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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

CHINESE COMMUNIST
INTERVENTION IN KOREA



Declassified by *OSX 375*
date *2 AUG 1977*

NIE-2/1

Published 24 November 1950

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force participated in the preparation of this estimate and concur in it. This paper is based on information available on 21 November 1950.

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CHINESE COMMUNIST INTERVENTION IN KOREA

THE PROBLEM

1. To re-estimate the scale and purpose of Chinese Communist intervention in North Korea.

CONCLUSIONS

2. The Chinese Communists will simultaneously:

- a. Maintain Chinese-North Korean holding operations in North Korea.
- b. Maintain or increase their military strength in Manchuria.
- c. Seek to obtain UN withdrawal from Korea by intimidation and diplomatic means.

3. In case of failure to obtain UN withdrawal by these means, there will be increasing Chinese intervention in Korea. At a minimum, the Chinese will conduct, on an increasing scale, unacknowledged operations designed to immobilize UN forces in Korea, to subject them to prolonged attrition, and to maintain the semblance of a North Korean state in being. Available evidence is not conclusive as to whether or not the Chinese Communists are as yet committed to a full-scale offensive effort. Eventually they may undertake oper-

ations designed to bring about the withdrawal of UN forces from Korea. It is estimated that they do not have the military capability of driving the UN forces from the peninsula, but that they do have the capability of forcing them to withdraw to defensive positions for prolonged and inconclusive operations, which, the Communists might calculate, would lead to eventual UN withdrawal from Korea.

4. So long as Chinese intervention continues, the USSR will continue and possibly increase its support to the Chinese by furnishing equipment, planes, technical advisers, and conceivably, "volunteers" as necessary to man the more intricate equipment.

5. The risk that a general war will develop already exists. The Soviet rulers may underestimate this possibility but they appear to have allowed for it and to feel prepared to cope with it.

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DISCUSSION

6. The immediate situation with regard to Chinese intervention in Korea is as follows:
- The military activity of Chinese troops in Korea so far is not in itself sufficient to demonstrate the existence of a plan for major offensive operations.
 - Military preparations being carried out in Manchuria and elsewhere in China are on a scale sufficient to support major operations of prolonged duration, either offensively in Korea or defensively in Manchuria.
 - Prevailing opinion in China, including opinion in circles close to Party leadership, appears to reflect expectations of hostilities, including expectations of extensive air attacks on Chinese, particularly Manchurian cities.
 - Neither the Chinese Government nor Chinese propaganda has thus far committed the Chinese Government to a specific line of action in Korea. Discussion of preparation for support of Korea has been only in terms of "volunteer" action.
 - Chinese propagandists for the past three weeks have been carrying on an intensive campaign centering on the charge that US military action in Korea is an attack aimed at China and have called for all-out sacrifices to meet and defeat this threat through "support of the Korean people." A sub-theme of the campaign has been American impotence in a war with China.
 - There has been no suggestion in Chinese propaganda or official statements that the Chinese support of North Korea has a limited objective such as protecting power plants, establishing a buffer zone on the border, or forcing the UN forces back to the 38th Parallel. In fact, none of these objectives has been mentioned by the Chinese. All Chinese formulations have been in terms of the necessity of bringing about a withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea.
 - The Chinese decision to send a delegation to the UN has been announced in such a manner as to give no conclusive indication of Chinese intentions with regard to Korea. The delegation has been reported to be willing to reach a diplomatic settlement on Korea so long as it is arranged outside the Security Council. No terms have been suggested, and there are as yet no indications that the Chinese would accept less than the withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea.
 - The Soviet press has reported with approval, Chinese support of North Korea. Soviet official statements and Soviet propaganda have identified the struggle of the North Koreans with the Communist cause generally. However, neither source indicated that the USSR is in any way committed to any specific line of action beyond moral support of North Korea and of China.
7. While there is no reliable intelligence regarding the role that the Soviet Union has played in decisions reached by Chinese leaders in regard to Korea, Chinese intervention in Korea furthers Soviet objectives. Although the USSR has made no open commitment to support the Chinese, planes drawn from the Soviet air force have been observed in increasing numbers in Manchuria and over Korea. Soviet propaganda has recently called attention to Soviet obligations under the Sino-Soviet treaty to support China in case of aggression by Japan or by any power directly or indirectly associated with Japan. Soviet officials and propaganda have recently stressed alleged US use of Japanese troops in Korea and US preparations to use Japan as a base for aggression.