pressures to such a degree as to permit the situation to become quiescent over an extended period of time.

38. There are a number of military pressures open to the Chinese Communists. They may engage in periodic heavy shelling and limited air and/or sea operations to harass the Nationalists in the Chinmen and Matsu areas. They might attempt to seize one or more of the small, lightly-held offshore islands, particularly Ta-tan and Erh-tan. Peiping might execute such an assault to support a political move or to provide specific evidence of progress for domestic political and propaganda purposes.

39. Though we believe it unlikely, it is possible that the Chinese Communists may resume intensive and sustained artillery bombardment of the major offshore islands, perhaps using heavier guns. They might initiate aggressive aerial activity over the offshore island area and, possibly, the Strait. We believe, however, that they would be reluctant

to expose their air force to the possibility of another humiliating defeat by the CAF, and hence we think them unlikely to initiate such air activity until they have considerably improved the proficiency of their pilots. Sufficient improvement might be accomplished by a few CCAF regiments with present equipment during the next few months. Moreover, during the period of this estimate the CCAF will probably have more advanced aircraft and may also acquire air-to-air missiles.

40. Peiping will probably intensify its political and psychological warfare campaign against the GRC. This can be done with little risk and with minimum demands upon Communist China's leadership or resources. In particular, Peiping might increase its campaign of rumors regarding secret negotiations with GRC leaders. It might renew the offer to negotiate in formal and concrete terms which might win support from some non-Communist countries.

41. Peiping might renew its demand that the US discuss the Taiwan problem and other questions at the ministerial level, perhaps citing the lack of progress in the Warsaw ambassadorial talks to demonstrate the need for higher-level discussions. Peiping would almost certainly rebuff any over-all consideration of Taiwan Strait questions by an international group, particularly by the UN.

42. Although we believe that the Chinese Communists are not likely during the period of this estimate to undertake actions which they believe would run great risks of involvement with US forces, they almost certainly will not change their basic objectives in the area. Over the longer run, as Communist China's economic and military strength grows, its leaders will probably become increasingly audacious in pursuing those objectives.

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ANNEX A

MILITARY ANNEX

A. GENERAL

1. The 100-mile wide Taiwan Strait separates the island of Taiwan from the mainland of China.¹ The Penghus (Pescadores), an archipelago of 64 islands, lie about 25 miles west of Taiwan, and like the main island, receive the protective benefits of the relatively wide strait. The offshore islands are not so fortunate, geographically speaking, from a defensive standpoint. These islands consist of two major groups and three lesser groups. The largest is the Chinmen (Quemoy) group consisting of: (1) Chinmen (Quemoy) Island, 47 square miles, garrisoned by five divisions plus supporting troops; (2) Little Chinmen (Little Quemoy, or Lieh Hsu) 6.7 square miles, garrisoned by one division and supporting troops; and (3) the eight small, rocky Tan islets, three of which are garrisoned with lightly armed troops of the Chinmen forces, about 1,200 on Ta-tan, 215 on Erh-tan, and perhaps 70 on Hu-tzu Hsu. The military significance of the Tans (aside from morale considerations) is confined to their usefulness as posts for observation of the Amoy port area. The other major group consists of the Matsu complex, including the Pai-ch'uan or White Dog Islands. The largest island, Matsu, about four square miles, is garrisoned with about 11,500 well-armed regular army troops; Chang-hsu, three square miles, has 5,000 regulars; and Kao-teng, about one square mile and northernmost of the Matsus, has 750 regulars. The southern islands of the complex, the Pai-ch'uans (White Dogs), still have some guerrilla forces, but are mainly manned by regulars: 3,300 on the one square mile of Hsi-ch'uan and 2,300 on the slightly smaller Tung-ch'uan. The other islands of the Matsu complex are not regularly garrisoned.

2. Largest of the somewhat isolated lesser groups is the Tung-yin group. Lying about

¹ See maps (Figures 1-6).

26 miles² ENE of the nearest island garrisoned by Nationalist regulars (Chang-hsu, in the Matsus), the two rugged small islands (1.8 and 0.6 square miles) comprising the group are held by about 2,000 lightly armed guerrillas. Lying about halfway between Chinmen and Matsu and about 14 miles SE of the mainland are the two Wu-chiu Islands, the larger of which is 250 acres. About 600 lightly-armed guerrillas hold this group. Tiny Tung-ting (Chapel) Island, about 14 miles south of Chinmen and eight miles off the mainland is held by about 70 regulars from a Chinmen division.

3. In the Foochow area the Chinese Communists have an estimated 47,600 troops facing the 23,000 GRC troops in the Matsu Island group. In the Amoy area they have an estimated 86,900 ground force troops facing about 86,000 GRC troops on the Chinmen Island group. The GRC garrisons on the Chinmens and the Matsus are now at or about optimum strength. Artillery strength in the Chinmen and Matsu areas is approximately as follows:

COMMUNIST		NATIONALIST	
Chinmen Area			
152-mm	108	8 inch Hows	11
122-mm	264	155-mm Guns	20
76, 75 and 87-mm	237	185-mm Hows	84
		165-mm Hows	122
		75-mm Hows	80
TOTAL	609*	TOTAL	317
Matsu Area			
152-mm	2	155-mm Guns	8
122-mm	88	165-mm Hows	60
76 or 87-mm	15	75-mm Hows	12
TOTAL	105	TOTAL	80

² All over-water distances in this note are given in nautical miles.

³ All but 63 of the Communist artillery pieces in the Chinmen area are believed to be within range of Nationalist positions. In addition to the pieces listed there are 274 covered positions in the area, the occupancy of which cannot be determined. (See Figures 3 and 4)

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4. Prevailing weather conditions in the Taiwan Strait determine to a great extent the Nationalist capability for resupply and reinforcement of any of the offshore islands, and also are a limiting factor in any attempted invasion of Taiwan and the Penghus by the Communists. The gentle, variable winds and light seas of spring (April through June) provide optimum conditions for movement across the Taiwan Strait. During the summer (July through September), when the typhoon risk is high, traffic from Taiwan to the offshore islands may be completely disrupted for relatively long periods. The strong northeasterly winds in the fall and winter cause a period of heavy seas which also restrict movement and confine offloading to a few especially favorable, leeward beach sites. Seasonal variations in weather are of far less significance for amphibious operations from the mainland against the offshore islands.

B. THE CHINESE NATIONALISTS

5. *Logistical Considerations.* The Communist interdiction of the Chinese Nationalist efforts to resupply the Chinmen garrison created the outstanding problem of the Taiwan Strait crisis. However, the supply situation on Chinmen (Quemoy) never degenerated to a dangerous stage during the Taiwan Strait crisis. The Communists' interdiction of the resupply effort influenced the extent of the Nationalists' counterbattery artillery fire, and undoubtedly initiated a general austere supply consumption program. However, by 6 October 1958 (when the Communists announced their unilateral cease-fire), Nationalist resupply had reached a point where adequate supplies were being delivered despite the interdiction effort. The amount of resupply to support the Chinmen garrison was computed by MAAG Taiwan to be a daily average of 320 tons, which included 900 rounds of counterbattery artillery ammunition. For the four days immediately prior to the cease-fire, air deliveries alone averaged 240 tons daily. For the period 14-30 September, despite interdiction and bad weather, daily deliveries averaged approximately 175 tons. Individual

day's efforts of 553 tons (27 September) and 422 tons (1 October) were recorded. During the two-week period immediately following the cease-fire a total of about 40,000 tons of supplies was delivered.

6. The valuable experience gained in continuing to resupply the island despite the Communist artillery fire has greatly improved the amphibious and aerial delivery capabilities of the GRC. The supply status of both Chinmen and Matsu as of February 1959 indicated that the garrisons have stocks of supplies on hand sufficient for approximately three months.

STATUS OF SUPPLY ON CHINMEN IN DAYS OF SUPPLY

Class	7 Sep 58*	14 Feb 59
I (Rations)	33	94
II-IV ... (Equipment)	45-60	90-120
III (POL)	53	96
V (Small Arms)	90	90
V (Artillery)	33-78	84

CHINMEN STOCKS OF ARTILLERY AMMUNITION BY ROUND AS OF 14 FEBRUARY 1959

8 inch Hows	30,081
155-mm Hows	296,797
155-mm Guns	60,620
105-mm Hows	491,812
90-mm Guns	11,155

7. The amphibious craft of the Nationalist Navy, supplemented by the BARCs (barge, amphibious, resupply cargo) assigned the Army, can transport more than the minimal level of 320 tons daily to resupply the offshore islands. The Chinese Nationalist Air Force has the capability of delivering approximately 300 tons of supplies daily to the offshore islands.

8. *Naval Forces.* The naval losses sustained by the GRC during the 1958 hostilities have been partially replaced, and additional US ships are programmed for the next six months.

PRESENT GRC NAVAL FORCES

60,800 personnel, including 25,000 marines			
Destroyers	4	Subchasers	15
Escort vessels	14	Amphibious vessels	61
Minelayers	2	Auxiliaries and	
Minesweepers	7	service craft	67

*Prior to receipt of resupply.

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Although GRC ship strength is slightly below the August 1958 level, losses have not been major, and will be exceeded by replacements. There have been no significant changes in deployment. The amphibious capability of the GRC Marine Corps continues to improve as newer equipment is received, particularly tanks, and more landing exercises are conducted. It is now considered capable of mounting raiding operations against the mainland.

9. *Air Forces.* The decisive victories scored by Nationalist F-86F's over Communist MIG's in the August-October air battles clearly demonstrated the high level of training and excellent caliber of CAF fighter units. Their F-86F fighter squadrons must be ranked among the world's finest air combat units in daylight operations. This excellent fighter capability is being improved as increasing numbers of Nationalist pilots are being trained in the use of the Sidewinder air-to-air missile. Since the easing of tensions in the Strait, the CAF has also attempted to improve its air-ground support capability through extensive training. The CAF's transport and troop carrier squadrons performed well in resupplying Chinmen during the recent crisis and further such training is being achieved as the airlift of supplies and personnel to Chinmen continues. Lastly, training in paratroop drops has also been extensive in the past few months.

10. The over-all capability of the CAF has been improved in recent months by the receipt of new equipment from the United States. Installation of Sidewinder equipment on additional fighters has increased the CAF's combat capability; it is expected that a total of 155 Nationalist fighters will be equipped with these missiles by the end of 1959. Fighter capabilities are also being improved as the more advanced F-86F replaces the F-84G's in Nationalist fighter squadrons. About 90 F-100's will probably become operational during 1960. The loan of 16 C-119's for an indefinite period has augmented the CAF's airlift capabilities.

11. The GRC's present total aircraft inventory in operational units is as follows: ⁵

	<i>Operational</i>
Jet Fighters	397
Jet Fighters (Reconnaissance)	21
Jet Light Bombers (Reconnaissance)	3
Land-Based ASW	4
Piston Transport	117
Other Jet	—
Other Piston	10
TOTALS	552*

12. *Missiles.* The GRC antiaircraft strength has been enhanced by the movement of a US Nike-Hercules battalion into the Taipei area. This has allowed the redeployment of the Nationalist AAA units which formerly defended Taipei to other strategic areas. There is also a US Matador squadron on Taiwan.

13. *Offshore Islands Defense.* Major emphasis has been given to improving the Nationalist counterbattery artillery capability of the offshore islands during and following the Taiwan Strait crisis:

a. *Chinmen:* At the beginning of the crisis in August 1958, the Nationalist artillery units assigned to the Chinmen Defense Command consisted largely of the light artillery organic to the six infantry divisions of the Command, totalling 308 pieces. Of these, only the fifty-six 155-guns and howitzers were capable of delivering effective counterbattery fire against the more than 600 Communist artillery pieces being employed against the island complex. By 1 November 1958, however, GRC artillery on Chinmen and Little Chinmen capable of counterbattery fire had been about doubled. This had been accomplished by a shift in emphasis from light to medium and heavy artillery even though the total number of guns had increased by only nine during this period. In addition, twelve 240-mm howitzers are now being readied on Taiwan for Nationalist use on Chinmen; however, date of deployment is uncertain. Further, the Nationalists are improving their observation capability with action already underway to provide equipment

⁵ There is no GRC naval air force.

* In addition there are about 237 aircraft in non-operational status: training, storage, or obsolescent.

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and training for sound and flash bases, and electronic meteorological sections for the offshore islands. (See Figures 3 and 4)

b. *Matsu*: The artillery inventory in the Matsu Defense Command in August totaled 32 guns and howitzers, and has been increased to 80 since that date. The Communists have approximately an 11 to 1 ratio of counter-battery weapons compared to the Nationalists in the Matsu area, while the ratio in the Chinmen area is only 3 to 1. The Matsus have a much lower priority than the Chinmen complex; however, plans call for an augmentation of the heavy artillery. (See Figure 5)

14. The military position of the GRC on the offshore islands, particularly the main island of Chinmen, has shown substantial improvement since the Taiwan Strait crisis in the fall of 1958. The Nationalist troops on Chinmen still number about 86,000; however, the GRC has agreed "in principle" to a reduction of about 15,000 men. The agreed reduction in personnel is to be offset by increases in artillery and automatic weapons, so that the overall defensive capability of the islands will be strengthened. If this were accomplished, the number of divisions deployed on the Chinmens would be reduced from six to five. The present Chinese Nationalist infantry division has approximately 63 percent of the personnel, 33 percent of the vehicles, and less than 50 percent of the artillery and crew-served weapons of the US World War II type division. The newly adopted "Forward Look" infantry division of the GRC (seven divisions of a total of 21 are scheduled to be reorganized by December 1959) will have about 57 percent of the personnel, 50 percent of the vehicles and crew-served weapons, and the same artillery as the US World War II type division. One or more of these new divisions will probably be committed to Chinmen during 1959. Neither of the GRC type divisions has organic armor assigned. Morale of troops on the offshore islands, including the small Tan Islands, is reported as excellent.

15. Nationalist capabilities for defense of the offshore islands could probably not be significantly impaired by local subversion or sabotage. With full US support brought to bear

in time, Chinese Nationalist forces probably could hold the major offshore islands indefinitely; without such support, they probably could not long withstand an all-out attack.

C. THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS

16. *Logistical Considerations*. Although the Taiwan Strait is a substantial barrier affording protection to Taiwan and to the Penghus, there are no significant logistical difficulties in operations against the offshore islands, except, probably, in the supply of POL. The Communist surface transportation system will accommodate a maximum of 7,500 tons per day into the Amoy-Foochow area. The two cities share the rail (5,000 tons) and river (2,000) capacity. In addition, there is a road capacity of 500 tons per day. An indication of the adequacy of this transportation capacity is seen in the estimated weight of artillery ammunition expended during the first six weeks of the bombardment of Chinmen. In August-October 1958 the average daily expenditure of artillery ammunition was 450 tons and the total expended was approximately 20,000 tons—consumed from an estimated 220,000 ton stockpile and an annual production rate by Communist China of about 44,000 tons. The daily supply requirements for a Chinese Communist Army in combat is 509 tons, again indicating the adequacy of the mainland transportation system in the Foochow-Amoy area to support military operations. Interior bottlenecks, an over-all shortage of rolling stock, and POL shortages, however, would develop during an extended operation.

17. *Naval Forces*. The over-all naval strength of the Chinese Communists has improved slightly during the past several months, but this improvement is believed part of the programmed naval buildup that has taken place over the past several years and is not related directly to the Taiwan Strait crisis.

PRESENT CHINESE COMMUNIST NAVAL FORCES 57,000 personnel, not including 8,000 in naval aviation

Destroyers	4	Patrol vessels (including 125 motor torpedo boats)	209
Submarines	21	Landing ships	53
Escort vessels	4	Service craft (appx.)	300
Mine vessels	33		

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In the offshore islands area, the strength of Chinese Communist Naval Forces appears to be about the same as at the climax of the recent crisis, no known permanent deployments of submarine, major surface or landing ship units into the Strait having taken place. The relatively shallow water in the Taiwan Strait makes the effective use of submarines more difficult, and greatly increases their vulnerability to ASW operations.

18. It is difficult to fix the number of small Chinese Communist vessels in the area at present. Based on the demonstrated ease with which motor torpedo boats can be introduced undetected, the strength of small patrol and landing craft types could be covertly augmented over a relatively short period of time. Moreover, in view of the relatively short distances involved, the bulk of major naval strength could be deployed into the Straits over a 24-48 hour period with little or no prior indication. There have been no authenticated instances of the employment of mine-warfare by the Chinese Communists; neither have there been positive indications of mine stockpiles along the Strait. However, the emphasis which the Chinese Communist Navy is known to place on such doctrine, coupled with an appreciable capability for mine delivery from all types of vessels, makes the occurrence of offensive mining a possibility to be reckoned with in the event of a renewal of hostilities.

19. *Air Forces.* With the possible exception of a small increase in fighter strengths, Chinese Communist Air Force levels have remained about the same in the Taiwan Strait area as they were during August-October 1958. At present, there are approximately 200-250 jet fighters based on the airfields in the Foochow-Swatow area. While there are no bomber aircraft operating from these fields, the Chinese Communists continue to have jet light bombers based at airfields well within striking range of Taiwan. It is possible that the Chinese Communists have some bomber forces in areas directly behind the coastal airfields.

20. The Chinese Communists must have been highly displeased with the performance of their fighter pilots during the crisis, and we

consequently believe that they must be conducting an intensive training effort to rectify this weakness. However, we have no direct evidence of any such effort. It is estimated that it would take about four months of intensive training to make a CCAF regiment combat proficient (with existing equipment).

21. It is possible that the Chinese Communists have received some MIG-19 aircraft from the Soviet Union; several months would probably be required, however, before Chinese pilots would be capable of effectively using this aircraft in combat.

22. We consider it likely that the embarrassing air losses suffered by the Chinese Communists last fall, along with the glimpse they had of the effectiveness of the Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, have led the Chinese Communists to press the USSR for similar weapons. We have estimated that the Soviets have developed several types of short-range air-to-air missiles, equipped with HE warheads. These could be made available for use by Chinese Communist jet fighters; we have no evidence, however, to confirm or deny the existence of such weapons in mainland China.

23. The combined Chinese Communist Air Force and Naval Air Force include 2,395 operational jet aircraft, of which 1,795 are fighters and 460 are light bombers. The present total aircraft inventory in operational units is estimated to be:

	<i>Operational</i>
Jet Fighter	1,795
Piston Fighter	35
Jet Light Bomber	460
Piston Light Bomber/Tactical/Attack	235
Land-Based ASW	10
Piston Medium Bomber	20
Piston Transport	100
Jet Trainers	140
Other Piston	150
TOTALS	3,035¹

24. *Reinforcement Capability.* Within 12 days the forces in the Amoy-Foochow area can be reinforced by approximately 255,000 troops, including three airborne divisions (of 7,000

¹ In addition there are about 1,385 aircraft in non-operational status: training, storage, or obsolescent.

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troops each), quite possibly without detection by GRC or US forces. Within 21 days an additional 46,000 troops could be deployed to the Amoy-Foochow area, making an estimated total force of 24 infantry divisions assembled there. These moves would not involve any re-deployment of those coastal units now stationed outside of the immediate Amoy and Foochow areas (which presumably would be kept in position against the possibility of a Nationalist counterattack). Compared with a World War II type US infantry division, the Chinese Communist infantry division has approximately the same personnel strength (about 17,000), but only 50 percent as much artillery, and 25 percent of the tanks and motor vehicles. Morale of the Chinese Communist forces is considered good.

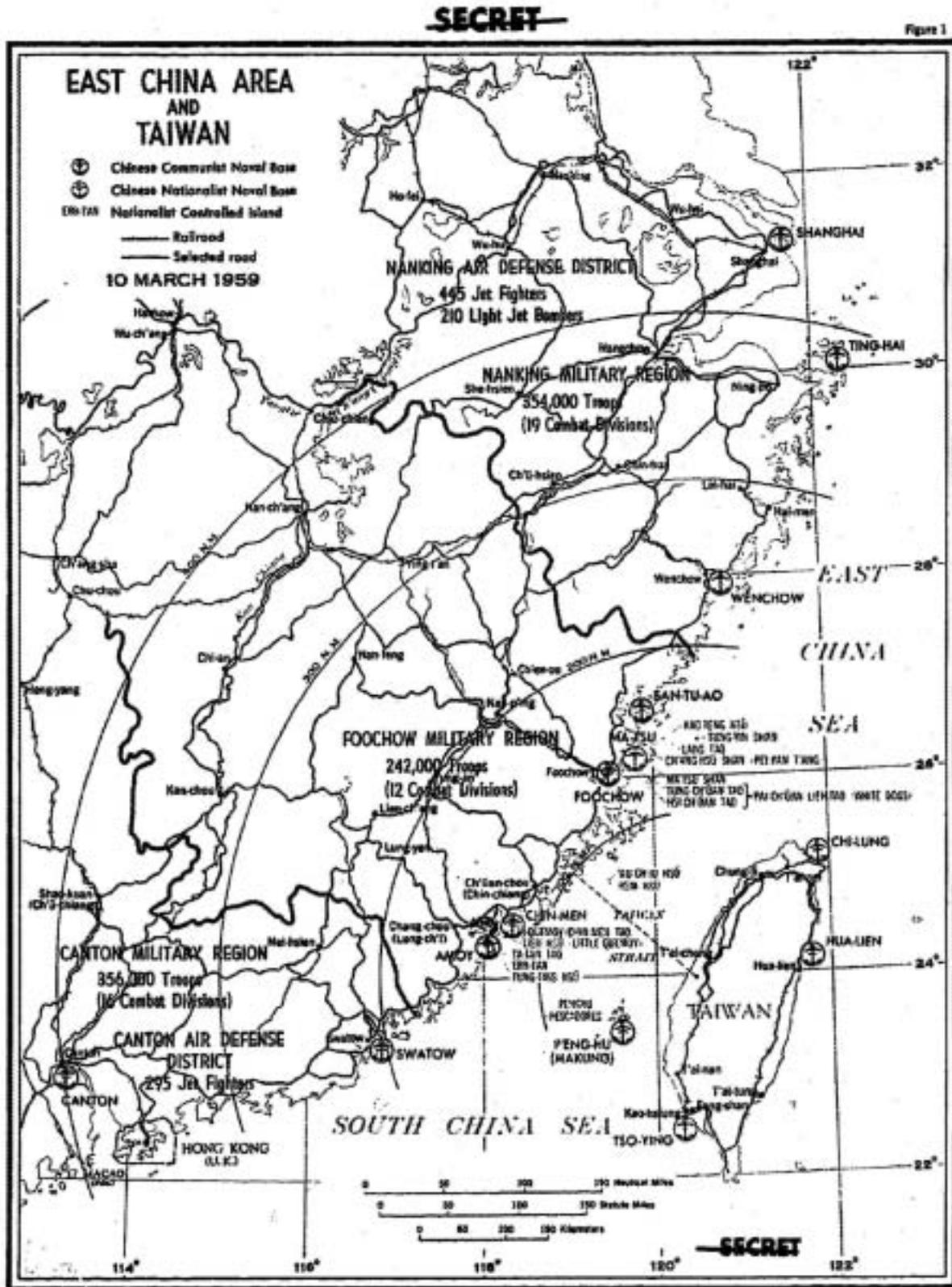
25. *Lift Capabilities.* In an amphibious assault against Chinmen or Matsu it is unlikely that larger amphibious units (LST, LSM) would be employed due to the extremely adverse beaching conditions. However, by employing lesser amphibious units (LCU, LCM) and readily available native craft, in successive waves, the Chinese Communists have the capability of launching assaults with forces numerically superior to the defenders on either the Chinmens or the Matsus. Timely warning might not be available that final preparations for either operation had been completed.

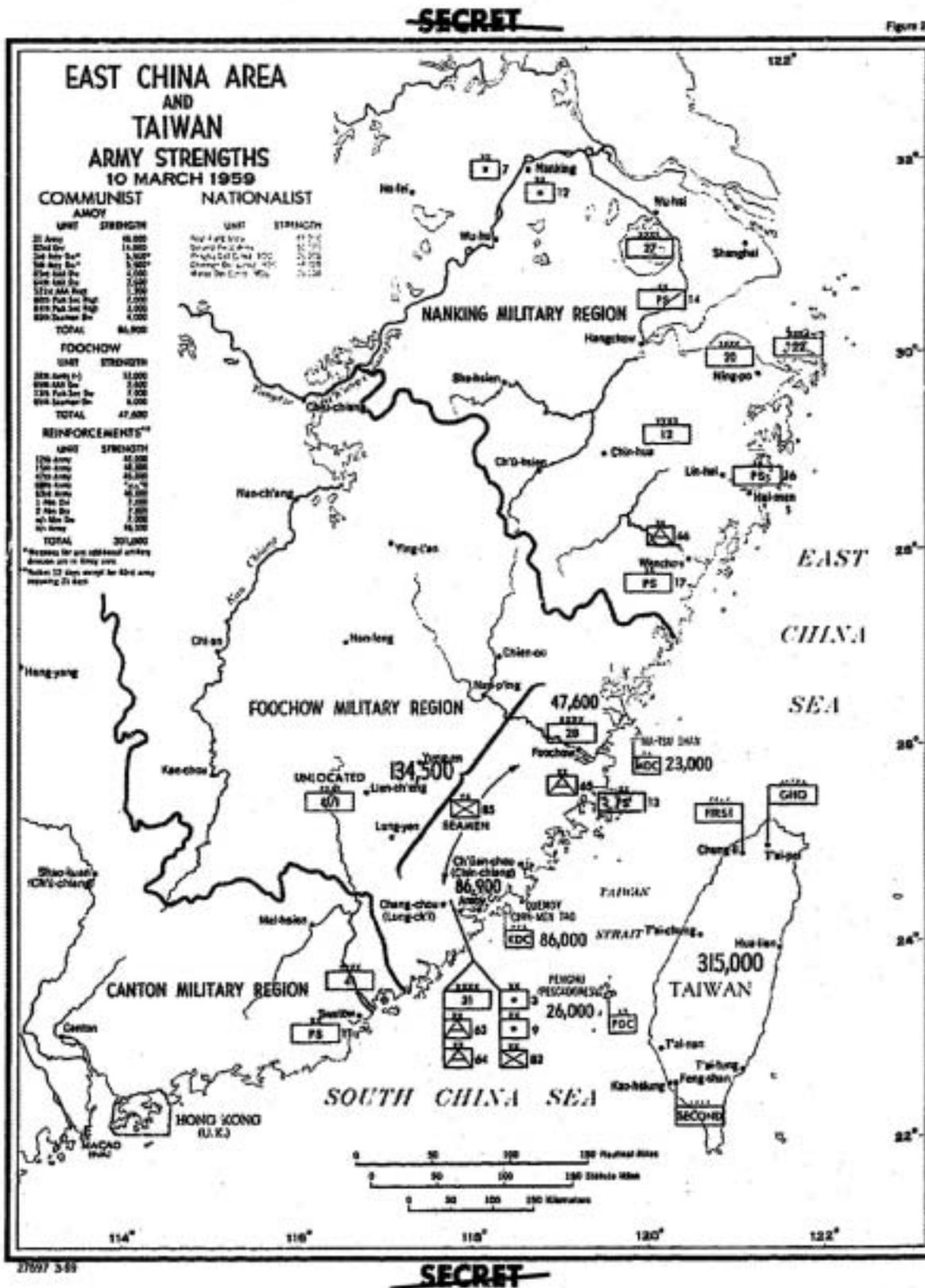
26. Utilizing assigned transport aircraft, together with available civil transport, and dis-

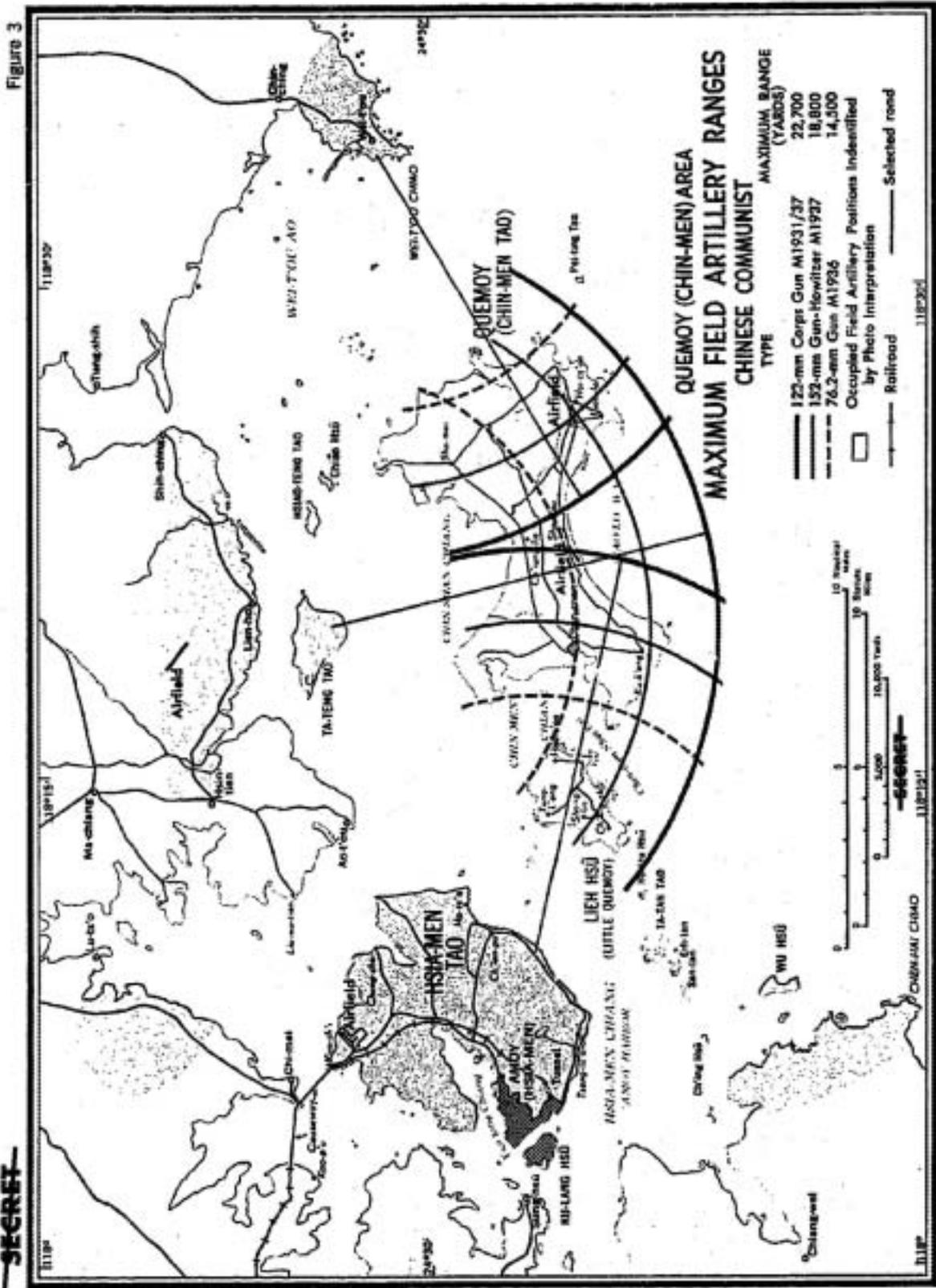
regarding normal maintenance and operational attrition, as well as combat attrition, it is possible that a maximum Chinese Communist airborne force of up to 10,200 men could be dropped on the offshore islands in two lifts on D-Day, followed by 5,100 men on D+1 Day, and the remaining 5,700 men of the three airborne divisions on D+2 Days. This airborne force is essentially light infantry, since the Chinese Communists do not have the aircraft or the capability to drop vehicles, or artillery larger than the pack 75-mm howitzer. Sufficient airfields are available in southeast China to mount such an operation within close range of the Nationalist positions. The use of helicopters to move personnel from the mainland to the Chinmen or Matsu Islands could increase the total force available by a considerable number, depending on the number of lifts flown. The Chinese Communists have an estimated 40 helicopters capable of carrying 16 troops each.

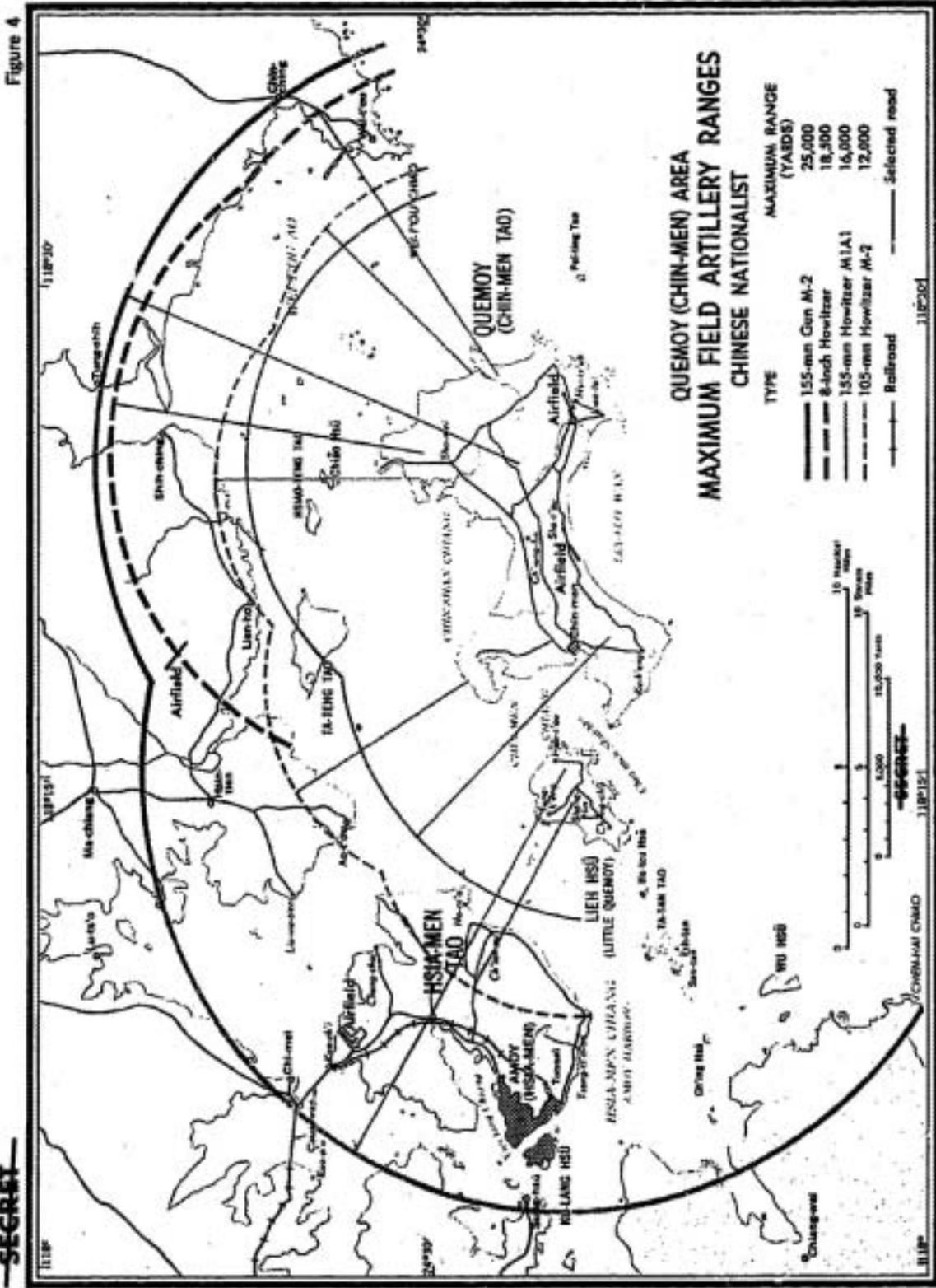
27. *Missiles.* There is no present evidence to corroborate recent low-level reports that the USSR has supplied short-range ballistic missiles to Communist China, and there are no confirmed indications that the Chinese Communists have any type of missile in the Taiwan Strait area. The absence of firm evidence does not, of course, preclude the possibility that the Chinese Communists may have received Soviet missiles and may have deployed some to the Taiwan Strait area, though we believe it unlikely.

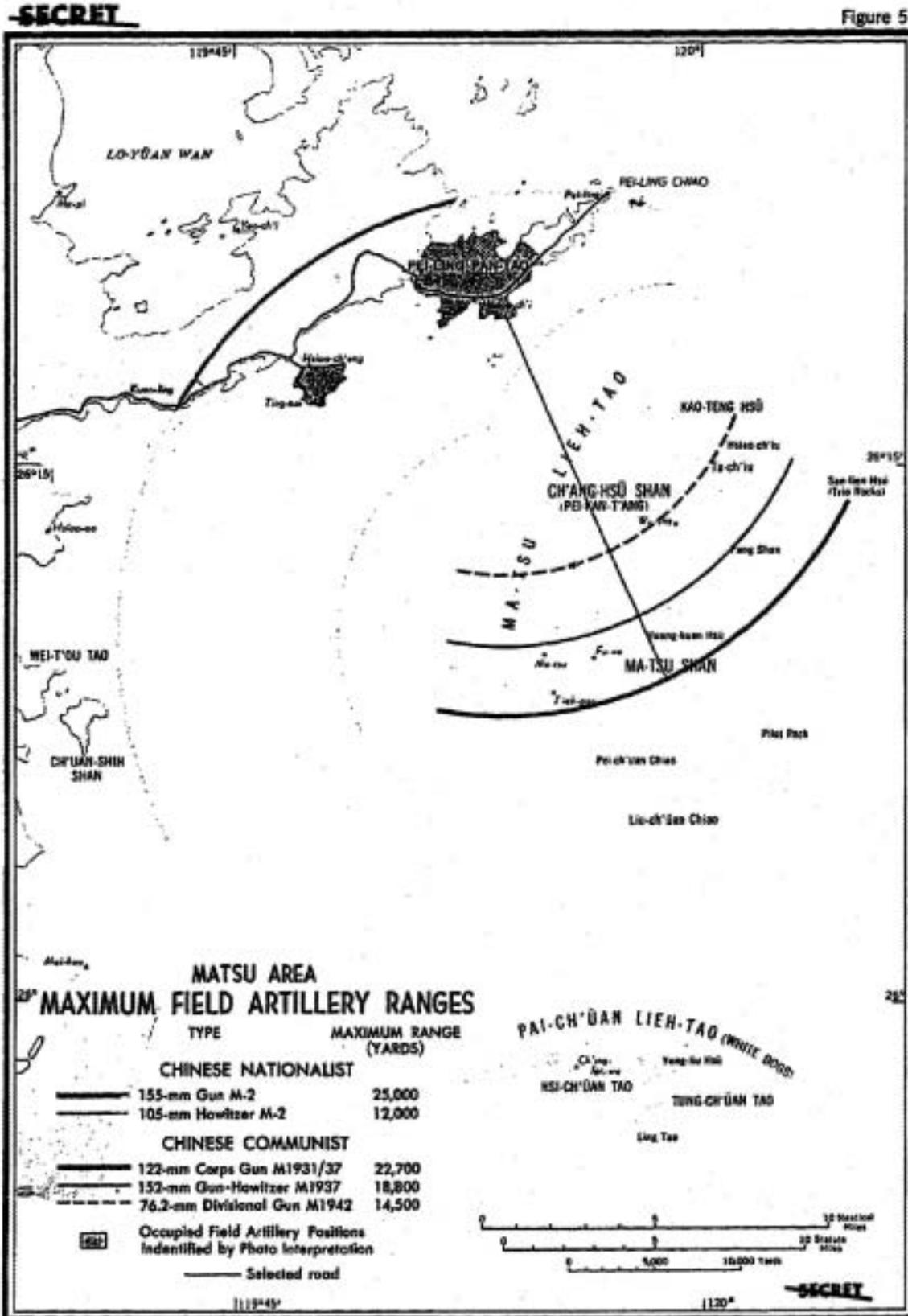
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