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INFORMATION

July 6, 1973

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

DR. KISSINGER

FROM:

PHIL ODEEN *POW*

SUBJECT:

China's Strategic Attack Programs

The U.S. Intelligence Board has just published NIE 13-8-73 on China's Strategic Attack Programs (Tab A). The NIE is a concise review of the various Chinese programs with emphasis on what the PRC has achieved rather than on where it might be going. The basic NIE is summarized below:

MORI C05307886  
Pgs 1-3 ONLY  
C00575514 Pgs 4-5  
ONLY

China has arrived as a Nuclear Power

China has about a hundred delivery vehicles -- half missile and half bomber -- and the nuclear warheads to make them effective.

The delivery vehicles are sufficiently survivable to provide the beginnings of a credible retaliatory capability against the USSR.

Chinese Bomber Programs

China has about 60 Tu-16 Badger medium bombers with a 1650 nm radius that can reach all of East Asia and the USSR to the Urals. Moreover, China is continuing to build these bombers. However, there is nothing to indicate that the Chinese are developing an intercontinental bomber.

Chinese Missile Programs

China began deployment of the CSS-1 MRBM with a 600 nm range in 1966 and now has 15 to 30 deployed at fixed soft sites and in a semi-mobile mode in the field.

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The CSS-2 IRBM has a range of 1400 nm and became operational in 1969. There are 25 to 40 deployed at fixed soft sites, usually housed in deep tunnels.

The CSS-3 with a range of 2,700 to 3,500 nm would be able to reach Moscow but not the U.S. Three silos are being built for this missile, which could become operational in 1974.

The CSS-4 is a true ICBM, comparable to the SS-9 and Titan II. It should cover the U.S. but is not expected to be operational until 1976 or later.

China has a submarine missile program but no flight tests of such a missile have yet been detected. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the nuclear reactor for their submarine may be causing problems at this stage. As a result it is estimated that the earliest that a submarine-launched missile system could be operational is 1977.

#### Chinese Capabilities

U.S. forces and bases in the Far East <sup>(except Guam)</sup> are all within easy range of Chinese missiles and bombers currently operational, as are Soviet forces in southern Siberia and the Soviet Far East. Interestingly, the deployment of missiles has shown no particular anti-Soviet bias.

When the CSS-3 is deployed with its threat to the western USSR, the Chinese will have a good retaliatory system against the Soviets. The CSS-4 and the SLBM will extend their nuclear missile capability to the continental U.S.

#### China's Approach to Strategic Programs

-- Economy of means. Less testing has been done by the Chinese than by the U.S. or USSR. Use is made of proven systems where possible, such as designing the CSS-3 to use the CSS-2 as a first stage. Few troop training missile firings have been detected.

-- Emphasis but not urgency. Considerable resources and priority have been given to the programs, but the pace of development has been deliberate. There is no sense of a "crash" program or attempts at concurrency in programs to shorten development time.

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-- Slowdown since 1971. In the past two years the number of tests, of both missiles and warheads, has slowed. Whether this is a result of Lin Piao's death and the subsequent change in military leadership, other demands on the economic base, lessening of tension, or some other causes is not apparent. However, the Chinese apparently do not feel impelled to push as hard as before 1971.

#### Future Forces

At current levels of effort, the Chinese could have about 140 Tu-16 bombers, 140 IR/MRBMs, 15 ICBMs and 2 SSBNs by 1978. With increased efforts, they could have 200 bombers, 200 IR/MRBMs, 30 ICBMs, and 2-3 SSBNs (a successful development program and reallocations of resources could increase ICBMs to some 40 missiles and SSBNs to 4 or so boats). In any case, the Chinese capability will amount to a small deterrent force.

#### Summary

There is no doubt that the Chinese intend to be an important nuclear power. Moreover, they are on the verge of attaining significant retaliatory capability to deter nuclear attacks. However, the size of their force and of their current programs is small compared to the U.S. and the USSR.

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