

17 februari 1959

U 1182/12-59 - C 46 - P4/PS9.

12 A-9625/17
GENEEM 21/2

Land: China.
Onderwerp: Chinese Communist military developments during 1958.

Referenties:

Datum van
waarneming: Tweede helft januari 1959.

Bron: Van bevriende zijde.

Opmerkingen:

Verzonden aan: de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken.

Aan Zijne Excellentie Prof. Dr. L.J.M. BEEL
Minister-President

Plein 1813 no. 4

'S-GRAVENHAGE.

17 februari 1959

U 1102/12-59 - C46-P4/P3

REVIEW: CHINESE COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1958

GEHEIM

Taiwan Strait: The military operation in the Taiwan Strait showed that the Chinese Communists have made progress in combined arms operations and highlighted the power of their artillery against the offshore islands. It also demonstrated, however, a substandard performance of their air force against the Chinese Nationalists, despite the occupation of the coastal airfields by Communist fighters, which greatly inhibited Nationalist overflights.

On the basis of equipment and numbers, the Communists should have made a much better showing, but inferior air tactics, resulting from poor or incomplete pilot training, and a lack of aggressiveness caused them to lose 33 aircraft as against only four Nationalist fighters, including two reconnaissance aircraft. Nationalist pilots indicated that Communist planes did not give the performance which would be expected from MIG-17s when flown by skilled pilots.

Taipei's use of the Sidewinder air-to-air missile may have given the Communists pause in engaging Nationalist fighters.

The Chinese Communist Navy did not directly participate in the crisis except to use motor torpedo boats against Nationalist supply vessels.

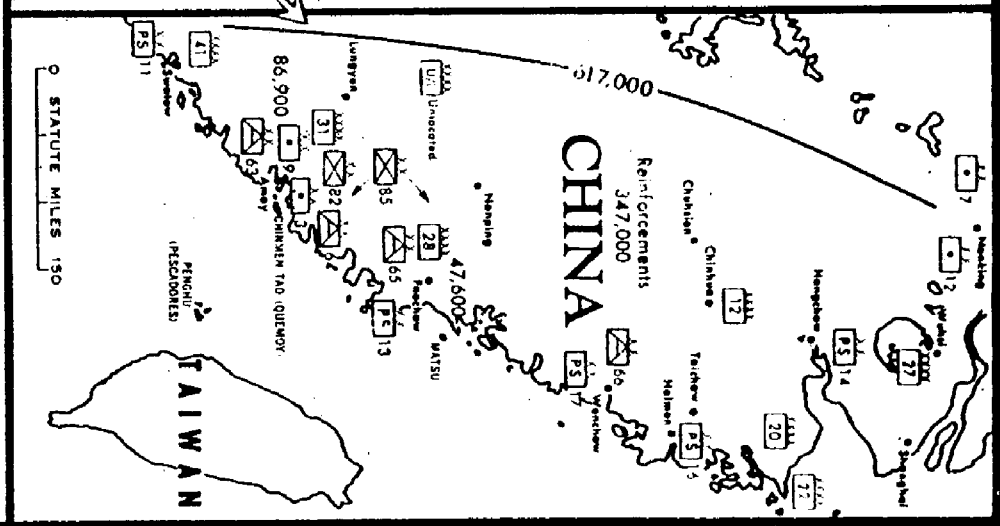
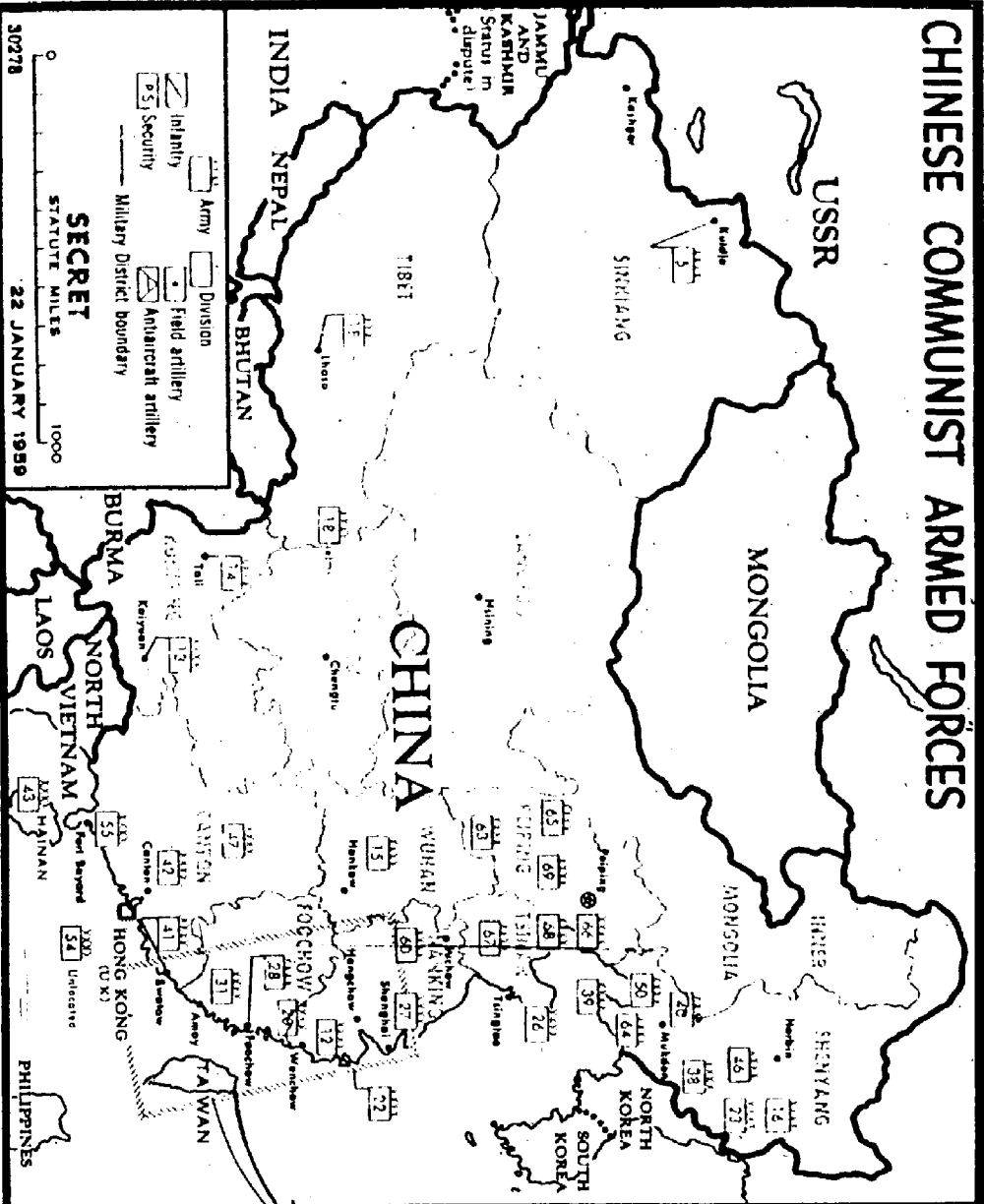
The large number of troops brought into the Fukien area during the crisis reflect an improved logistics capability. The Yingtai-Amoy railroad was an important factor in this respect. Some of the motor torpedo boats which operated against the Nationalist supply vessels in the Amoy area were apparently brought to the island on this line.

Withdrawal From North Korea: In a joint communique on 18 February 1958, Chou En-lai and Kim Il-sung announced the Chinese Communists would withdraw from North Korea. Subsequent announcements from Peiping stated that the withdrawal would be completed in three stages, with the final phase to be completed before the end of 1958. Chinese Communist troops in North Korea at that time totaled about 300,000 and included five armies--the 1st, 16th, 21st, 23rd, and 54th.

The first phase of the withdrawal, involving the 16th and 23rd armies, was completed during March and April; the second stage in August with the withdrawal of the 21st and 54th armies; and the third stage on 26 October. Two of the armies--the 16th and 23rd--are believed to be in Manchuria, while the others may have been deployed to South and Southeast China. There are reports that some troops may have been sent to Tibet.

Soviet Military Aid: Soviet military aid to Communist China continued on a fairly large scale during 1958, but indigenous war-production facilities were also expanded--thus decreasing Peiping's dependence on Moscow in its drive to become a first-rate military power. Items of Soviet equipment identified in China during the year included the new ground-control intercept ROCK-CAKE height-finding radar, the LONG TROUGH and TRACK DISH artillery radars, the 100-mm anti-aircraft gun, and the quadruple-mount 14.5 mm heavy anti-aircraft gun.

CHINESE COMMUNIST ARMED FORCES



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GROUND FORCES

Strength	514,000	Manpower	133,000
Personnel	181,000	Organized	31,900
Police	266,000	Total	61,000
Warfare	354,000	Shanghai	55,300
Equipment	156,000	Lanchow	63,000
Artillery	555,000	Inner Mongolia	25,000
Warfare	98,000	Unscaled	306,000

Total Army 2,632,000

Arms 35
Divisions 154

SELECTED CATEGORIES OF AIRCRAFT

Air Force	1310	Naval Air Force	280
Jet fighters day	35	Piston fighters	0
Piston fighters	150	Jet attack fighters	0
Jet attack fighters	70	Piston attack fighters	0
Piston attack fighters	230	Jet light bombers	210
Jet light bombers	165	Piston light bombers	0
Piston light bombers	20	Piston medium bombers	0

Chinese War Production: Chinese Communist facilities now are producing mortars up to 160 mm. caliber, and various artillery pieces. A program of construction of Soviet-designed warships, begun in 1955, apparently continues.

Organizational Changes: Other developments during the year include the reorganization of certain administrative and supply organizations and the implementation of a reserve program which is to be responsible for training the militia.

The "rectification" campaign, which affected virtually all aspects of Chinese Communist life, increased party control over military command and administration at all levels. Other results of the "rectification" program last year were increased emphasis on the study of Communist doctrine and the return of Chinese Communist officers to the ranks for at least one month a year.

Current Capabilities: The continued Soviet support in the form of material and technical aid to the Chinese Communist armed forces and the strides being made by the Chinese Communists to achieve greater independence by the expansion of their own war-production facilities foreshadow an ever-increasing military threat in the Far East. Despite the great strides being made, however, there are several areas where improvements will be necessary before Peiping can rank as a first-rate military power. Thus far the principal element of Peiping's military power is its large ground force, in size second only to Moscow's.

This force relies largely on overwhelming the enemy by numerical superiority, but it is not prepared to wage a nuclear war nor defend against a nuclear attack. Although there have been numerous reports of missile installations, there is no firm evidence that Peiping possesses operational tactical missiles.

The principal weakness in the Chinese Communist Air Force seems to be inadequate pilot training.

The navy, although it has received modern types of Soviet-designed vessels from its own shipyards, will continue to remain principally a coastal defense force for some time to come. The lack of experience in deep-water operations and the limited number of deep-water vessels are factors which will restrict the development of a naval threat for some time to come.

Although there are many vessels which could be used to stage an amphibious assault against the offshore islands, the type of lift capability necessary to mount an invasion of Taiwan itself is inadequate, and this deficiency is not likely to be soon remedied. The Chinese Communists have, however, the capability to undertake operations against the offshore islands at any time and, if not opposed by American forces, could press these operations to a successful conclusion.