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Collection Name GREGG, DONALD: FILES

Withdrawer

CAS 5/15/2007

File Folder TAIWAN - FX SALE (NOVEMBER 1981-12/16/1981)

FOIA

F99-056

Box Number 10

JESPERSEN

27

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
36114	MEMO	DONALD GREGG TO RICHARD ALLEN RE TAIWAN <i>R 8/10/2018 M910/1</i>	1	11/17/1981	B1
36115	MEMO	ALLEN TO THE PRESIDENT (ATTACHMENT TO 36114)	1	ND	B1
36116	MEMO	GENERAL DAVID C. JONES TO SECRETARY WEINBERGER RE TAIWAN <i>D 12/9/2022 M910/1</i>	2	11/10/1981	B1
36117	MEMO	SAME TEXT AS 36115	1	11/25/1981	B1
36118	MEMO	SAME TEXT AS 36116 <i>D 12/9/2022 M910/1</i>	2	11/10/1981	B1
36119	MEMO	SAME TEXT AS 36114 <i>R 8/10/2018 M910/1</i>	1	11/17/1981	B1
36120	MEMO	JAMES NANCE TO THE PRESIDENT THRU ED MEESE RE TAIWAN (SAME TEXT AS 36076)	1	12/3/1981	B1

The above documents were not referred for declassification review at time of processing

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]

B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]

B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]

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B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
36121	MEMO	ALEXANDER HAIG TO THE PRESIDENT RE TAIWAN (ANNOTATED COPY OF 36077)	2	11/27/1981	B1
36122	MEMO	DON GREGG TO NANCE RE TAIWAN (ANNOTATED COPY OF 36075)	1	11/30/1981	B1
36123	MEMO AND REPORT	RE TAIWAN (MEMO AND REPORT PAGINATED TOGETHER) (SAME TEXT AS 36082 AND 31610) PAR 2/21/2023 M910 #36123	5	12/14/1981	B1 B3
36124	MEMO	DONALD GREGG TO BUD NANCE RE TAIWAN	1	12/16/1981	B1
36125	MEMO	JANET COLSON TO DON GREGG ET AL RE ITEM OF INTEREST	1	12/16/1981	B1
36126	CABLE	160219Z DEC 81	1	12/16/1981	B1

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6735 China 36114
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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~SECRET~~

November 17, 1981

ACTION

AK

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD V. ALLEN

FROM: DONALD GREGG *DG*
SUBJECT: Sale of FX to Taiwan

The Secretary of Defense has forwarded to the President a memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommending that the FX not be sold to Taiwan. The JCS recommends extension of the existing F-5E/F acquisition program.

RECOMMENDATION

That this memorandum (Tab A) be forwarded to the President under the transmittal at Tab I.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

C. Shoemaker concurs.

Attachments

Tab I Memo for RVA Signature
A Incoming transmittal

✓ cc: China Office

~~SECRET~~

Review on November 17, 1987

~~SECRET~~

M910 #36114
RW 8/10/18

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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Collection Name

LAUX, DAVID: FILES

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File Folder

TAIWAN - FX SALE (NOVEMBER 1981-12/16/1981)

FOIA

F99-056

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Box Number

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<i>ID</i>	<i>Document Type</i> <i>Document Description</i>	<i>No of</i> <i>pages</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i> <i>tions</i>
36115	MEMO ALLEN TO THE PRESIDENT (ATTACHMENT TO 36114)	1	ND	B1

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SECRET

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

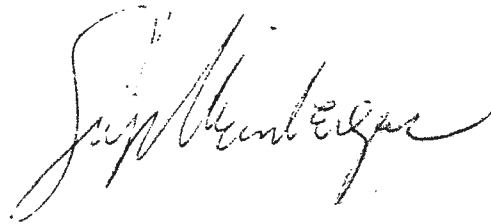
81 NOV 16 P 4: 16 NOV 1981

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The Joint Chiefs have requested that I convey to you their views, set forth in their attached memorandum, on the FX fighter plane for Taiwan.

Attachment



UPON REMOVAL OF ATTACHMENTS THIS
DOCUMENT BECOMES UNCLASSIFIED

CHS 5/15/07

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36116	MEMO GENERAL DAVID C. JONES TO SECRETARY WEINBERGER RE TAIWAN	2	11/10/1981	B1

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36117	MEMO SAME TEXT AS 36115	1	11/25/1981	B1

The above documents were not referred for declassification review at time of processing

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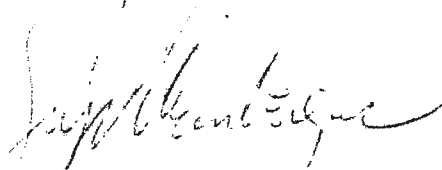
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

81 NOV 16 P 4: 16 NOV 1981

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The Joint Chiefs have requested that I convey to you their views, set forth in their attached memorandum, on the FX fighter plane for Taiwan.



Attachment

UPON REMOVAL OF ATTACHMENTS THIS
DOCUMENT BECOMES UNCLASSIFIED

CAS 5/15/07

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17097

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36118	MEMO SAME TEXT AS 36116	2	11/10/1981	B1

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36119

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~SECRET~~

November 17, 1981

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD V. ALLEN

FROM: DONALD GREGG *DG*
SUBJECT: Sale of FX to Taiwan

The Secretary of Defense has forwarded to the President a memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommending that the FX not be sold to Taiwan. The JCS recommends extension of the existing F-5E/F acquisition program.

RECOMMENDATION

That this memorandum (Tab A) be forwarded to the President under the transmittal at Tab I.

Approve *[Signature]*

Disapprove _____

C. Shoemaker concurs.

Attachments

Tab I Memo for RVA Signature
A Incoming transmittal

cc: China Office

~~SECRET~~

Review on November 17, 1987

~~SECRET~~

rw *MAID #36119*
8/10/18

China office:

*Subj.
FX-Taiwan*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 27, 1981

Dear Mickey:

Thank you very much for your November 18 letter dealing with the subject of fighter aircraft sales to Taiwan.

As you know, this is a subject in which I have a strong personal interest. We are now drawing together the best analyses from within the Government, upon which we will make our decision. The choice is a delicate one involving a balance of interests. The points in your letter are well taken and I can assure you that they will receive full consideration as we reach our decision.

With warm personal regards,

Sincerely,



Richard V. Allen
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

The Honorable
Mickey Edwards
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

208 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2132

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

DISTRICT OFFICE:
717 OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. 73102
(405) 231-4541

November 18, 1981

The Honorable Richard V. Allen
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20506

Dear Dick:

It is widely anticipated that the Administration will soon reach a decision on advanced fighter sales to Taiwan. As you are aware, the decision will have an important impact on Sino-American relations and our strategic posture in East Asia.

Although deeply concerned about the Soviet threat, I do not feel that it would be in the interest of the United States to seek closer strategic cooperation with the PRC at the expense of Taiwan.

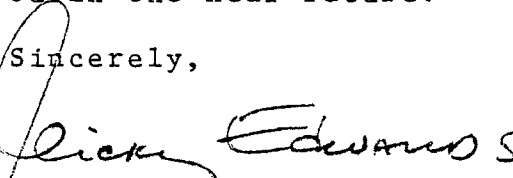
Peking is pursuing improved relations with the West, not because it wants to be our friend, but because it is in its interests to do so. I do not believe that limited fighter sales to Taiwan (even of the F-16) would undermine the larger economic and strategic policies of the PRC or lead, as some have suggested, to a Sino-Soviet alliance. If rapprochement between the two communist governments does occur, it will be based upon factors largely out of our control and certainly not because of commitments spelled out in the Taiwan Relations Act.

I personally favor the sale of a new fighter to Taiwan (see the enclosed article prepared by a member of my staff).

At minimum, if you conclude that the sale of the FX or F-16 is not feasible, I would urge upgrading of the F-5E.

Please let me hear from you in the near future.

Sincerely,



Mickey Edwards
Member of Congress

ME/ml1

FIGHTER SALES TO TAIWAN

by

Martin L. Lasater

One of the most difficult foreign policy dilemmas facing the Reagan administration is the issue of advanced fighter sales to the Republic of China on Taiwan. Any discussion of the issue must consider three important questions: (1) Does Taiwan actually need a more advanced air superiority fighter? (2) Is it in U.S. interests to sell Taiwan such a plane? and (3) How will the sale affect U.S.-PRC relations? The following paragraphs will briefly discuss these questions.

Does Taiwan need a new fighter?

The Taiwan Relations Act states that "the United States will make available to Taiwan such defensive articles and defense services in such quantities as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability." It further provides that "the President and Congress shall determine the nature and quantity of such defensive articles based solely upon their judgement of the needs of Taiwan." (emphasis added)

Using this criteria, it must be recognized that Taiwan's military security is heavily dependent upon air superiority over the Taiwan Strait. ROC air control over the Strait would make any conventional use of force by the People's Republic of China prohibitively expensive, especially in terms of hard-to-replace, relatively sophisticated equipment needed to secure the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Vietnamese borders. The greater the cost, the less likely Peking would exercise one or more of its military options.

These options include the interdiction of Taiwan's sea lines of communications, air attacks against selected strategic targets, blockade or seizure of Quemoy and/or Matsu, massive surprise attacks against ROC air and naval forces, and combined air and amphibious invasion. The invasion option is unlikely to occur, at least in the foreseeable future, but it could be undertaken in successive stages once the air battle over the Strait was determined. The ROC navy, already outmanned and outgunned by PRC submarines and missile boats, could be easily neutralized by air and naval attacks if the PRC gained superiority over the Strait.

Although highly trained and motivated, the pilots of Taiwan's 350 fighter/interceptors face more than 4,500 fighters on the Mainland, approximately 1,000 of which are deployed opposite the island. In the past the ROC enjoyed a degree of qualitative superiority because of its more than 200 F-5A/Es. Recent improvements in the PRC air force, however, including the acquisition of Rolls Royce Spey engine technology and the development of the F-12, have closed the qualitative gap to the point where Taiwan's air force could contest the air space over the Strait for only about two weeks before its inventory of planes and missiles would be exhausted.

In the 1985-1986 time frame, the F-12 will be deployed in significant numbers by the PLA, while roughly two-thirds of Taiwan's current inventory of some 90 F-100s, 70 F-104s, and 200 F-5A/Es will have passed their air frame life.

Unless the ROC is able to replace its outdated fighters with a more modern air superiority aircraft, Taiwan will find itself in an increasingly vulnerable position. The acquisition of additional F-104s and F-5Es is an interim solution only and will not materially affect the qualitative and quantitative advantages enjoyed by the PRC in the post-1985 era.

Since the introduction of new fighters takes three to five years from the time of initial approval of purchase to operational deployment, Taipei is concerned that it receive permission to buy the F-16, FX, or an equivalent plane as soon as possible. The F-16 is preferred because of its superior performance and the fact that the FX, in either its F-5G or F-16/J79 configurations, has not yet come into production. Since the F-16 has already been introduced into Northeast Asia, its purchase by Taiwan would not destabilize the region's balance of power.

No one knows for certain whether the PRC will use force against Taiwan or, if so, when. It is clear, however, that Peking highly values Taiwan for its strategic, political, psychological, and economic importance. In his list of priorities for the 1980s, Teng Hsiao-ping placed the return of Taiwan as second only in importance to the curbing of Soviet efforts to encircle China. He has also stated that the PRC would use force against Taiwan under three conditions: Taipei would refuse over a long period to negotiate with the Mainland; Taiwan would declare itself an independent state; or the Soviet Union would become involved with the island. Recently, official PRC publications have stated that Peking might also use "nonpeaceful methods" to reunify Taiwan with the Mainland if the U.S. carries out the defense provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act.

The current PRC objective is to gain control of Taiwan by peaceful means if possible, that is, by pressuring Taipei into accommodation through political, economic, and military isolation. Should this indirect strategy fail, however, it is likely that Peking would use force if its leaders calculated a high probability of success against an acceptable level of risk and loss.

There is little the West could do in terms of economic or diplomatic sanctions to prevent Peking's use of force against Taiwan. Very few observers expect Washington to intervene militarily given the level of U.S. domestic opposition to an armed conflict with the PRC.

With the abrogation of the U.S.-ROC mutual defense treaty and the increasing ability of the PRC to pursue a military option towards Taiwan, the most important deterrent to Peking in the future is likely to be Taiwan's own defense capability. The backbone of that defense is a new air superiority fighter able to maintain control over the Taiwan Strait.

Is it in U.S. interests to sell Taiwan such an airplane?

As long as Washington intends to maintain a military and political presence in Asia, Taiwan is of value to the U.S. There are several compelling reasons for this.

First of all, Taiwan's bases and facilities are able to provide key logistical support to U.S. military operations in the Far East and Indian Ocean. Taiwan's usefulness in this respect has actually grown in recent years because of the rapid growth of Soviet power in the region, the drawdown on U.S. forces due to military cutbacks and permanent deployments to the Indian Ocean, and mounting opposition to U.S. bases in Japan and the Philippines. With only one carrier on station in the Far East and logistical lifelines, especially to the Indian Ocean, stretched to the breaking point, Washington should not neglect the excellent facilities available on Taiwan. Described by various U.S. military leaders and statesmen as "an unsinkable aircraft carrier," worth "about ten aircraft carriers," and a "rather impregnable aircraft carrier," Taiwan could prove to be of immense value in any future war involving American forces in Asia.

Geographically, Taiwan is well-suited to further U.S. interests. The island sits between two of the most important passageways in East Asia, the Taiwan Strait and Bashi Channel, and is centrally located in the island chain along the East Asian littoral. Whoever controls Taiwan has the ability either to protect or interdict sea traffic between Northeast Asia and the rest of Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Western Europe. If strengthened by American weapons such as the F-16 or FX, Harpoon anti-ship missile, and improved antisubmarine warfare capabilities, Taipei could contribute significantly to regional defense through participation (even informally) in cooperative security arrangements. Taiwan's role in securing local sea and air lines of communications would be especially important.

It is in the interests of the U.S. to support Taiwan for moral and ideological reasons as well. The government and people of the Republic of China have successfully adopted many of the economic, political, and social principles underlying the American way of life. Combined with their own resourcefulness and ingenuity, the Chinese on Taiwan have proven the validity of Western ideals to many developing countries. Thus, in its ideological struggle with communism the U.S. has benefitted from Taiwan's commitment to freedom.

It is most important that the U.S. make clear its own commitment to freedom at this time. With the regional balance of power shifting in favor of the Soviet Union, many American friends and allies in Asia are questioning whether the U.S. is willing or able to defend free world interests in the Western Pacific. There is a trend towards Finlandization, carefully cultivated by the Soviets, which must be arrested before U.S. bases and security alliances are compromised. The sale of an advanced fighter to Taiwan to secure the island's defense would be perceived as a sign of American determination to remain in the region and to protect its friends.

How will the sale affect U.S.-PRC relations?

Although uncertain as to degree, there can be little doubt that the sale of advanced fighters to Taiwan would have an adverse effect on relations between Peking and Washington. Economically, there would probably be at least a temporary reduction in the purchase of American goods. Contracts with the Mainland might also suffer. The actual size of the loss of business, however, would be small in comparison to the loss of trade with Taiwan should the island fall under communist control.

Politically, there is the remote possibility that the pro-Teng Hsiao-ping faction of moderate administrators might be toppled from power and replaced by either extremists or a pro-Moscow coalition. At minimum, a toughening of PRC attitudes towards the West, the U.S. in particular, could be expected. On the other hand, the current PRC leadership is not dependent upon U.S. policy towards Taiwan for its political survival. Nor does Washington exercise much influence over Peking's domestic and international policies. The argument that the U.S. should withhold support from Taiwan in order not to undermine the strength of the moderates on the Mainland is misleading. To deny Taiwan the airplanes it needs for its legitimate defense is too high a price to pay for ephemeral influence in Peking. After all, the pragmatism of Teng and his supporters has as its ultimate goal the defeat of the U.S. and the socialization of not only Taiwan but all of Asia.

Strategically, the PRC may move closer to the Soviet Union if the U.S. sells advanced fighters to Taiwan. A meaningful rapprochement with Moscow, however, is far too important a decision than to be reached in retaliation over limited American aircraft sales. The Sino-Soviet split involves long-standing territorial disputes, historical animosities based in part upon racial hatred, major ideological differences, matters of national pride, questions of leadership within the international communist movement, and other issues of great significance to both the PRC and the USSR. If a Sino-Soviet rapprochement does occur, it will not be triggered by fighter sales to Taiwan. It is far more probable that Peking will continue to tie down large numbers of Soviet troops, tanks, missiles, and other equipment along its Russian border, despite whatever relations exist between Washington and Taipei.

As long as friendly relations exist between the U.S. and Taiwan, relations between Washington and Peking are likely to be strained. The PRC will utilize every possible strategy -- direct and indirect -- to weaken the ties between the people of America and the ROC. It is in U.S. interests to see a just and peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue; but that objective can best be realized by enabling Taiwan to defend itself against the use of force from the Mainland, not by withholding the defensive equipment Taipei legitimately needs for its security.

Given Taiwan's current defense needs, the probable continuation of the Sino-Soviet split, and U.S. interests in seeing a just resolution of the differences between the two Chinese governments, the United States should approve without delay the sale of an advanced air superiority fighter such as the F-16 or FX to Taiwan.

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Martin L. Lasater is a specialist in East Asian security affairs. He recently returned from a two-year period of study in Taiwan researching the strategic equation in Northeast Asia under a grant from the Pacific Cultural Foundation.

-MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

November 24, 1981

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD V. ALLEN

FROM: DONALD GREGG 

SUBJECT: Congressman Mickey Edwards' Concern re
Aircraft Sales to Taiwan

Attached is a letter from you to Congressman Mickey Edwards replying to his letter on the subject of aircraft sales to Taiwan.

RECOMMENDATION

That you sign the attached letter at Tab I.

Approve



SIGNED

Disapprove

Bob Kimmitt and Chris Shoemaker concur.

Attachments

Tab I Letter for RVA Signature
Tab II Incoming Correspondence

cc: R. Kimmitt
C. Shoemaker
China Office

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TAIWAN - FX SALE (NOVEMBER 1981-12/16/1981)

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36121	MEMO ALEXANDER HAIG TO THE PRESIDENT RE TAIWAN (ANNOTATED COPY OF 36077)	2	11/27/1981	B1

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36122	MEMO DON GREGG TO NANCE RE TAIWAN (ANNOTATED COPY OF 36075)	1	11/30/1981	B1

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RECEIVED 28 NOV 81 11

TO - ALLEN

FROM HAIG, A

DOC DATE 27 NOV 81

US 5/15/07

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL
OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

F-1C

F-16/79

F-5/G

F-5 E ENHANCED

KEYWORDS: CHINA P R

TAIWAN

ARMS SALES

CM

SUBJECT: RESOLVING US - CHINA DIFFERENCES ON TAIWAN ARMS SALES

ACTION: PREPARE MEMO FOR ALLEN

DUE: 30 NOV 81 STATUS S FILES

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

CHINA OFFICE

KIMMITT

SHOEMAKER

GREGG

COLSON

LENZ

Timing - Earlier, rather than later

COMMENTS ** URGENT DUE FIRST THING MONDAY MORNING 11/30.

REF#

LOG

NSC/FID

(M /)

ACTION OFFICER (S)	ASSIGNED	ACTION REQUIRED	DUE	COPIES TO

DISPATCH

W/ATTCH FILE (C)

6957

WASHFAX RECEIPT
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

B

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL
OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

S/S #

GAJ 5/15/67

MESSAGE NO. 001531 CLASSIFICATION: ~~Secret~~ No. Pages 2
FROM: Al Adams S/S 28448 7224
(Officer name) (Office symbol) (Extension) (Room number)
MESSAGE DESCRIPTION Memo for the President re Resolving US-China
Differences on Taiwan Arms Sales

TO: (Agency)	DELIVER TO:	Extension	Room No.
<u>NSC</u>	<u>Allen Lenz</u>	<u>395-3044</u>	<u>376A</u>

FOR: CLEARANCE ☐ INFORMATION ☒ PER REQUEST ☐ COMMENT ☐

REMARKS: _____

S/S Officer: _____

[Handwritten signature]

81 DEC 10 PM 3.30

JANET COLSON

BUD NANCE

DICK ALLEN

IRENE DERUS

JANET COLSON

BUD NANCE

PETER

CY TO VP

CY TO MEESE

CY TO BAKER

CY TO DEEVER

CY TO BRADY

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SHOW CC

Comments:

#6957

(see #6655
attached)

RECEIVED

31 MAY 30 PM 12:53

JANET COLSON

BUD NANCE

DICK ALLEN

IRENE DERUS

JANET COLSON

BUD NANCE

PETER

CY TO VP

CY TO MEESE

CY TO BAKER

CY TO DEEVER

CY TO BRADY

Comments:

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

1.1.1. 1981

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EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs

3.3(b)(1)

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. John H. Holdridge
Assistant Secretary of State
for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Mr. Hugh Montgomery
Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

Mr. Richard L. Armitage
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Mr. Donald P. Gregg
Office of the Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

FROM : John H. Stein
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : China's Position Regarding U.S. Sales of
Fighter Aircraft to Taiwan

1. The attached report, [REDACTED]

3.3(b)(1)

[REDACTED] provides information concerning China's position on U.S. sales of fighter aircraft to Taiwan. [REDACTED] provided the information in response to specific questions. [REDACTED] was aware that his remarks might reach U.S. officials but is believed to have been speaking frankly.

3.3(b)(1)

3.3(b)(1)

2. According to the report, Chinese officials are pessimistic about prospects for an acceptable outcome to the

NO HARD COPY FOLLOWS

3.3(b)(1)

[REDACTED] RVW 14DEC01 DRV [REDACTED]
BY SIGNER ALL SECRET

3.3(b)(1)

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3.3(b)(1)

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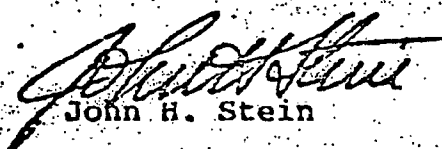
BY RW DATE 2/21/2023

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3.3(b)(1)
3.3(b)(1)

current differences with the U.S. over sales of fighter aircraft to Taiwan. The new, tougher line on this issue in the Chinese press reflects the position of the Chinese Politburo. China will no longer accept the sale by the U.S. to Taiwan of any jet aircraft which represent an improvement over the F-5E which Taiwan and the U.S. now co-produce. China believes that the U.S. has delayed unreasonably in responding to China's request that a time and place be set for the planned bilateral negotiations on this issue. China has not changed its basic attitude toward the Soviet Union, but might reopen border talks with the Soviet Union if China believes it can no longer count on the U.S. as a close partner.

3. This information is for background use only. This report has been made available to the Ambassador in Beijing. There will be no further distribution of this report, and additional dissemination or extraction of information requires prior approval from this Agency.


John H. Stein

cc: DCI
DDCI
D/NFAC
D/NFAC/EAA
NIO/EAP
D/OCO
Mr. Rope, State, EAP/China

Attachment:
Report as stated

3.3(b)(1)

~~SECRET--WARNING NOTICE--INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS~~
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3.3(b)(1)

3.3(b)(1)

THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: China's Position Regarding U.S. Sales of Fighter Aircraft to Taiwan

1. As of 10 December 1981, Chinese officials involved in Sino-U.S. relations believe that China and the U.S. are clearly moving farther apart on the issue of potential U.S. sales of fighter aircraft to Taiwan; consequently, these officials are increasingly pessimistic that an acceptable solution to the differences dividing the two countries can be found.

3.3(b)(1)

convey a belief that the U.S. public in general favors continued U.S. military support to Taiwan.

3.3(b)(1)

has noted that some U.S. Government officials have spoken out in favor of such support to Taiwan, that a number of U.S. newspaper editorials have supported Taiwan, and that some states have declared "Republic of China" days and have otherwise publicly recognized Taiwan.

2. Editorials by the official Chinese Communist Party (CCP) paper, "People's Daily," have become increasingly critical of the U.S. attitude toward the problem. Since the F-5E aircraft now possessed by Taiwan are already militarily superior to China's MiG fighters, China regards the issue not as a military one but as fundamentally one of policy and of politics on the U.S. side. China thinks the U.S. has delayed to an unreasonable degree in responding to China's request that a time and place be set for the planned bilateral negotiations on this issue. The Chinese expected that when U.S. Undersecretary of State Stoessel visited Beijing in mid-November and spoke with Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Huang Hua the Undersecretary would bring some reply from Washington. Instead, the Undersecretary said the matter was still being discussed and that no decision had yet been reached.

3. The Chinese believe that an intense debate over U.S. policy toward China and Taiwan is going on at high levels of the U.S. Administration and that the U.S. will not set a date for the negotiations with China until a policy decision has been

3.3(b)(1)

- 3 -

[redacted]

made. China believes there is no question that the U.S. decision ultimately will be made by President Reagan alone. China fears the President is heavily influenced by conservative Business interests with substantial investments in Taiwan. China assumes that the lucrative contract to co-produce the F-5E aircraft is an important economic and political consideration bearing on the U.S. decision. At present China sees nothing on the U.S. side which points toward a decision acceptable to China.

4. The new, tougher position in the Chinese official press can safely be interpreted as the line set by the Politburo. The New China News Agency (NCNA) commentary of 25 November rejecting a compromise which would involve the U.S. selling Taiwan an improved version of the F-5E accurately represents the current Chinese policy. Modification of the F-5E with the AIM 9L missile and the improved "look down" radar would significantly upgrade the aircraft's combat capability. China will not accept the sale by the U.S. to Taiwan of any jet fighter aircraft that represent an improvement over the F-5E which Taiwan and the U.S. now co-produce. Earlier, China would have accepted the sale of a modified F-5E, although under protest, if it felt that the U.S. sincerely intended to reduce its overall military sales to Taiwan over a period of time.

3.3(b)(1)

Comment: [redacted] reported the earlier Chinese position in [redacted]. China's tougher position is derived from several factors. First, China believes the U.S. Administration and public have no real intention of phasing out U.S. military support to Taiwan and that the U.S. public is still somewhat suspicious of long-term Chinese intentions. Second, China believes the U.S. is taking too long to meet to negotiate over this issue. Originally, China had expected the talks to be held in November or December, certainly before the end of the year. Finally, China believes the U.S. is not sincere in its earlier stated intention to settle the Taiwan issue amicably with China over a period of time. Instead, China believes the U.S. is simply postponing the issuance of a clear statement of its policy toward China.

5. In view of these considerations China has come to believe that if it accepts the U.S. sale of modified F-5E aircraft to

Taiwan, it will be tacitly accepting an upgrading of the weapons the U.S. sells Taiwan, something which China has stated it fundamentally opposes. Most important, China believes that to permit this sale now would be to establish a dangerous precedent and lead the U.S. to believe that at each successive discussion with China over arms sales to Taiwan, the U.S. can chip away the Chinese position and extract further concessions. China believes that it is important to take a strong stand now. This is not a bluff. The question of "face" is also very important to China. China believes that the U.S. is not treating it fairly or as an equal but is instead trifling with Chinese sensitivities. Consequently, China feels insulted.

6. Although Sino-U.S. relations are clearly declining, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not believe that either side will take any unilateral action regarding U.S. aircraft sales to China until the two sides have met to negotiate. Chinese diplomats have noted that both countries want to settle their problems without a downgrading in diplomatic relations which the USSR might seek to exploit. These diplomats point out that when diplomats get together to negotiate, they often manage to find a way around the most thorny problems to reach a solution. Some solution may yet be found which will satisfy both sides. Some Chinese officials believe that the U.S. may simply again postpone a decision on aircraft sales to Taiwan and delay making a clear U.S. statement of its China policy. This at least would defer for the time being any disturbance in diplomatic relations between the two countries.

7. If Sino-U.S. relations continue to deteriorate, China believes it can quite properly look elsewhere, such as to Japan or Western Europe, for alliances. China has not changed its basic attitude toward the Soviet Union and does not intend to play off the Soviet Union against the U.S. However, China recognizes that if the U.S. can no longer be counted on, China must realistically evaluate its foreign policy in order to survive in a world in which the U.S. is no longer its close partner. In this context, it would not be unusual for China to choose to reopen border talks with the Soviet Union. China does not view this possibility as a real or implied threat toward the U.S., but only as a contingent response to political realities.

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36124 MEMO

1 12/16/1981 B1

DONALD GREGG TO BUD NANCE RE TAIWAN

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36125	MEMO JANET COLSON TO DON GREGG ET AL RE ITEM OF INTEREST	1	12/16/1981	B1

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36126	CABLE 160219Z DEC 81	1	12/16/1981	B1

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7310
December 18, 1981

Dear Bob:

This is to acknowledge and thank you for your November 17 letter to the President, which we received on November 24, regarding the Administration's decision on providing modern defensive fighter aircraft to the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Please know that I have requested the President's foreign policy advisers to respond to the points which you and your colleagues have raised in this matter.

Your concerns are appreciated and will be given full consideration.

With cordial regard, I am

Sincerely,

Max L. Friedersdorf
Assistant to the President

The Honorable Robert W. Daniel, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

MLF/CMP/Lpt(MLF-10:43)

cc: w/copy of incoming, NSC Secretariat -- for DIRECT
Response (with copy to Max L. Friedersdorf)

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HENRY J. HYDE, ILL.

JOHN J. BRADY, JR.
CHIEF OF STAFF

7310

Congress of the United States

Committee on Foreign Affairs

House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

November 17, 1981

mx
The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are concerned over the long delay in announcing the Administration's decision to provide modern defensive fighter aircraft to the Republic of China on Taiwan.

We are confident that the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 and your own personal goodwill toward the ROC guarantee that the decision to provide these fighters will be favorable. Nevertheless, we think that the prolonged review of Taiwan's defensive needs has contributed to an inordinate growth of public speculation about the sale and possible PRC objections.

The Taiwan Relations Act gives the full force of law to the American commitment to supply adequate defensive weapons to the ROC. A dynamic and increasingly open society and a major trading partner of the U.S., the ROC is a strategic element in our security network. Its survival as a prosperous, viable nation is of obvious importance to the U.S.

Moreover, the readiness of this nation to keep its commitments to the ROC is viewed as a test case throughout Asia. Fulfillment of its commitments is evidence of U.S. reliability - Japan and several Southeast Asian nations are aware of this fact. The Peoples Republic of China should understand it too. We hope a favorable announcement of the question of fighters to the ROC will be made soon and that the spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act will be positively interpreted by your Administration on all points.

Sincerely,

Bob
Robert W. Daniel, Jr.
Robert W. Daniel, Jr., M.C.

Dan
Dan Lungren, M.C.

Ed
Edward J. Derwinski, M.C.

George
George M. O'Brien, M.C.

049884

Philip M. Crane Phil
Philip M. Crane, M.C.

Daniel B. Crane MR.
Daniel B. Crane, M.C.

Jim Dunn Jim
Jim Dunn, M.C.

Floyd Spence Floyd
Floyd Spence, M.C.

Tom Corcoran Tom
Tom Corcoran, M.C.

Carroll A. Campbell Carroll
Carroll A. Campbell, M.C.

Newt Gingrich Newt
Newt Gingrich, M.C.

Mickey Edwards Mickey
Mickey Edwards, M.C.

Gerald B.H. Solomon Jerry
Gerald B.H. Solomon, M.C.

L. A. Batalis Skip
L. A. Batalis, M.C.

John Hiler Jack
John Hiler, M.C.

William L. Dickinson Bill
William L. Dickinson, M.C.

Robert W. Davis Bob
Robert W. Davis, M.C.

Marjorie A. Holt start here
Marjorie A. Holt, M.C.

John Ashbrook John
John Ashbrook, M.C.

Albert L. Smith Albert
Albert L. Smith, M.C.

John Kousselot John
John Kousselot, M.C.

Jim Courter Jim
Jim Courter, M.C.

Bob Livingston Bob
Bob Livingston, M.C.

Wayne Grisham Wayne
Wayne Grisham, M.C.

Dan Marriott Mr.
Dan Marriott, M.C.

Clair W. Burgener Clair
Clair W. Burgener, M.C.

John LeBoutillier John
John LeBoutillier, M.C.

Jim Jeffries Mr.
Jim Jeffries, M.C.

Dan Coats Dan
Dan Coats, M.C.

Ken Kramer Ken
Ken Kramer, M.C.

Hank Brown Hank
Hank Brown, M.C.

Gene Taylor Gene
Gene Taylor, M.C.

Carlos Moorhead Carlos

Carlos J. Moorhead, M.C.

Ray McMath Ray

Raymond J. McMath, M.C.

Frank R. Wolf Frank

Frank R. Wolf, M.C.

Bill Lowery Bill

Bill Lowery, M.C.

Arlan Stangeland Arlan

Arlan Stangeland, M.C.

David Dreier Mr.

David Dreier, M.C.