



Military Aspects of a Study of the Implications of a Communist Chinese Nuclear Capability

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MEMORANDUM
RM-3418-PR
MARCH 1963

Classified under the
President John F. Kennedy
Executive Order 11652
Atomic Energy Act
Section 1.4(c)

MILITARY ASPECTS OF
A STUDY OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF
A COMMUNIST CHINESE NUCLEAR
CAPABILITY (U)
B. F. Jaeger and M. Weiner

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This research is sponsored by the United States Air Force under Project RAND—contract No. AF 49(628)-700 monitored by the Directorate of Development Planning, Deputy Chief of Staff, Research and Development, Hq USAF. Views or conclusions contained in this Memorandum should not be interpreted as representing the official opinion or policy of the United States Air Force.

Classification changed to: Confidential UNCLAS per
Authority: DDI/ISA/157, 1107 87
By: AKC Date: 6/2/20
Operating Entry: The Rand Corporation

Revised for declassification on: 5-2-1983

1—DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS; NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED
DDO DSR 1206.10

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Recommended Citation

"Military Aspects of a Study of the Implications of a Communist Chinese Nuclear Capability", August 28, 2013, <https://nautilus.org/foia-document/military-aspects-of-a-study-of-the-implications-of-a-communist-chinese-nuclear-capability-2/>

The advent of China's nuclear weapons program in 1964 has played an important role in the military-security landscape of Asia. Prior to its first nuclear test in October 1964, the impetus for the pursuit of nuclear weapons was spurred by China's belief that possession of nuclear weapons would enhance both its military and diplomatic stature vis-à-vis the U.S., especially after the latter's commitment to the defense of Taiwan during the 1955 Taiwan Strait Crisis. Following China's first

nuclear test, Taiwan began its own nuclear weapons program in 1967, raising the specter of a regional arms race. Despite China's long established nuclear weapons program, recent tensions in the region over North Korea's own weapons program, and the current impasse in multilateral talks regarding it give cause for further study on the possible implications of further nuclear proliferation in the region, especially amidst the U.S. strategic "pivot" towards Asia in the face of a rising China.

B.F. Jaeger and M. Weiner's 1963 study analyzes the future implications and probability of a nuclear-armed China by assessing hypothetical scenarios of armed confrontation with the U.S. involving nuclear weapons, the military consequences of a Chinese nuclear capability, and the political-military implications China's acquisition will have on U.S. interests in the region and its allies.

Jaeger & Weiner write:

"The possession of a nuclear capability by the Communist Chinese could create political pressures on the United States to limit its response and might necessitate operational and logistic readjustments. The use of nuclear weapons by the Communist Chinese in such campaigns would provide the United States with a variety of options for military response including nuclear attacks on Communist China." [page 64]

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