

1969 CINCPAC China Assessment

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China conducted two nuclear test explosions in 1969, including the first underground test. Other developments were modest and the number of SA-2 surface-to-air missiles only increased slightly from 37 to 39 sites.

Chinese passiveness was also evident on the northern border with the Soviet Union. Although the Soviet Union had doubled its conventional forces in the Sino-Soviet border region over the previous three years -- possibly as a precaution against Chinese adventurism or as part of a contingency preparation for a preemptive strike on China's nuclear capability and missile production capability -- no parallel Chinese build up had taken place.

The inclusion of an in-depth assessment of the North Korean threat was continued from the previous year in response to the North Korean shooting down a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft over the Sea of Japan (coordinates for the incident are deleted). In response to the incident, four retaliatory plans were drawn up, including one for B-52 strikes from Guam against the Sondok and Wonsan airfields.

As for the possibility of a Korean war in general, CINCPAC assessment was that North Korea "was not likely" to receive the Soviet and Chinese aid and concurrence necessary for successful sustained aggression against South Korea.

These plans and operations are described in more detail in the selected pages from the 1969 CINCPAC history provided below:

Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, "CINCPAC Command History 1969," n.d. [1970], Volume 1. Only selected pages. Partially declassified and released under FOIA. (0.30 MB)

Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, "CINCPAC Command History 1969," n.d. [1970], Volume 4 (North Korean threat assessment part 1). Only selected pages. Partially declassified and released under FOIA. (1.25 MB)

Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, "CINCPAC Command History 1969," n.d. [1970], Volume 4 (North Korean threat assessment part 2). Only selected pages. Partially declassified and released under FOIA. (1.29 MB)

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