

1992 CINCPAC China Assessment

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Following the demise of the Soviet Union, the United States was struggling with analyzing its new security situation and foreign challenges. James Woolsey, the head of the Central Intelligence Agency, said that, "We have slain a large dragon. But now we live in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes."

In listing the main dangers in the Pacific area, CINCPAC made numerous references to China:

- The racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Kashmir, Papua New Guinea, Punjab, Timor, and the border of China;
- The economic strife in the Spratly Islands, the South China Sea, parts of Southeast Asia, and Southern China;
- Further advancements in the development of sophisticated weapons, especially by China and North Korea.

Despite the strained relations with China, CINCPAC continued to list China on its list over countries it provided with security assistance, and a specially designated unit at the Embassy in Beijing remained in operation.

China conducted two underground nuclear explosions in 1992, the first of which had a yield of approximately 660 Kiloton. The second was a less powerful warhead producing a yield of 1-20 Kiloton.

The nuclear situation on the Korean peninsula continued to evolve. All U.S. nuclear weapons had been removed from South Korea in late 1991, but North Korean efforts to also go nuclear continued. The U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency estimated that North Korea would be able to produce its first nuclear weapons by late 1992 or early 1993 if it managed to start production of its first reprocessing facility.

All tables relating to the details of Chinese nuclear force developments were withheld in error by the CINCPAC FOIA office. A new request for those pages is currently under review and will be made

available when released. Selected pages of the remaining China-related sections from the 1992 CINCPAC history are provided below:

Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, "CINCPAC Command History 1992," October 29, 1993, Volume 1. Only selected pages. Partially declassified and released under FOIA. (0.30 MB)

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