

## UNLEASHING CHIANG KAI-SHEK?

### Eisenhower and the Policy of Indecision toward Taiwan, 1953

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When Chiang Ching-kuo<sup>(1)</sup> called on Secretary of State John Foster Dulles on October 1, 1953 while visiting Washington, the Secretary said he hoped it was evident that the attitude of the new (Eisenhower) administration toward China (by which he meant Taiwan) was different from that of the previous (Truman) administration. The younger Chiang made no direct reply.<sup>(2)</sup> The evasion is interesting in light of the general impression that the Eisenhower administration was a strong supporter of Chiang Kai-shek's cause—a notion not totally unfounded. President Eisenhower lifted the ban (or so it seemed) on Nationalist operations against the China mainland soon after he assumed office. In December 1954, the administration signed a Mutual Defense Treaty with the Nationalist government amidst the first Taiwan Strait Crisis. Its responses to the two Communist shellings of the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu, first in 1954-1955 and again in 1958, seem to have indicated a willingness to go to war against the Chinese Communists for defending Nationalist interests. The presence of American personnel and aid materiel on Taiwan also became conspicuous as the delivery of U.S. aid speeded up after Eisenhower took office.<sup>(3)</sup> While continuing a nonrecognition policy toward

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- (1) Chiang Kai-shek's elder son, then Director of the Political Department of the Ministry of National Defense, later Premier and President of the Republic of China.
- (2) Memorandum for the Files by Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs W. P. McConaughy on General Chiang Ching-kuo's call on the Secretary, October 1, 1953, November 13, 1953, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter cited as *FR*), 1952-54, 14(1): 252-253.
- (3) The increase of delivery was particularly obvious in the military field and the number of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) personnel amounted to about 2,400 in 1955, which was more than double of the total when Truman left office. But the number gradually decreased after 1955. See Kuo-fang-pu Shih-cheng-chu (Historic Office, Ministry of National Defense), ed., *Mei-chun Tsai-hua Kung-tsuo Chi-shih: Ku-wen-tuan chih pu* (The Working Record of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group: the Headquarter) (Taipei, 1981), pp. 10-12. See also D-513 from Taipei on Proposed MDAP Equipment Program and Country Statement for Formosa, Fiscal Year 1954, March 23, 1953, *FR* 1952-54, 14(1): 162.

the Peking regime, the administration worked hard to prevent the latter's admission into the United Nations and other international organizations.

Indeed, the Nationalists publicly applauded Dwight D. Eisenhower's electoral victory which they anticipated would result in a reverse of Truman's "Europe first" tendency and his passive "containment" policy toward communism in favor of "liberation." And with the strong attack the Republicans made on the Democrats' China policy, they had reason to believe the former, in control of both the White House and Congress, would be more active in cooperating with Taiwan in the struggle against communism.<sup>(4)</sup> On the day of Eisenhower's inauguration, the editorial of the *Central Daily News* (the Nationalist party-owned newspaper) stressed the "traditional friendship" between the United States and China and the Nationalists' belief that the new president would "crash Stalin's design to conquer Asia" and "open" the door of the "world" till "no iron curtain was left."<sup>(5)</sup> To the Nationalists, this meant that they could anticipate U.S. support for the reconquering of the mainland. Similar sentiment expressed by the right-wing Republican members in Congress as well as pro-Nationalist American news media undoubtedly strengthened their conviction along this line.<sup>(6)</sup>

Then why did the younger Chiang evade showing gratitude to Dulles (which was not diplomatic to say the least)? Was Taiwan's enthusiasm toward the new administration dampened so soon? Why? Was it possible that, despite appearances to the contrary, the two administrations' China policy differed little? That there existed a "gap" between Eisenhower's pronounced China policy and its actual implementation?<sup>(7)</sup> If so, what exactly did the adminis-

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(4) See the editorial of the November 6, 1952 *Central Daily News* (the Nationalist party newspaper which often revealed the policy of the government, hereafter cited as *CDN*), and the comments on the election of Eisenhower by high officials as well as a collection of Eisenhower's campaign statements regarding China policy on the same date. One topic discussed enthusiastically by the *Central Daily News* was blockading the China coast to end the Korean War. See *CDN* reports on the subject in November 1952 through January 1953.

(5) *CDN* editorial, January 20, 1953.

(6) See the discussion in Norman A. Graebner, "Eisenhower and Communism: the Public Record of the 1950s," in Richard A. Melanson and David Mayers eds., *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the 1950s* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987), pp. 67-69.

(7) In fact, many Nationalist officials continued to express in private their doubts about the inconsistency of U.S. Taiwan policy despite the "deneutralization" order of the new administration. When Vice President Richard Nixon visited Taiwan in November 1953, Chiang finally showed his impatience with U.S. policy to his distinguished guest along with two Senators, fourteen Representatives, two four-star and three three-star admirals. See D-320 from Taipei, November 30, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 336-337.

tration have in mind regarding Taiwan? What were its plans on issues such as the island's ultimate disposition? What was the perceived value of the island to U.S. security interests? What actions did the planners propose in pursuing such interests and how effective or successful was the implementation of Washington's policy in fulfilling its own goals? And how did U.S. policy contribute to Taiwan's political, economical, military development, and the island's relations with the mainland? Why did Eisenhower's Taiwan policy antagonize Peking while winning no appreciation from Taipei?

As an initial attempt to answer the above questions, this article examines the new administration's perception of the "unleash" policy, its attitude toward Taiwan compared with that of its predecessor, and factors that affected policy designs toward Taiwan. Then it details the formulating of the administration's first formal policy guideline toward Taiwan, NSC (National Security Council) 146/2, entitled "United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Formosa and the Chinese National Government," approved by Eisenhower on November 6, 1953. It concludes with comments on the characteristics of the administration's policymaking process.

## I

When Eisenhower was inaugurated in January 1953, the Far Eastern situation remained bleak. Battles in Korea had been seesawing along the 38th parallel for almost two years and the armistice negotiations were, again, in recession since the previous October; China continued to be hostile while vowing to liberate Taiwan; and crisis in Southeast Asia, Indochina in particular, was ever mounting. Though never an Asia firster, the new President was elected more or less on a mandate to clean up the "Far Eastern mess" begotten by the previous administration.

The immediate task was to end the Korean War. It was clear that the procrastination of the conflict had worn thin the patience of the American people and the new President alike. Returning from Korea in December 1952 (a visit to fulfill his campaign promise), Eisenhower was convinced that the Communists respected only force—"small attacks on small hills would not

end the war”—the enemy could only be impressed by deeds, not words.<sup>(8)</sup> Eisenhower did not have any concrete plan to end the war, though. All he had was a conviction that through applying maximum pressure on the Chinese Communists, the U.S. could “induce the others to want peace also.”<sup>(9)</sup> In other words, he believed that all of Washington’s actions, Far Eastern policies in particular, should be designed to generate military, economic, political, and psychological pressure in order to force Peking to end hostility.<sup>(10)</sup>

Eisenhower’s February 2, 1953 “denuclearization” order which stated that “the Seventh Fleet [would] no longer be employed to shield Communist China” was undoubtedly part of this pressure strategy for ending the Korean War promptly.<sup>(11)</sup> Critics readily exclaimed the step as “unleashing” Chiang Kai-

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(8) Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Mandate for Change, 1953-1956* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963), p. 95.

(9) Robert J. Donovan, *Eisenhower: the Inside Story* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), p. 116. Though saying “to induce,” Eisenhower was by no means contemplating concessions, but rather how to apply pressure tactics. The idea of “inducement through pressure” corresponded to the idea of “wedge through pressure” which was identified by John L. Gaddis as the key strategy of the administration in handling the Peking-Moscow alliance. For discussions on Eisenhower’s perception of and ideas about the Korean War prior to his inauguration, see Burton I. Kaufman, *The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis, Credibility, and Command* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), pp. 287-302. For the “wedge through pressure” concept, see Gaddis, “The American ‘wedge’ Strategy, 1949-1955,” in Harry Harding and MingYuan, *Sino-American Relations, 1945-1955: A Joint Reassessment of a Critical Decade* (Wilmington, DL: Scholarly Resources, 1989), chapter 10. An expanded version of Gaddis’ paper was first printed in his *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), chapter 6, under the title “Dividing Adversaries: the United States and International Communism, 1945-1958.” See also discussions in section III of this article.

(10) Eisenhower’s public expression of toughness led to the belief that he was ready to expand the war into China in order to end the conflict in Korea. The Nationalists certainly reached that conclusion. See the editorial of the December 16, 1952 *CDN* which commented on Eisenhower’s statement after he visited Korea. Many scholars also reached the same conclusion. See, for example, Donovan, *Eisenhower*, pp. 115-117; Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 205; Foot, “Nuclear Coercion and the Ending of the Korean Conflict,” *International Security* 13: 3 (Winter 1988/1989): 95-99; and also Foot, *A Substitute for Victory: the Politics of Peacemaking at the Korean Armistice Talks* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 159-161.

(11) Eisenhower announced the decision in his first State of the Union message to Congress on February 2, 1953. The CINCPAC (Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet) was given an order to that effect on the same day. See Extract of Message From the President to the Congress, February 2, 1953, *FR1952-1954*, 14 (1): 140; JCS 930324 to CINCPAC, February 2, 1953, Formosa Book, RG 59, Records of the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, Lot55D388 (hereafter cited as FE Records), box 2 of 8, National Archives (hereafter cited as NA).

shek. The western allies also responded with apprehension, fearing it might trigger a Nationalist attack and drag the West into a general war with China. <sup>(12)</sup> Dulles's widely publicized ideas on nuclear deterrence might have added weight to the new Taiwan policy. <sup>(13)</sup> Within two months of deneutralization, Peking proposed a resumption of the armistice talks. Chinese Premier Chou En-lai even announced over the radio Peking's willingness to make certain concessions on the POW (prisoners of war) issue—an issue that had been the major obstacle for concluding an armistice.

To what extent, though, the announcement contributed to Peking's decision to resume truce talks was unclear. <sup>(14)</sup> Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin died in early March and his successor, Georgi Malenkov, had displayed a willingness to improve relations with the West. Malenkov might have found it not too difficult to persuade war-weary Communist China and North Korea to terminate the prolonged stalemate. <sup>(15)</sup> Even deservingly a successful measure of psychological warfare, the deneutralization policy hardly represented a

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(12) Immediate reactions by most of the foreign officials and press to Eisenhower's decision ranged from moderate opposition to strong apprehension. Only the Philippines, Thailand, Pakistan, Greece, Turkey, Australia, and Latin America expressed moderate enthusiasm over the new Taiwan policy. See Memorandum, Allison to Dulles on Foreign Reactions to Lifting of Curb on Chinese Nationalists, February 11, 1953, 793.00/2-1153, RG 59, NA. Observing reactions closely, the Chinese Embassy reported that even though the general public largely hailed the decision, as were some Republican members of the Congress, there were reservations from some Congressional members and from the press such as the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. See telegrams sending back to Taipei from Ambassador Koo in early February 1953, folder B.13.1g, Koo Papers, box 145, Butler Library, Columbia University (hereafter cited as BL). The Nationalists, though generally applauding the policy, considered it only as part of a tougher U.S. Far Eastern policy and expressed reservations against its implication of their offensive actions against the mainland. See reports related to the policy in *CDN*, February 1 through 4, 1953.

(13) In his memoirs, Eisenhower believed the announcement helped to end the Korean War. See Eisenhower, *White House Years*, p. 123.

(14) The effectiveness of the nuclear menace which Eisenhower and Dulles often named as the main reason why Peking finally agreed to sign an armistice, was not all that clear. For the discussion on the effect of nuclear threats in ending the Korean War, see Edward C. Keefer, "President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the End of the Korean War," in *Diplomatic History* 10 (Summer 1986): 267-289; John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace*, pp. 124-129; and Gordon Hsiao-shu Chang, "Friends and Enemies: the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1968" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1987), p. 116. The dissertation was revised and published as *Friends and Enemies: the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990).

(15) See Kaufman, *The Korean War*, pp. 304-307.

decision to “unleash” Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>(16)</sup> Neither should it be interpreted as a commitment to the Nationalist goal of returning to the mainland. Rather, it symbolized a psychological breakthrough made feasible by the momentum of a new administration and a more imaginative approach than steps adopted by the Truman administration to “leash” Chiang and his followers.<sup>(17)</sup>

Eisenhower and Dulles were no more prepared to face an expanded war than were Truman and his Secretary of State Dean Acheson. But since the latter had assumed that the Nationalists would cross the Strait the minute the ban was lifted, they ruled out a JCS (Joint Chiefs of Staff) proposal to change the neutralization policy in April 1952.<sup>(18)</sup> The new administration, though, believed that Taiwan’s limited capability provided the best constraint. As Chief of Naval Operation Admiral William M. Fechteler stated in a JCS-State meeting: “I think we do have some control over Chiang Kai-shek by reason of the paucity of his capabilities.”<sup>(19)</sup> Assistant Secretary of State for

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(16) Some historians still hold the view that it was an “unleashing” (the term is, of course, quite derogatory) of Chiang. But many have recognized that Eisenhower never intended to “unleash Chiang.” See Nancy B. Tucker, “John Foster Dulles and the Taiwan Roots of the ‘Two Chinas’ Policy,” in Richard H. Immerman, ed., *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 239; Foster Rhea Dulles, *American Policy toward Communist China, 1949-1969* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1972), p. 131; Harry Harding, “The Legacy of the Decade for Later Years: An American Perspective,” in Harding and Yuan, eds., *Sino-American Relations*, p. 321. The unleash/leash arguments are generally given without articulation.

(17) Key advisors to the Eisenhower administration agreed that the deneutralization policy was designed to be part of a larger psychological warfare, and that it was a means to “leash” Chiang. See John Foster Dulles and the Far East: a Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Dulles Oral History Project, July 17, 1964, Dulles Oral History, Seeley Mudd Library, Princeton University (hereafter cited as ML). Dulles himself had proposed, in a private memorandum dated March 31, 1952, to “deneutralize” the Taiwan-Strait to deter Peking from committing more military forces to Korea and Indochina. He stated that “Chiang needs to be restrained, but we have ample means of doing so privately and without public humiliation.” The memorandum can be found in the Formosa 1952 folder, Dulles Papers, box 60, ML. Prior to the announcement, Dulles noted that the “unleashing” of Chiang would be primarily a symbolic action, and considered it good domestic politics. See H.W. Brands, Jr., *Cold Warriors: Eisenhower’s Generation and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 11-12.

(18) For the Truman administration’s discussions of deneutralizing the Taiwan Strait in 1952, see Su-Ya Chang, “Pragmatism and Opportunism: Truman’s Policy toward Taiwan, 1949-1952” (Ph.D. Dissertation, the Pennsylvania State University, 1988), pp. 251-257.

(19) Memorandum of the Substance of Discussion at a State-JCS Meeting at Pentagon, March 27, 1953, *FR1952-1954*, 14(1): 167.

Far Eastern Affairs John M. Allison believed that, with prior consultation, the Nationalist government could be persuaded to restrict voluntarily the activities of its armed forces "in the interests of cooperation with the U.S. and the U.N. when announcing the change of the Fleet mission."<sup>(20)</sup> After being informed of the deneutralization decision, Chiang, though requesting assistance to increase the defense capability of Taiwan, did assure that he would not ask for aid in ground forces. And Nationalist Ambassador Wellington Koo was instructed that, while praising the deneutralization decision, he should advocate neither a return to the mainland nor the opening of a second front of the Korean War.<sup>(21)</sup>

Washington officials felt uneasy to rely merely on the words of the Nationalists, hence other means to "leash" Chiang were conceived. For instance, with scheduled delivery of F-84's and program of F-86's combat jets approaching and the removal of the ban, the JCS suspected that Taipei might undertake some adventures and involve Washington in war with Peking. The new Secretary of State thus ordered obtaining Chiang Kai-shek's pledge of not using the new equipments against the Communists without U.S. consent. Meanwhile, Dulles professed the Defense should suspend any delivery of aircraft capable of attacking the mainland pending Taipei's commitment. When the matter was discussed in a National Security Council (NSC) meeting, Eisenhower was surprised that Chiang had not already committed himself "to play ball with the United States."<sup>(22)</sup>

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(20) Memorandum, Allison to Dulles on Check List of Items Connected with Change in Seventh Fleet Directive, January 26, 1953, Formosa Book, RG 59, FE Records, box 2 of 8, NA.

(21) Tel. 515 and 520, Yeh to Koo, January 31 and February 6, 1953, folder B.13.1g, Koo Papers, box 145, BL; Chiang Kai-shek's response to the deneutralization policy, *CDN*, February 4, 1953. The Nationalists, of course, fully recognized that the new administration had no intention to support its reconquest of the mainland and that the deneutralization order was more a bluffing gesture since the Seventh Fleet had not actually been stationed along the Taiwan Strait. But they valued the salutary effect on the morale of the people on Taiwan as a result of the announcement. See *The Reminiscences of Wellington Koo* (Chinese Oral History, Butler Library, Columbia University, hereafter cited as *Koo Memoirs*), 7: F35, F47-51.

(22) Memorandum, Charles C. Stelle to Matthews on JCS Views on Formosa, March 28, 1953; Memorandum, Matthews to Dulles, March 31, 1953; Memorandum, Dulles to Matthews, April 4, 1953; above three in 611.93/3-2853, RG 59, NA; Memorandum on a State-JCS Meeting, March 27, 1953; Memorandum of Discussion of the 139th NSC Meeting, April 8, 1953; above two in *FR1952-1954*, 14(1): 164-168, 180-182.

Since the Nationalists were unlikely to set up an operational jet squadron in a few months, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet (CINCPAC) Admiral Arthur W. Radford and Air Force Chief of Staff General Hoyt S. Vandenberg urged that, while proceeding to obtain a formal agreement from the Nationalists, the administration should not halt delivery. Eisenhower and Dulles nonetheless insisted on no delivery prior to Chiang's commitment. Taipei eventually sent a formal communication stating that it would not engage in "offensive military operations inimical to best interests of [the] United States of America" and that Washington would be consulted in advance regarding plans for any operations that might "radically alter pattern or tempo of [existing] operations" of its armed forces, including specifically any offensive use of aircraft. The NSC deemed such a commitment acceptable and ruled that shipments of jets be proceeded. Then, under the instruction of CINCPAC, Chief of the Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) General William Chase requested Nationalist Chief of General Staff General Chow Chih-jou to inform him in advance of any plans for offensive operations, including guerrilla raids, involving regular Nationalist forces.<sup>(23)</sup>

Allison then proposed another means to check possible impingements upon U.S. will by Nationalist forces. The Assistant Secretary suggested that joint planning with Taipei, either for the defense of Taiwan or for the possible use of Nationalist troops outside the island, might give the U.S. more knowledge of the latter's plan hence enable it to restrain the latter from precipitating military actions. Similar ideas of operational coordination had been rejected by the Truman administration for fear of disclosing Washington's operational plans or committing the U.S. to Taipei's cause. Truman thus halted the revision of the CINCPAC directive which authorized the latter to

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(23) Prior to the deneutralization, the Nationalists were conducting raids against the mainland with covert assistance from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the acquiescence of other branches of the U.S. government without having to disclose their plans to the MAAG. For discussions on the subject, see Su-Ya Chang, "Pragmatism and Opportunism: Truman's Policy toward Taiwan, 1949-1952" (Ph.D. Dissertation, the Pennsylvania State University, 1988). Regarding discussions on the issue of jet delivery within the NSC, between the JCS and the State Department, and between U.S. representatives in Taipei and the Nationalist government, see documents in *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 184-187, 187n, 190-4, 192n, 193n; also Msg. 062321Z, CINCPAC TO CHMAAG FORMOSA, May 7, 1953, 381 Formosa (11-8-48) sec. 10, Geographic Files (1951-1953), RG 218, JCS Records, box 17, NA.



coordinate plans of using Nationalist forces with Taipei. Policymakers of the Eisenhower administration nevertheless found Allison's reasoning acceptable. The revised CINCPAC directive was accordingly cleared and despatched on April 6, 1953.<sup>(24)</sup> In other words, with a change of perception, a step previously deferred to avoid commitment had become a means to "leash" Taipei's military operations. Forced to relinquish its flexibility of planning and freedom of operation, Taipei hence found itself, instead of being "un-leashed," enjoying even less freedom than prior to deneutralization.

## II

If the deneutralization policy in actuality resulted in less rather than more freedom for Taipei's military actions, how about the anticipation that a Republican administration would be more inclined toward supporting Chiang's cause? While Eisenhower's campaign rhetoric gave rise to such hope, the Nationalists were soon to realize that the new administration was no more ready to make any commitment than was the previous one. Meeting with Nationalist Foreign Minister George Yeh and Ambassador Wellington Koo a few weeks after the election, Dulles stressed the new administration's determination of not appeasing the Chinese Communists. He nevertheless evaded Yeh and Koo's request of a more assertive policy such as derecognizing the Peking regime by the West or unifying the anti-Communist efforts in the Far East. While discussing Eisenhower's deneutralization message with Koo, Assistant Secretary Allison also skillfully avoided any implied commitment.<sup>(25)</sup>

The resistance to make a commitment through military coordination also prevailed. For coordinating defense planning, Chiang had been urging the

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(24) Memorandum of Conversation, McConaughy, Jenkins, Holland, and Pittard, on Proposed JCS Directive to CINCPAC Concerning Formosa, March 31, 1953, 793.00/3-3153, RG 59, NA. The revision of the CINCPAC directive started in October 1952. For discussions on the subject, see Memorandum, G-3 to CS/USA, October 17, 1952, 091 Formosa 1952, RG 319, TS G-3 Records, NA; Memorandum, McConaughy to Allison, March 13, 1953, 611.93/3-1353, RG 59, NA; Memorandum of Conversation: McConaughy, Jenkins, Holland, and Pittard on Proposed JCS Directive to CINCPAC Concerning Formosa, March 31, 1953, 793.00/3-3153, RG 59, NA; Memorandum, Allison to Dulles, March 25, 1953; Memorandum of a JCS-State Meeting, March 27, 1953; JCS 935782 to CINCPAC, April 6, 1953; above three in *FR 1952-1954*, 14(1): 162-163, 164-168, 172-174.

(25) Tel. 405, Yeh to the Premier, November 24, 1952, folder L.11, Koo Papers, box 168, BL; Tel. 163, Koo to Yeh, February 2, 1953, folder B.13.1g, *ibid.*, box 145.

establishment of a Sino-American combined staff board in Taipei ever since the Korean War broke out. Many American military personnel such as CINCPAC Admiral Radford, MAAG Chief General Chase, and to some extent General George C. Marshall, agreed to the desirability of such an establishment. Dulles himself admitted that such coordination was logical. Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson was sympathetic, but Eisenhower remained noncommittal up to the end of March.<sup>(26)</sup>

When the administration finally approved of the coordination of defense planning in April, it specified that the CINCPAC was not to make any commitment of U.S. support not required by U.S. interests or likely to jeopardize other U.S. commitments. He was also instructed to make clear to Taipei that, joint planning notwithstanding, the U.S. was undertaking "no commitment" to counter Communist military actions brought about by Nationalist offensives that had no U.S. concurrence beforehand.<sup>(27)</sup> And a combined staff as proposed by Chiang did not appear through the year, due partly to disagreements between the Nationalists and CINCPAC, and largely to the bureaucratic jealousy between U.S. Army and Navy Departments over the control of such a liaison and the intelligence flow.<sup>(28)</sup>

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(26) *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F267-268, F270, F272-274, F296-297; Memorandum of Conversation between Dulles, Koo, and Allison, March 19, 1953; Memorandum, Allison to Dulles, March 25, 1953; above two in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 157, 162-163; Memorandum of Conversation, Robertson, McConaughy, and Yu Ta-wei, April 8, 1953, Nationalist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA. Washington had resisted the coordination between the Nationalist Ministry of National Defense and the Seventh Fleet for fear of implying any firm commitment up to October 1952 when the Formosa Liaison Center was finally established. For the establishment of the Liaison center, see Tel. 1473 from Taipei, May 23, 1952; Letter, Allison to Foster, July 23, 1952; and summaries of messages between CINCPAC and MAAG Formosa in October, 1952; all in *FR1952-1954*, 14(1): 52, 77, 78n.

(27) Memorandum on a State-JCS Meeting, March 27, 1953; Memorandum of a State-JCS Meeting on April 3, 1953; above two in *FR1952-1954*, 14(1): 164-168, 170-2.

(28) D-657 from Taipei on Admiral Radford's Conversation with President Chiang Kai-shek, June 18, 1953; D-660 from Taipei on Sino-American Military Discussions of Problems Related to the Joint Defense of Formosa, June 19, 1953; above two in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 207-208, 210-212. CINCPAC Radford proposed to establish a liaison team separate from MAAG to coordinate defense planning and command operations when Taiwan came under attack. The plan was eventually abandoned due to disagreements between the Army and the Navy. See Memorandum, MBR to SGS, August 23, 1953; Memoranda, G-3 to CSA (Chief of Staff, Army), both dated September 14, 1953; and Memorandum for the Record by Major Queenin, September 22, 1953; above all in 091 Formosa 1953, sec. I (case 1), RG 319, G-3 Records, box 32, NA.

If the Nationalists were disappointed at the Eisenhower administration's restraints on their offensive actions and its unwillingness to make any specific commitment, they could not have been surprised by its lack of enthusiasm toward their ultimate goal of returning to the mainland. Very few Americans of significance deemed it possible for the Nationalists to reconquer the mainland short of a general war with the defeat of the Communist bloc as a whole.<sup>(29)</sup> But toward the end of the Truman administration, Washington had stopped openly rebuking Taipei's repeated pronouncements in this regard for the dual purpose of exerting pressure upon Peking and sustaining the morale of Taipei. Meanwhile, it also moved to ensure that the Nationalists would not misinterpret U.S. acquiescence of the slogan and its encouragement of extending guerrilla raids as a commitment to underwrite their military reconquest of the mainland.<sup>(30)</sup>

The ambivalence of the U.S. attitude inevitably created difficulties both for programing and coordinating U.S. aid and for Taipei's public stand on

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(29) For the requirements and analyses of the impossibility of a Nationalist reconquest of the mainland, see attachment to D-91 from Taipei on Prerequisites to a Return to the China Mainland, August 20, 1953, China 1952-1953, Country and Area Files, RG 59, Records of the Policy Planning Staff 1947-1953 (hereafter cited as PPS Records), box 14, NA. There were, however, some enthusiastic American promoters of this cause. For example, Colonel J.W. Gleene of the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) told Chiang Ching-kuo in October 1953 that he was contemplating pushing forward the organization of a volunteer corps to help the Nationalists recover the mainland, much like the Flying Tigers organized by Claire Chennault during the war against Japan. See *Koo Memoirs*, 7: G149. Ambassador Karl Rankin was also quite sympathetic to the Nationalists goal of returning to the mainland. While Minister to Taipei under Truman, he had been urging Washington not to reprimand the use of such a slogan to boost the morale of Nationalist armed forces. Recognizing the magnitude of the commitment, Rankin did not advocate underwriting the cause. He merely argued that the U.S. should not exclude such a possibility as it might appear in the future to be in its interests to support the action. Counselor Howard P. Jones agreed with Rankin's views. See D-91 from Taipei as cited above. Some considered limited landing and capture of territories under Communist Chinese control would be useful to exert pressure on the Peking regime. For instance some in the Navy (including JCS Chairman Admiral Radford) and the CIA favored a landing on Hainan. See *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F310-311, F355-356.

(30) U.S. Tactics toward Communist China in the Event of an Armistice, May 29, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, Records of the Office of Chinese Affairs (hereafter cited as CA Records), box 39, NA; Memorandum, McConaughy to Johnson on Changes in Attached Airgram to Taipei, June 26, 1953, Nationalist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA: Tel. 416 from Seoul, Nixon to Dulles, November 12, 1953; Memorandum of Discussion at the 177th NSC Meeting, December 23, 1953; above two in *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 331-332, 345-349.

the issue. The Nationalists, of course, formulated all of their political, economic, and military policies around the goal of returning to the mainland. But since U.S. mission personnel in Taiwan were forbidden even to discuss the question, it was very difficult to integrate Taipei's and Washington's goals and make the best use of U.S. aid. And Chiang Kai-shek, when interviewed in February, acknowledged that Nationalist forces were not yet adequately equipped for a full scale invasion, but stressed that Taipei could not afford to wait until the forces were fully prepared. On the other hand, he had to discourage both Chinese and foreign audiences who expected the Nationalists to launch an attack immediately after Eisenhower's deneutralization order.<sup>(31)</sup>

After the inauguration of the Eisenhower administration, a hopeful Rankin had recommended that Washington make a formal commitment, limited or not, to elevate mutual confidence necessary for full cooperation, to encourage private investments, and to make future planning less academic. His proposals went unheeded. Dulles acknowledged as early as in spring 1952 that "[i]nvasion of the mainland [was then] out of question." And the administration officially decided by the end of 1953 that Washington should avoid any "implication" of U.S. obligation to underwrite the Nationalist government or to guarantee its return to power on the mainland.<sup>(32)</sup>

Some State Department officials therefore criticized that, while recognizing the total impracticality of the Nationalist objective, Washington had failed to make Taipei reconcile to the fact. "What is perhaps more reprehensible than fooling ourselves," professed Far Eastern Regional Planning

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(31) *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F40-41, F58, Appendix I. Taipei's military budget deficit was serious due to its plan for returning to the mainland. State officials urged the administration to make a decision as to whether the U.S. would support such a goal and made it explicit to Taipei, also adjust the U.S. military aid program to the decision lest the imbalance of budget caused instability in Taiwan. See Memorandum, Jenkins to McConaughy on Embassy Taipei's Despatch Concerning the Chinese National Government's Military Budget for 1953, May 14, 1953, 430.2 U.S. Aid to Nationalist China 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 42, NA; Memorandum, McConaughy to Robertson on 1953 Military Budget of the National Government of China, May 22, 1953, Nationalist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA.

(32) See Memorandum on Formosa, March 31, 1952, Formosa 1952, Dulles Papers, box 60, ML; NSC 146/2, United States Objectives and Courses of Action with respect to Formosa and the Chinese National Government, November 6, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 14 (1): 309.

Adviser Charles Ogburn, "is that we are fooling our Chinese friends." He felt that to keep the Nationalists "dangling" was "dishonorable."<sup>(33)</sup> However, the Nationalists, perhaps more than others, did fully comprehend the limit of the new administration's commitment.<sup>(34)</sup>

Since the JCS and State Department Far Eastern specialists of the previous administration had largely remained in their posts, one can expect that at the initial stage the new administration's attitude and policy toward Taiwan represented more a continuity than a sharp break from those of its predecessor. Karl Rankin, who was finally promoted to the rank of Ambassador in April 1953, found that the manner in which the two administrations dealt with the government on Taiwan did not differ much. He had mentioned to Dulles the impropriety of the tone Washington used in dealing with the Nationalists, and was frustrated that the new administration continued to extend to Taipei "small nation treatment," characterized by a patronizing and superior attitude of distaste."<sup>(35)</sup>

The embedded arrogance, together with Washington's less than amicable attitude toward the Nationalists, proved more tenacious than the Ambassador

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(33) D-399 from Taipei on U.S. Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to the Government of the Republic of China on Formosa, February 3, 1953, China 1952-1953, Country and Area Files, RG 59, PPS Records, box 14, NA; Memorandum, Ogburn to Robertson and Johnson on Contradictions in Our Far Eastern Policies, April 17, 1953, 306.1 TS US Policy toward Far East, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; Memorandum, Ogburn to Drumright on Policy on Formosa, November 3, 1953, Nationalist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA. Of course, Ogburn failed to realize that "honor" was the least concern of U.S. policymakers.

(34) The reports on the deneutralization in the *CDN* reflected Taipei's uncertainty about the direct connection between the new policy and its goal of returning to the mainland. The headlines and titles of the reports generally described the new policy as "lifting the restriction on Nationalist forces' counter-offensive operations," while none of the contents suggested that such was indeed the intention of Washington, nor that such operations were imminent or likely to succeed. For instance, the February 3 *CDN* is headlined "Eisenhower announced to Congress yesterday that he would order the Seventh Fleet not to stop our counter-offensive against the mainland. The U.S. had affirmed a new global strategy on anti-communism." One suspects that such deliberate distortion might be designed to boost the morale of the people who generally would not read detailed accounts of the stories, nor would they read between the lines to discern the true intention of the United States. See related reports on February 2 through 4, 1953.

(35) Letter, Rankin to Dulles, April 2, 1953, 611.94a/4-253, RG 59, NA; Letter, Rankin to McConaughy, April 10, 1953, 410 TS Chinese Nationalist Armed Forces 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 35, NA.

had expected. Washington continued to treat Taipei more like a colonial subject than an anti-Communist partner such as Japan, not to mention an ally like the NATO countries. Refraining from overt coercion to remodel Chiang's government into America's image, the planners at times still believed that threats to cut off aid was the most effective means to make the Nationalists behave and that Americanization represent the best prospect for Taiwan.<sup>(36)</sup>

The substance of the Eisenhower administration's "new" Taiwan policy and its attitude, therefore, were not drastically different from those of its predecessor. The deneutralization order aside, the Republican administration conceived new means to "leash" (rather than "unleash") Chiang, remained non-committal to his cause, especially that of returning to the mainland, and maintained a mentality of superiority and an attitude of arrogance. Small wonder the younger Chiang was reluctant to praise the "change" of U.S. policy toward Taipei!

### III

If the Eisenhower administration had no intention either to "unleash" Chiang or to commit itself to Taipei's cause, what was its perception of Taiwan's role in world affairs? What were its ultimate objectives with respect to the island? As the Korean War was drawing to an end, Eisenhower's policy toward Taiwan became less contingent on the development of the conflicts than in the previous two years,<sup>(37)</sup> and more pronounced on U.S. perception of

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(36) The mistrust of the Nationalists as expressed in the repeated demand for a formal commitment by Taipei to restrain its offensive operations disturbed Rankin and CINCPAC Radford. Also, when it seemed that Snygman Rhee would obstruct the conclusion of an armistice in Korea, Dulles threatened to reconsider U.S. Taiwan policy if Chiang supported Rhee's defiance of the U.S. wish. The incident greatly enraged Chiang. See Tel. 1077 to Taipei from Dulles to Rankin, June 24, 1953; Memorandum of Conversation, Rankin, Chiang, and Yeh, July 1, 1953; above two in *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 214; 222; *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F209. The best example of the wish for an Americanization of the Nationalists was the invitation of Chiang Ching-kuo to visit the U.S. between September and October, 1953. Most American officials, including Eisenhower, hoped that the younger Chiang would stay in the U.S. for a few years to learn American way of life and democracy. It was this wish to "baptize" the younger Chiang in American ways that finally overcame opposition against inviting him to the U.S. For details of Chiang Ching-kuo's visit, see *Koo Memoirs*, vol. 7, part G, section 2-a.

(37) See Chang, "Pragmatism and Opportunism," chapter 10.

threats and its objectives in the Far East where the expansion of Communist China was its most acute concern. To understand the administration's perception and designs regarding Taiwan, it is necessary to discuss Eisenhower's policy toward the Far East in general and Communist China in particular.

Prior to Peking's overture for resuming truce talks, State Department and the NSC Planning Board<sup>(38)</sup> had worked out a Far Eastern paper to be considered in the April NSC meetings. The planners perceived the increasing Communist control of Far Eastern resources through a combination of Soviet, Chinese, and other indigenous Communist forces inimical to U.S. economic and security interests in that area. The ultimate goal of the U.S., according to the paper, was to develop self-sustaining, non-Communist, friendly governments in the Far East through self-help and mutual aid. Intermediately, Washington should seek the reduction of Soviet influence in the area primarily through undermining China's stance as an effective instrument of Moscow's policy. The impending goal, of course, was to conclude a truce in Korea on terms acceptable to the United States. To attain these objectives, the Board recommended maintaining the offshore defense positions (including Taiwan), "even at the grave risk of general war," to develop local economy and indigenous forces independent of Moscow's and Peking's control, and to maximize the availability of Far Eastern resources to the U.S. and the free world while denying them to the Communist bloc.<sup>(39)</sup>

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(38) NSC Planning Board was chaired by the special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and its membership was comprised of representatives from the State, Treasury, and Defense Departments, the Office of Defense Mobilization, and the Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Disarmament. The board formulated policy recommendation for the consideration of the NSC; the function of the Operations Coordinating Board was to coordinate the implementation of NSC policy.

(39) United States Objectives, Policies and Courses of Action in Asia, transmitted for NSC discussion on February 10, 1953, February 7, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; NSC 148, United States Policy in the Far East, April 6, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 12: 285-289. Eisenhower himself believed that U.S. strength and security depended on its maintaining access to and control of global markets and resources, particularly in the Third World. Hence, the theme of this paper largely paralleled the President's ideas. For Eisenhower's concept, see his letter to Dulles dated June 20, 1952, in Prior Inauguration folder, Dulles-Herter Series, box 1, Whitman File (hereafter WF), Eisenhower Library (DDEL); and Richard H. Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist: An Agonizing Reappraisal," *Diplomatic History* 14:3 (Summer 1990): 339.

The planners set as the ultimate objective the “reorientation” of the Peking regime by driving a wedge between Peking and Moscow and by developing non-Communist leadership within and outside China. The Truman administration had conceived, but fallen short of active implementation due to the slim prospect, a “wedge strategy” through a combination of enticement and threat to split the two Communist giants.<sup>(40)</sup> The new Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had been a strong advocate of a strategy of “wedge through pressure.”<sup>(41)</sup> He argued that by “keeping [Communist China] under pressures which would, in turn, keep the Communists pressuring for more than Russia would give,”<sup>(42)</sup> the Sino-Soviet bond could be severed. What Dulles meant was to deny recognition and U.N. membership to Communist China to isolate it from the international community and to exert a trade embargo to destruct its economy. For these measures to be effective, Dulles proposed that they be accompanied by implied threats of instantaneous nuclear destruction of China and Russia if the former misbehaved.<sup>(43)</sup>

The planners thus renewed enthusiasm over the wedge strategy minus the “enticement” part. Their logic was to stimulate in the Peking regime a desire for an avenue to escape the Soviet orbit after the excessive demands from the former had strained the relations between the two. They therefore argued that attempts to drive Peking away from Moscow and to develop a non-Communist government hopefully to replace the existing CCP (Chinese Communist Party) regime were not conflicting courses at that time, and that the wedge through pressure strategy should be reviewed only when Peking was ready to look for

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(40) For discussion of the “wedge strategy” under the Truman administration, see David Allan Meyers, *Cracking the Monolith: U.S. Policy Against Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1949-1955* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), chapters 2, 3, and 4, and Gaddis, *Long Peace*, chapter 6.

(41) The term is characterized by historian John Gaddis. For a detailed discussions of the strategy, see, Gaddis, *Long Peace*, chapter 6.

(42) Memorandum of Luncheon Meeting with George Yeh, Chinese Nationalist Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador to Washington, November 19, 1952, PRC 1952, box 58, Dulles Papers, ML. Dulles elaborated on this idea at the Bermuda conference more than a year later. See Memorandum of Eisenhower-Churchill-Bidault Meeting, December 7, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 5: 1808-1818.

(43) See Meyers, *Cracking the Monolith*, pp. 119-121; also Gaddis, *Long Peace*, pp. 174-182.



friends other than Moscow.<sup>(44)</sup>

Moscow's peace offensive after Stalin's death and Peking's offering of concessions in the armistice talks at the end of March caused the NSC to halt considerations of the Far Eastern and other relevant policy papers, pending an appraisal of the new situation. In searching for a new guideline, the administration called upon a high level NSC working committee headed by Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Robert Cutler to reevaluate the basic U.S. national security policy. Among the strategies studied in the "Solarium Project," as the policy review was referred to, Eisenhower approved as basic guideline of the principle of containment with a slight modification in the direction of deterrence. Following the spirit of the review, the administration adopted NSC 162/2 entitled "Basic National Security Policy." The paper embraced the principles of a balanced budget and nuclear deterrence.<sup>(45)</sup>

The planners viewed the peace offensive basically as a change in tactics, not the ultimate goal, of the Communist bloc aiming at buying time for further build-up and for weakening free world unity. Such perception persisted even after the conclusion of the Korean armistice on July 27, 1953. Officials thus unrelentingly argued that the "wedge through pressure" strategy should not be relinquished.<sup>(46)</sup> The National Security Council accordingly

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(44) Criticism of conflicting goals had appeared during the Truman administration. The contradiction remained when Eisenhower took over. However, the NSC Planning Board staffs argued that the dilemma was only potential and neither needed nor could be resolved at the time. See Memorandum, Ogburn to Johnson on NSC Paper on Formosa, March 10, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; and NSC Staff Study on Basic U.S. Objective toward Communist China, annex to NSC 148, April 6, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 175-179.

(45) For discussions of Operation Solarium conducted during the summer of 1953, see Gaddis, *Strategy of Containment*, p. 145; H.W. Brands, "The Age of Vulnerability: Eisenhower and the National Insecurity State," *American Historical Review* 99:4 (October 1989): 966-968; and Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist," pp. 335-340. For the reports of the Solarium Project, see *FR 1952-54*, 2: 399-431. And for the NSC 162 series, see *FR 1952-54*, 2: 491-514, 577-597.

(46) For the planners' perception of the peace offensive, see Memorandum, Anderson to Jenkins, Martin, and McConaughy on Current Chinese Communist Foreign Policy Developments, April 1, 1953, 320.2 Communist Chinese Relations with Others 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 40, NA; Memorandum for NSC meeting, April 8, 1953, Miscellaneous (1), NSC Series, Subject Subseries, box 5, White House, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Records (WHO-NSA), DDEL; Memorandum, Holland to Jenkins, Hope, Martin on Observations on the Communist Peace Offensive and Its Effects upon U.S. Policy, May 11, 1953, 320 International Political Relations (General) 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 40, NA; NSC 154, United States Tactics Immediately Following an Armistice in Korea, June 15, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 15(1): 1170-1176.

adopted an uncompromising guideline regarding Peking toward the end of Eisenhower's first year in office. NSC 166/1, the administration's first official policy statement on Communist China, professed that "[t]he primary problem of U.S. foreign policy in the Far East is to cope with the altered structure of power which arises from the existence of a strong and hostile Communist China, and from the alliance of Communist China with the USSR." The document assumed that even if particular Far Eastern issues were resolved to Peking's satisfaction, the latter would remain hostile to the west in general and the U.S. in particular.<sup>(47)</sup> Upon the insistence of the JCS and the consent of most civilian planners, the NSC adopted as U.S. ultimate goal the replacement of the existing regime by one that would at least not be hostile to Washington "even though specific measures which might be effective to this end [were] not [then] feasible."<sup>(48)</sup>

Aside from the utmost aspiration, as mentioned above the Council ruled out the use of U.S. forces, either unilaterally or in support of Nationalist counter-offensive, to overthrow or replace the CCP regime. But it also objected making concessions to overcome that regime's basic animosity to the West. On the other hand, it asserted that a Sino-Soviet split would stem primarily from the inner workings of the partnership between Peking and Moscow, and only secondly from the nature of external pressures or inducements.<sup>(49)</sup> Such a statement implicitly reflected a lack of confidence in the potential of the "wedge" strategy.

Indeed, the implementation of the wedge through pressure strategy, and a trade embargo in particular, was slackened bit-by-bit even before the adoption of NSC 166/1. One reason was that the allies intent to normalize relations with Peking were reluctant to cooperate with Washington. Also, rhetoric aside, Eisenhower and many like-minded advisers stressed the principle of "net advantage" in dealing with the Communists. In an NSC meeting, the President even went as far as saying that "he would be willing to send jet aircraft to the Chinese Communists if it could be shown to [U.S.] net advan-

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(47) NSC 166/1, U.S. Policy toward Communist China, November 6, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1)2: 278-280.

(48) See Memorandum, Martin to Ogburn on Further Comments on Far Eastern Section of the Solarium Paper, September 21, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; Memorandum, the JCS to the Secretary of Defense, November 3, 1953, *FR1952-56*, 14(1): 260.

(49) NSC 166/1, November 6, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 278-280.

tage.”<sup>(50)</sup> Thus, even the pronounced goal rang like a “roll-back,” what the administration embraced was basically a policy of “containment” through strengthening the defense of the offshore island chain (including Taiwan) and other Asian allies, exerting “political and economic” pressure on Peking “at least until settlements satisfactory to the United States can be achieved” in the Far East, and impairing Sino-Soviet relations through “all feasible means.”<sup>(51)</sup>

Elements of both pragmatism and idealism, therefore, coexisted in the administration’s design toward China. The ensuing policy ambiguity disturbed some planners who had been pushing for a “clear-cut, consistent” China policy since the late 1940s. Many of them never bought into the logic of the “wedge through pressure” design, and upheld the British argument that pressure would only push Peking and Moscow closer together, rather than splitting them up. The administration nonetheless opted for a policy guideline that, as many fully recognized, would not lead to a clear “solution” in the foreseeable future. Following the pattern of their predecessors in the Truman administration, the planners preferred to leave the solution, if there is such a possibility, to continuous policy review in light of “future development.”<sup>(52)</sup>

To many planners, the more active option of “driving a wedge between Peking and Moscow” which many recent historians praise as a farsighted,

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(50) Eisenhower elaborated on his idea of “net advantage” as the criterion in considering trade policy with respect to Communist China in the November 5 NSC meeting. See Memorandum of Discussion at the 169th NSC Meeting, November 5, 1953, *FR 195 2-6 4*, 14(1): 267-269. For the slackening of pressure, especially trade embargo, against Peking, see also Memorandum, Hope to Drumright on Comment on Hinke Letter on U.S. Attitude on Trade Controls, December 1, 1953, Trade with Communist China, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA; Qing Simei, “The Eisenhower Administration and Changes in Western Embargo Policy against China, 1954-1958,” in Warren I. Cohen and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Great Powers in East Asia, 1953-1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

(51) NSC 166/1, November 6, 1953, *FR 195 2-5 4*, 14(1): 281-282. The “means” were not specified by the planners.

(52) Charles Ogburn was the most voracious critic of U.S. China policy. see for example his Memorandum to Robertson on Decision on China, June 6, 1953, Communist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA; Memorandum to Stelle on Draft Paper on U.S. Policy toward Communist China, August 14, 1953, *ibid.* See also Memorandum, Peake to Robertson and Johnson on Considerations Affecting U.S. Policy with respect to the Two Chinas, Nationalist Chinese, *ibid.*; Draft Policy Paper on China by Stelle, September 28, 1953, 306.12 TS U.S. Policy to Communist China 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA. For criticism of using policy review as an escape of decision-making, see Chang, “Pragmatism and Opportunism,” pp. 280-282.

even prophetic, strategy remained the best means to maximize U.S. interests in the Far East. However, most of them also were convinced that actions of the West could not expedite the split between the two Communist giants. Hence, except non-recognition and slackening trade control, they did not recommend specific steps to implement the wedge strategy. Without active pursuit, the strategy represented a “wish” rather than a concrete goal. It is hence quite doubtful how much Eisenhower’s policy toward Peking contributed to its eventual split with Moscow.<sup>(53)</sup>

#### IV

Taiwan Policy was under active review prior to Eisenhower’s inauguration, and the review process was continued in connection with the deneutralization policy. In the process, Karl Rankin, who all along had been urging for a more positive policy toward Taiwan, asked several questions pertinent to the planning of economic and military aid programs that the previous administration had evaded. First of all, he asked whether or not the U.S. intended to employ Nationalist troops other than for the defense of Taiwan and, if yes, when should they be combat ready? Secondly, would Washington assist Taiwan in becoming economically self-supporting, except for military expenditures, within four years? Lastly, did the U.S. wish to make a formal commitment to solve the problem of Taiwan’s legal status or to support the Nationalist objective of returning to the mainland?<sup>(54)</sup>

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(53) For the discussion and general acclaim of the wedge strategy, see Mayers, *Cracking the Monolith*; Mayers, “Eisenhower and Communism: Later Findings,” in Richard A. Melanson and Mayers eds., *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the 1950s* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987), pp. 88-119; and Gaddis, *Long Peace*, chapter 6.

(54) For the review of Taiwan policy, see Statement of U.S. Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to the National Government of China on Formosa, second draft, December 11, 1952, 611.94a/9-252. The first draft of the paper was circulated within the Department since early September. Most planners considered it an excellent paper and Assistant Secretary John Allison suggested it be considered as a formal NSC paper. The second draft was sent to Taipei for informal embassy comment in early January 1953. See Memorandum, Holland to Martin, September 11, 1952; Memorandum, Martin to McConaughy, September 22, 1952; Memorandum, Allison to McConaughy, same date; all in *ibid.*; D-22 to Taipei, January 6, 1953, 793.00/1-653, RG 59, NA. For Rankin’s questions, see D-399 from Taipei on U.S. Objectives and Courses of Action with respect to the Government of the Republic of China on Formosa, February 3, 1953, China 1952-1953, Country and Area Files, RG 59, PPS Records, box 14, NA.

The new administration's answers to the above questions, after almost one year of deliberation, failed to be as clear-cut as desired by Ambassador Rankin and his host government.<sup>(55)</sup> There were elements of certainty, of course. For instance, not even the most enthusiastic advocates of accommodation proposed to hand Taiwan over to Peking in exchange for a settlement in the Far East. And almost all planners deemed it impractical to support Chiang Kai-shek's return to power on the mainland. Economic aid policy also caused little debates. Washington supported in principle Taipei's first 4-year plan aiming at its economic independence, which had been the goal of U.S. assistance. Disagreements existed in the amount of aid required, especially in how to counter the economic impact caused by the delivery of military aid materiel, not in the principle of fostering a self-supporting Taiwan.<sup>(56)</sup> In the political and military arena, however, signs of indecisiveness and uncertainty were quite apparent.

One of the major political problems pertained to the legal status of Taiwan. Concern of the issue mounted as the Korean War was coming to an end. Many considered U.N. trusteeship a preferable means to justify Washington's control of Taiwan after the end of hostilities with Peking. But the option was rarely discussed, nor disagreed upon, either prior to or after the armistice. Policymakers largely consented that without satisfactory settlement of the Far Eastern problems (in both Korea and Indochina), Washington should not consider relinquishing its control over Taiwan—which it feared it might lose once the island's legal status was determined.<sup>(57)</sup>

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(55) The review of Taiwan policy, similar to that of the Far Eastern and China policies, was halted first to await the overall review of national security policy after the death of Stalin (the Solarium Project, as mentioned in the previous section), then due to the preoccupation with the Korean cease-fire which took effect on July 27, 1953. It was resumed in the fall of 1953, along with other projects, and resulted in the approval of NSC 1661/1 on China and NSC 146/2 on Taiwan in early November, 1953.

(56) For details of U.S. aid programs and discussions between U.S. and Nationalist officials, see *Koo Memoirs*, vol. 7, part F, section 3-b; and part G, section 2-b.

(57) A *New York Time* feature about a possible trusteeship for Taiwan on April 9, 1953 originated from an over-stretched interpretation of Dulles's reply to a reporter's question, causing an uproar in Congress and great anxiety in Taiwan. The White House immediately issued a statement denying such a solution for Taiwan to be considered at the time. The Nationalists' insecurity feeling was not eased after the armistice. See *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F114-126, F130-133, F137, F138; Minutes of Telephone Conversation of Dulles, April 9, 1953, (Microfilm, University Publication of America, 1980), Reel 1: 0026-0027; Tel. 1093 from Taipei, April 15, 1953, 794a.022/4-1553, RG 59, NA; Memorandum, FPL to EWM, AJ, WOA, HMH, on Trusteeship for Formosa, April 23, 1953, #2P Formosa, RG 59, CA Records, box 23, NA.

Nor would Washington consider replacing Taipei by Peking in the U.N. and other international bodies. It would not award Peking international acceptance prior to granting its own recognition—though some officials did toy with the possibility of seating both Taipei and Peking in the United Nations.<sup>(58)</sup> In early June, Congress adopted an amendment to the appropriations bill declaring it “the sense of Congress” that Peking be barred from the United Nations.<sup>(59)</sup> However, allied pressure to admitting Peking to the United Nations mounted after the armistice. Again, Washington, proposed to defer consideration of the question for the duration of the session. In responding to Nationalist preference of a vote on the substance of the problem, Dulles said a majority might favor admitting Peking, and all Washington could get from London was a continued moratorium on the issue for a limited time. Tactics aside, by the end of Eisenhower’s first year in office, the U.S. had decided to continue its support of the Nationalist government’s U.N. seat to isolate Peking internationally at least until a satisfactory settlement surfaced in the Far East.<sup>(60)</sup>

Taiwan’s political value, aside from occupying China’s seat in international bodies to isolate Peking, lay mainly in the planners’ conviction that the Nationalist government could serve as a rallying point of non-Communist

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(58) Dean Rusk had advised Dulles as to the possibility of dual representation in the U.N. in a letter of June 16. See the letter as printed in William P. Snyder, “Dean Rusk to John Foster Dulles, May-June 1953: the Office, the First 100 Days, and Red China,” *Diplomatic History* 7:1 (Winter 1986): 79-86. Dulles mentioned it in a press conference on November 9, 1953. The Nationalists were aware of such a contemplation by U.S. planners. See *Koo Memoirs*, 7: G27, G30-31.

(59) The Senate Appropriations Committee’s original amendment required that the UN deny Peking’s membership, or the U.S. would withhold funding for the support of the organization. But Eisenhower persuaded Senate leaders to remove such a requirement in exchange of his promise to seek assurances from the allies that they would not use the Korean truce as an excuse to urge the admission of Peking into the UN. Congress then adopted the amendment to express its “sense” on June 3, 1953. See *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F171-178; Memorandum, Eisenhower to Dulles on meeting with Congressional leaders, June 2, 1953, DDE Dairies Series, box 3, WF, DDEL; Draft Letter, Eisenhower to Nixon, June 2, 1953, International series, box 9, WF, DDEL.

(60) Draft Paper on Chinese Representation for the Bermuda Conference, June 10, 1953, Conference, June 10, 1953, Communist China, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA; Memorandum, Bacon to Johnson and Robertson on Draft Paper on Chinese Representation for the Bermuda Conference, June 12, 1953, *ibid.*; *Koo Memoirs*, 7: G1-16, G31, G36-42; NSC 166/1, November 6, 1953; above two in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 280, 307.

Chinese groups outside China and Taiwan. They were convinced that it would divert the loyalty of the overseas Chinese from the Peking regime. This was particularly important in Southeast Asia where the overseas Chinese population accounted to more than ten million and their allegiance to Peking might result in a Communist control of the area. Therefore, Washington decided to help enhance the international prestige of the Nationalist government and to encourage the allies to follow its Taiwan policy.<sup>(61)</sup> The administration thus approved of the recognition of the Nationalist government as the "Government of China." In answer to Secretary of Defense Wilson's argument that Washington should "get off the hook" of imagining and treating Chiang as the potential ruler of China, Under Secretary of State Smith said that unfortunately, the U.S. was "stuck with it." The President agreed agonizingly by stating that the U.S. could not "afford" to restrict its recognition of Chiang to the mere leadership of Taiwan.<sup>(62)</sup>

The sticky problem of Taiwan's legal status, though, remained unresolved. It was a delicate question that Washington found difficult to answer and chose to overlook whenever possible. The Eisenhower administration gradually stopped planning according to the premise that Taiwan was a part of China and U.S. policy toward Taipei and Peking a zero sum game.<sup>(63)</sup> In other words, they ceased equating Taipei's gain to Peking's loss. Consequently, Taiwan did not have to either be annexed by Communist China or become independent. It could exist in a grey zone without clear legal status as long as it served U.S. interests. And Taiwan's status ceased to be a pressing problem for policy planning, particularly after the cease-fire in Korea. Deputy Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs Edward Martin pointed out that there might be an overemphasis on the importance of Taiwan policy to the solution of the China problem as a whole, and that U.S. policy toward

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(61) NSC 146, March 27, 1953, RG 273, NSC 146 Series, Civil Reference Branch, NA; NSC Staff Study on United States Objectives and Courses of Action with respect to Formosa and the Chinese National Government, Enclosure of NSC 146/2, November 6, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 311-318.

(62) Memorandum of Discussion at the 169th NSC Meeting, November 3, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 274.

(63) Since the spring of 1951, Washington had accepted the idea that in order for Taiwan to be useful either as a threat or an enticement to the Peking regime, the island should not be separated from China. From then on, U.S. China policy was planned on the premise. See Su-Ya Chang, "Pragmatism and Opportunism," chapter 6.

the Far East, rather than its Taiwan policy, might in the long run prove to be more decisive on Peking's attitude or courses of action with respect to the United States.<sup>(64)</sup> Avoiding the extremes of either a pro-Nationalist or a pro-Communist stance, the planners hence treated the island merely as a pawn in the containment game against Communist China. The underlying fear that the U.S. might someday place Taiwan under U.N. trusteeship or reach a settlement with the Chinese Communists and turn Taiwan over to Peking thus remained vivid among the Nationalist officials. As Ambassador Wellington Koo sighed at the end of 1953: "all had to be on the alert all the time."<sup>(65)</sup>

With respect to Taiwan's military value, the National Security Council concluded that Nationalist forces would continue to represent a threat to Communist China and add significantly to the strategic reserve potentially available to the free world in the Far East.<sup>(66)</sup> There was little debate on the idea of making Nationalist forces a strategic reserve to be employed whenever and wherever required by U.S. interests. The planners were not so clear, though, in terms of the desirable size of the forces and the circumstances, or even the feasibility, of their actual employment.<sup>(67)</sup> Ambassador Rankin kept pointing out the inadequacy. He argued that, since the existing scope of planning, training, and equipment of these forces had gone beyond the minimum requirement for purely defensive purposes, the U.S. might as well define clearly the prospect of their utilization.<sup>(68)</sup> Making some efforts to

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(64) Staff Study on Communist China by Martin, April 2, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA.

(65) For discussions on the contemplations of the disposition of Taiwan during the Truman administration, see Su-Ya Chang, "Pragmatism and Opportunism." For the anxiety of the Nationalist officials, see *Koo Memoirs*, 7: F66, F312, G64; Memorandum of Conversation, July 31, 1953, #2P Formosa, RG 59, CA Records, box 23, NA.

(66) See NSC 166/1, in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 300; and NSC 146/2, in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 318.

(67) The need for a formal agreement from Taipei to make its forces available for the defense of the Far East was raised once by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC), but was obviously brushed aside for no such agreement was obtained. Perhaps the planners thought it impossible for Taipei to reject Washington's request for the use of its troops since they were trained and equipped through U.S. military aid programs. See JSC 1966/67, Draft Memorandum, JSSC to the JCS on NSC 146, April 3, 1953, 381 Formosa (11-8-49) sec. 10, Geographic Files, RG 218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (hereafter cited as JCS Records), box 17, NA.

(68) D-513 from Taipei, Rankin to State on Proposed MDAP Equipment Program and Country Statement for Formosa, Fiscal Year 1954, March 23, 1953; Memorandum of Conversation, State and Defense Representatives with Rankin, June 1, 1953; above two in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 161, 199-201; D-91 from Taipei on Prerequisites to a Return to the China Mainland, August 20, 1953, China 1952-1953, Country and Area Files, RG 59, PPS Records, box 14, NA.



clarify the desired size of Nationalist forces, the planners nevertheless persisted through the year that the concept of strategic reserve was sound enough for planning purposes.<sup>(69)</sup>

There were, however, vast disagreements on the degree of "threat" these forces could pose. Deputy Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs Edwin Martin once commented that since the disparity of their respective strength was overwhelming, Peking would not view Taipei as a serious military threat as long as it maintained its hold on the mainland. Eisenhower himself had strong reservations about the effectiveness of such a "threat" as well. When Secretary of Treasury George M. Humphrey asked in an NSC meeting whether Chiang Kai-shek really represented anything more substantial than a "vague threat" to mainland China, the President replied that "in effect that was about it." Dulles, NSC adviser Robert Cutler, and Assistant Secretary of State W. Bedell Smith, on the other hand, believed that the threat posed by these forces would be strong enough to hold down a considerable number of Chinese Communist divisions for aggression elsewhere.<sup>(70)</sup> The latter view eventually prevailed. But according to the assessment made by the State Department in December, none of the three services in Taiwan could withstand an all-out attack from the Communists.<sup>(71)</sup> One can not but feel Washington too wishful in hoping military forces unable to defend Taiwan alone to pose a threat to Communist China.

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(69) Compare NSC 146 and the approved NSC 146/2, the latter was more specific in term of the size of Nationalist Army and the missions of the Navy and Air Force, that should be supported by U.S. military aid. However, it still failed to specify the desired size of Nationalist Navy and Air Force. See NSC 146/2, November 6, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 308. For the persistence on the vague definition of "strategic reserve", see Memorandum, McConaughy to Drumright on An Evaluation of the Military Situation in Formosa, December 8, 1953, 794a.56/12-853, RG 59, NA.

(70) Staff Study on Communist China by Martin, April 2, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; Memorandum of Discussion at the 169th NSC Meeting, November 5, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 275.

(71) See Memorandum, McConaughy to Drumright on An Evaluation of the Military Situation in Formosa, December 8, 1953, 794a.56/12-853, RG 59, NA; and Memorandum, McConaughy to Robertson on the Military Situation in Formosa, December 18, 1953, 794a.5/12-1853, RG 59, NA. Since State had been more skeptical about military aid to Taiwan, its estimate should not be taken on face value. However, it was obvious that Nationalist military strength was far below the level anticipated by the military aid programs. For the strength planning, see Staff Study of NSC 146/2, November 6, 1953, in *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 320.

Without a clear goal for the ultimate use of Nationalist forces, the extent of military aid likewise remained a point of controversy. Defense Secretary Wilson proposed in November to slow down military aid since the money spent might be “money being poured down a rathole.” Eisenhower assented and stressed that military aid program should not be guided by the concept of the Nationalist forces’ being ready for use somewhere at a certain date. In a characteristically evasive terms as to a decision, Eisenhower asked whether it would be better “*to leave the actual figure haze and indefinite* until such time as we can see something concrete in the way of a return for the money we propose to spend [emphases added]?” Decisions on military aid to Taipei was thus postponed, as many times before, pending further investigation by the Defense Department. <sup>(72)</sup>

Washington’s desire to maintain control over Nationalist forces further muddled its policy. Bedell Smith’s view best illustrates the problem. Echoing General Douglas MacArthur’s idea, Smith considered Taiwan as a sort of unsinkable aircraft carrier manned with a strong reserve fighting forces which would add appreciably to U.S.-allied strength in the Far East. But he also believed that Washington should have sufficient control over these forces by making sure Taipei did not have the transport vessels or the air and naval strength to attempt a major adventure on the mainland. <sup>(73)</sup> Many shared Smith’s sentiment. Concern over control hence often took precedence in contemplating and implementing military aid to Taipei and hampered program efficiency.

Caught between the desire to control Taipei’s military operations and to make sense of its military aid program—the withdrawal of which was inconceivable—the Eisenhower administration thus could not but inject some wishful thinking in its military aid policy while avoiding decisions on the critical questions pertaining to its design. It evaded a definition of what exactly “strategic reserve” implied. Questions such as when, where, or under what circumstances the forces should be employed, whether the Nationalists would agree to their deployment and how to get them ready, to what standard they

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(72) Memorandum of Discussion at the 169th NSC Meeting, November 5, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 274-277.

(73) Memorandum, McConaughy to Robertson on Briefing of General Smith on NSC 166 and NSC 146/1, November 4, 1953, *FR1952-54*, 14(1): 264.

should be organized and trained, and how to make military as well as economic aid programing consonant with these specific goals, etc., all remained unanswered. <sup>(74)</sup>

Critics from right and left, even the reassessment of overall U.S. national security policy in the summer and fall, seemed to have little effect on the lines of reasoning regarding Taiwan policy. A special MSA (Mutual Security Administration) evaluation team headed by businessman Harry Bullis visited Taiwan in March 1953. Its report recommended a clarification of U.S. policy to permit the optimum development of Nationalist forces for offensive operations and to increase military aid immediately. They went unheeded. So did Rankin's suggestion that the U.S. help to develop balanced Nationalist forces and select a particular mission for them. Neither did the NSC decision reflect the President's own realistic perception and suspicion of the value of Taipei's forces. <sup>(75)</sup> In other words, U.S. military aid toward Taiwan persisted to be a compromise without a clear objective. Hence, not surprisingly, the accomplishments of the military aid program up to the end of 1953 were quite

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(74) D-399 from Taipei on U.S. Objectives and Courses of Action with respect to the Government of the Republic of China on Formosa, February 3, 1953, China 1952-1953, Country and Area Files, RG 59, PPS Records, box 14, NA.

(75) Memorandum by Hope and Jenkins on Current Problems with respect to China, March 30, 1953, 005 Briefing Papers 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 38, NA; Bullis Mission Report-Special Military Report on Formosa by Major General W. A. Worton, May 22, 1953, 091 Formosa 1953, Sec. I (Case 1-), RG 319, G-3 Records, box 32, NA; Memorandum of Conversation, State and Defense Representatives with Rankin, June 1, 1953; NSC 146/2, November 6, 1953; above two in *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 199-201, 308. The most notable critic of Taiwan policy was State Far Eastern Regional Planning Adviser Charles Ogburn, but his reprimand of the Taiwan as well as China policies seems to have left very little impact on the final decisions of both as indicated in NSC 146/2 and NSC 166/1. See, for example, Memorandum, Ogburn to Johnson on NSC Paper on Formosa, March 10, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; Memorandum, Ogburn to Johnson and McConaughy on NSC 146, April 3, 1953, *ibid.*; Memorandum, Ogburn to Robertson and Johnson on Contradiction in Our Far Eastern Policies, April 17, 1953, 306.1 TS US Policy toward Far East, *ibid.*; Memorandum, Ogburn to Johnson and Robertson on Need for Planning U.S. Strategy on Chinese Representation Question, May 26, 1953, Communist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA; Memorandum, Ogburn to Robertson on Decision on China, June 6, 1953, China, *ibid.*; Memorandum, Ogburn to Stelle on Draft Paper on U.S. Policy toward Communist China, August 14, 1953, Communist Chinese, *ibid.*; Memorandum, Ogburn to McConaughy on NSC 146/1, October 30, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 257-259; Memorandum, Ogburn to Drumright on Policy on Formosa, November 3, 1953, Nationalist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA.

disappointing.<sup>(76)</sup>

Therefore, what the Eisenhower administration did with regard to Taiwan during the first year of its tenure was ruling out a few policy options while leaving the most difficult questions unanswered. Politically, it decided not to turn the island into a U.S. trusteeship, continued to recognize the Nationalist government as the government of China, and was against seating Peking in the international bodies. It chose to ignore the question of Taiwan's legal status and both Chinese governments' claims that Taiwan belonged to China, while embracing an ambiguous stance that left the island neither Chinese nor non-Chinese. It was a *de facto* two-China policy, but not to be spelled out explicitly lest the resistance from both sides of the Taiwan Strait unsettle the status quo. Such an attitude inevitably nourished the myth of a possible "return to the mainland."<sup>(77)</sup>

Militarily, the administration would not increase aid to Taiwan to a level that might enable the latter to attack the mainland; nor would it employ its armed forces, either covertly or overtly, to overthrow the Chinese Communist regime despite its hope of the latter's ultimate replacement. It also exerted additional restrictions on Taipei's offensive operations to ensure that Nationalist forces would act only for the advancement of U.S. interests. Washington officials thus basically perceived Nationalist forces more or less as mercenaries (strategic reserve, as they termed it) paid by U.S. aid. But instead of making important decisions to make such a "reserve" effective, they debated over how to restrict the offensive potential of Nationalist forces while maintaining their defensive capability. They failed to realize the difficulty to distinguish between offensive and defensive capabilities since combat capacity could be employed either ways, and that restraints on the "offensive" capability of any forces might cost their combat capacity altogether. And, according to a Mutual Security Program estimate, as of the end of the year Nationalist forces had zero effectiveness for offensive operations, could last five days for

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(76) See the assessment of Nationalist capabilities in The Mutual Security Program, Status of December 31, 1953, Status of National Security Programs, Key Data Book (1), NSC Series, Status of Projects Subseries, box 10, WHO-NSA, DDEL.

(77) See Norman A. Graebner, "Eisenhower and Communism: the Public Record of the 1950s," in Melanson and Mayers, eds., *Reevaluating Eisenhower*, pp. 70.

sustained defense.<sup>(78)</sup> Such an outcome, many critics would lament, hardly justified the amount of U.S. aid and surely was not the designed or desired result of the administration's policy.

## V

Historians began to have direct access to official files of the Eisenhower administration in the 1970s. Since then, the so-called "Eisenhower revisionism" had come under a full glow.<sup>(79)</sup> Beside a changed perception on Eisenhower's leadership style, many have noted the gap between the administration's "cold war rhetoric" and its cautious actions as illustrated by its policies toward Moscow, Peking, and the use of nuclear weapons.<sup>(80)</sup> The "cold warriors" of the Eisenhower administration are thus redefined as not merely a bunch of anti-Communist fanatics who were ready to "nuke" the "Commies" off the face of the earth, but as politicians who were able to blend their strong distaste for Communism with pragmatic calculation over U.S. interests and capabilities.<sup>(81)</sup>

But revisionism might go too far as "to make Eisenhower into something that he was not."<sup>(82)</sup> Admirable though the President was, some "traditional" criticism still stands in the light of discussions in the previous sections. The ad-

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(78) The Mutual Security Program, Status of December 31, 1953, Status of National Security Programs, Key Data Book (1), NSC Series, Status of Projects Subseries, box 10, WHO-NSA, DDEL. For earlier and slightly different estimates of Nationalist capabilities, see Memorandum, Holland to McConaughy on Military Situation in Formosa, October 29, 1953, 410 Chinese Nationalist Armed Forces, RG 59, CA Records, box 40, NA; Memorandum, McConaughy to Drumright on An Evaluation of the Military Situation in Formosa, December 8, 1953, 794a.56/12-853, RG 59, NA; Memorandum, McConaughy to Robertson on the Military Situation in Formosa, December 18, 1953, 794a.5/12-1853, RG 59, NA.

(79) For a bibliographic list of this "revisionism," see footnote 1 of Richard H. Immerman's article "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist," p. 319.

(80) For discussions of such a "gap," see for example, H. W. Brands, Jr., "Testing Massive Retaliation: Credibility and Crisis Management in the Taiwan Strait," *International Security* 12:4 (Spring 1988): 124-151; Brands, *Cold Warriors*; Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies*, chapter 3; Keefer, "President Dwight D. Eisenhower and the End of the Korean War," pp. 288-289; John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 1982), chapter 5; Gaddis, *The Long Peace*, chapters 5 and 6; David Allan Meyers, *Cracking the Monolith*, chapters 4 and 5; Jisi Wang, "An Appraisal of U.S. Policy toward China, 1945-1955, and Its Aftermath," in Harding and Yuan, eds., *Sino-American Relations 1945-1955*, p. 302.

(81) Brands, *Cold Warriors*, Conclusion.

(82) Richard A. Melanson, "The Foundations of Eisenhower's Foreign Policy: Continuity, Community, and Consensus," in Melanson and Meyers, eds. *Reevaluating Eisenhower*, p. 56.

ministration's Taiwan policy indeed reflects a concoction of anti-Communist ideology and practical concern of national interests. However, it also indicates the timidity, inaction, and policy drift Walt W. Rostow criticized at the end of Eisenhower's tenure.<sup>(83)</sup> Resolving not to decide whether to apply nuclear weapons upon the Korean situation,<sup>(84)</sup> the administration displayed similar reluctance to make difficult decisions in the shaping of its Taiwan policy. It deferred to make a choice regarding the ultimate status of Taiwan. It similarly evaded to deal with the paradox implied in its proclamation that the National government on Taiwan represent all of the Chinese people. What kind of logic is it that a government should represent China in the UN but not be "allowed," or "deemed unable," to regain control of the Chinese territory? Such was the logic of Eisenhower's Taiwan policy.<sup>(85)</sup> And what use is a goal which is unattainable in the first place? Yet, such was precisely the implication of the administration's China policy as prescribed in NSC 166/1. Perhaps the rationale was, as one historian contends, that the perennial recognition of the Nationalist regime demanded nothing beyond limited military and economic aid, while non-recognition of the Peking regime enabled the administration to "avoid the hard necessity of formulating a policy for China."<sup>(86)</sup>

One specialist on U.S.-Chinese relations describes U.S. policy toward Taiwan regarding the island's status, the Taiwan Strait crises, arms sales to Taipei, and the future of the island as "calculated ambiguity." He explains that since the decisionmakers were convinced that whichever alternatives they chose in these cases, they were bound to hurt U.S. interests in some respect,

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(83) Rostow, *The United States in the World Arena: An Essay in Recent History* (New York: Harper & Brother, 1960), p. 395.

(84) Gaidds, *Long Peace*, pp. 124-129.

(85) Charles Ogburn thought that to think the Nationalists ever able to reconquer the mainland was mainly "fooling ourselves." Arthur Dean, the chief negotiator of the Korean armistice, also commented that such a notion was only "kidding ourselves." See Memorandum, Ogburn to Drumright on Policy on Formosa, November 3, 1953, Nationalist Chinese, RG 59, FE Records, box 4 of 8, NA; *Koo Memoirs*, vol. 7, part G, section 1, appendix II, "The Text of the Article in 'the Providence Sunday Journal' of January 3, 1954 on Mr. Arthur Dean's Advocacy of a New Look at China Policy" by Frederick W. Collins.

(86) Graebner, "Eisenhower and Communism," p. 70.

they opted for ambiguity.<sup>(87)</sup> The term "ambiguity" indeed characterizes U.S. Taiwan policy. This researcher nevertheless has some reservations about the word "calculated." Some planners did acknowledge there existed an element of "ambiguity" in their designs and justified it in the intent of retaining flexibility.<sup>(88)</sup> But most of them neither recognized nor admitted that their policy recommendations contained such a factor. Searching for a clear-cut policy was more in the nature of planners who supposedly were both logical and rational by training. Hence in reading the policy papers, one can spot frequent utterances of dissatisfaction over the lack of a clear China policy.<sup>(89)</sup> The ambiguity, one thus suspects, was more a result of inhibitions in making decisions, and to a small extent the product of bureaucratic compromises, rather than of scrupulous "calculation." For example, while agreeing with "the desirability of firmness and strength" toward Peking, Under Secretary of State W. Bedell Smith evaded an answer on what to do in the eventuality by saying that "we need not cross the bridge until we come to it."<sup>(90)</sup>

It may not be fair to expect that political or diplomatic decisions are as logical, consistent, and clear-cut as are theoretical analyses by academics.<sup>(91)</sup> Traits of indecisiveness, uncertainty, wishfulness, unwillingness to take risks, etc., appear to be common in any decision-making process. However, one inevitably would anticipate the leaders of a government to possess higher ability to make judgments and decisions. If all Eisenhower and his advisers did was picking up easy choices while leaving the difficult ones to be taken care of by changing circumstances, they were at least guilty of being irresponsible or weak-kneed. And if the "ideal objectives" they

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(87) See Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, "U.S.-Republic of China Relations: An Explanation of Ambiguity in U.S. Foreign Policy and a Retrospective Evaluation of Decision-making Models" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1988), chapter 7, Conclusion.

(88) See, for example, Memorandum on a State-JCS Meeting, April 9, 1952, in *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 34-39.

(89) See footnote 49 and 71 above.

(90) Smith's comment was made to Han Li-wu, see *Koo Memoirs*, 7: G33.

(91) Richard H. Immerman, a historian specialized in the Eisenhower administration's foreign policy, pointed out the need to reconsider the level of foreign relations analysis. He argues that historians should not portray the choices as invariably the product of rational cost-benefit analysis, and that beliefs, emotions, attributes, biases, and similar considerations influenced policymakers' diagnoses and prescriptions. See Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist," p. 324.

conceived of were not implemented because “nothing the West do would accelerate the splitting of Peking and Moscow,” the planners were also reprehensible of planning on wishful thinking.<sup>(92)</sup>

Historians often snap at Chiang and his followers' ethnocentric view which situated China at the center of the world and its problems, and ridicule them for being blinded by their overbearing ambition to reconquer the mainland. But it is evident that Eisenhower and many of his advisers, as indifferent as they appeared to Nationalist arguments, held similar ideas. Both Chiang and the American planners considered the “liberation” of China the ultimate solution to the Far Eastern, if not world-wide, problems.<sup>(93)</sup> Both in fact realized the impossibility of a Nationalist “counterattack” but would keep the “fantasy” alive. If the Nationalists were culpable for dreaming an impossible dream, so was Washington for its misleading hints of its support for such a dream, not to mention the fact that it actually shared the same “dream,” though in a different version.<sup>(94)</sup> To keep Taipei dangling, or in a dishonorable

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(92) Charles Ogburn criticized that U.S. China policy was founded on wishful thinking. See Memorandum, Ogburn to Johnson on NSC Paper on Formosa, March 10, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA.

(93) For examples of scholars' comments on Chiang's “impossible dream,” see Gordon H. Chang, “Friends and Enemies,” pp. 106-107; Keiji Nakatsuji, “The Straits in Crisis: America and the Long-term Disposition of Taiwan, 1950-1958” (Ph.D. Dissertation, the University of Chicago, 1985), p. 58. For Chiang's China-centered world view, see, for examples, tel. 1226 from Taipei, May 27, 1953; Memorandum of Conversation, Rankin, Chiang, and Yeh, July 1, 1953; D-320 from Taipei on Views of President Chiang Kai-shek as Expressed to Official American Visitors in October-November 1953, November 30, 1953; above three in *FR 1952-54*, 14(1): 197, 222, 355-356; D-657 from Taipei on Admiral Radford's Conversation with President Chiang Kai-shek, June 18, 1953, China 1952-1953, Country and Area Files, RG 59, PPS Records, box 14, NA. For U.S. planners' perception of the China-centered Far Eastern problems, see United States Objectives, Policies and Courses of Action in Asia, February 7, 1953, 306.13 TS NSC Reports and Correspondences, 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA; NSC 148, April 6, 1953, *FR 1952-54*, 12: 285; NSC 166/1, November 6, 1953, *ibid.*, 14(1): 278.

(94) Deputy Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs Edward Martin once said that “meanwhile the U.S. shares with the Nationalists a common purpose of altering the status quo on the mainland through the exertion of pressure.” See Staff Study on Communist China, April 2, 1953, 306.13 TS U.S. Policy toward Communist China 1953, RG 59, CA Records, box 39, NA. Reading carefully the *Central Daily News* comments on U.S. Far Eastern and Taiwan policies, one may discern the high expectation Taipei bestowed on the Eisenhower administration to support the realization of its “dream.” The reports often highlighted the hint of support from Washington for the counter-offensive. For example, the August 23, 1953 headline reads: “We do not need to consult the U.S. if decided on counter-offensive—the Seventh Fleet Commander Clark stated in Hong Kong that he was ordered not to prevent attacks against China coast.” And another article on September 8 stressed that U.S. House Speaker Martin urged assistance of Nationalist reconquest of the mainland.



way failing to clarify U.S. intentions, <sup>(95)</sup> therefore, did not primarily concern the policymakers; the freedom to act as they saw fit and the pursuit of maximum U.S. interests did. But while American historians gradually recognize and praise the flexibility and pragmatism implied in such a policy, they generally overlook that fact, and castigate Chiang's ideas while accusing him of non-cooperation in advancing "U.S. national interests."<sup>(96)</sup>

Despite its (desired or undesired) reputation as the friend of "Free China," the Eisenhower administration was in fact less than certain about supporting the cause of Chiang and his followers. Nor was its attitude toward the latter as amiable as it was presumed to be. Appearances notwithstanding, the Eisenhower administration had chosen a cautious middle road respecting Taipei and Peking during the first year of its tenure. It is nonetheless difficult to attribute the ensuing development, desirable or not to Washington, solely to the success or failure of Washington's policy since elements of uncertainty, ambiguity, and wishfulness were strikingly conspicuous in the policy. But one can discern in the Eisenhower administration's Taiwan policy a utilitarian trait similar to that of its predecessor, and conclude that the attitude of "waiting for the dust to settle" indecisiveness was certainly not the patent of Dean Acheson.

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(95) Such was the criticism made by Charles Ogburn on not making U.S. intentions perfectly clear to the Nationalists. See footnote 49 and 71.

(96) A recent example of such an attitude can be discerned from Nancy Tucker's article "John Foster Dulles and the Taiwan Roots of the 'Two Chinas' Policy," in Immerman, ed., *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, chapter 9. It seems that historians share the sentiment of the policymakers that the Nationalist regime was a loser living on the favor of the U.S. and should therefore have followed the will of Washington.