

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

**TAIWAN AND THE OFF-SHORE ISLANDS
IN TAIWAN-U.S. RELATIONS,
1953-55**

BY

YUFENG ZHANG

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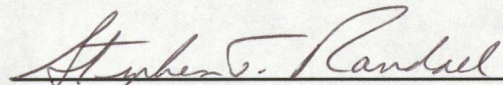
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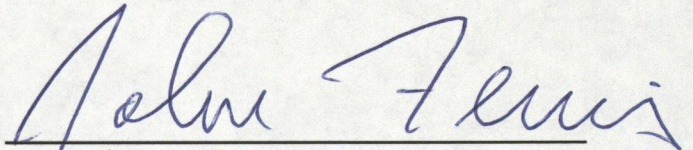
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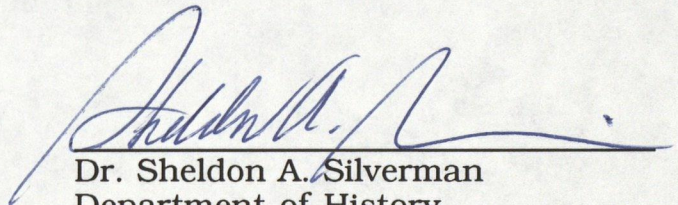
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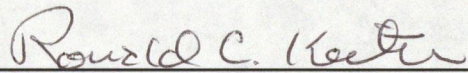
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Abstract

Since the declassification of the documents of the Eisenhower administration, there has been considerable scholarly interest in the Eisenhower administration's foreign policy toward the Taiwan government. Historians have focused their analysis on American policy toward the Taiwan government during the two Taiwan Strait crises in the 1950s. However, limited attention has been paid to the Chinese Nationalist foreign policy toward the United States.

This thesis concentrates its analysis on the diplomatic controversy between the American and Chinese Nationalist governments in the first term of the Eisenhower administration. It pays special attention to the Taiwan government's foreign policy toward the United States in an effort to make up for the existing inadequacy in the current study of the U.S.-Taiwan relations of the 1950s. Based primarily on archival sources and government publications, this thesis reconstructs and examines the complete process of the negotiation of the U.S.-Taiwan mutual Defense Treaty. It also analyzes the "off-shore islands" crisis from 1954-1955. The defense of the off-shore islands together with the Chinese Nationalist military action against mainland China are the main issues examined. These issues were the major sources of diplomatic controversy between Taipei and Washington in the 1950s.

The formation of U.S.-Taiwan alliance in the early 1950s was a consequence of their shared confrontation with the People's Republic of China. However, pursuing conflicting national interests in the Far East aroused many bitter disputes between the two governments. As a superpower, the United States had expected the Chinese Nationalist government to comply with the American proposals for courses of action. On the other hand, Jiang Jieshi, the leader of a small power in Taiwan, utilized his political and diplomatic skills in an effort to achieve as much American

assistance as possible. The U.S.-Taiwan conflicts resulted mainly from their diverging national interests, but cultural misunderstanding was also a contributing factor.

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I dedicate this thesis to my parents and Uncle Tim. Uncle Tim has assisted me to come to Canada and constantly assisted my traveling around the world which has enabled me to collect valuable Chinese material from various world-famous universities.

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Introduction

There is a significant literature on U.S.-Taiwan relations, which focus their analysis on the two Taiwan Strait crises of 1954 and 1958. Historians have interpreted American relations with Taiwan in this period either as the product of American bureaucratic politics, of domestic politics and public opinion, of the personality of the decision-makers, or of application of containment policy.¹ These authors share one common feature: however while claiming to study American-Taiwan relations in the 1950s, they have actually largely overlooked the policy of Jiang Jieshi toward the United States. In fact, Jiang had exerted his utmost effort in bargaining with Washington so as to obtain a U.S. commitment to the defense of both Taiwan and the off-shore islands, which he believed would help him return to power on the mainland.

This thesis reconstructs and analyzes the signing of the U.S.-Taiwan Mutual Defense Treaty and the first Taiwan Strait crisis of 1954-1955. Through detailed narrative and analytical study, this paper concentrates on the diplomatic conflict between Jiang and the Eisenhower administration. Particular care has been given to Jiang's and the Nationalists' policy toward the United States in order to make up for the existing deficiency in the present study of Taiwan-U.S. foreign relations. In this research, considerable use has been made of available Chinese sources, as well as American government documents. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute to a more balanced study of the nature of U.S.-Taiwan relations in the 1950s.

After World War Two, the world was divided into two camps: the Western world and the Communist world, dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union, respectively. In order to take a predominant position in dealing with their enemies, the two antagonistic camps sought to form supportive alliances. According to Robert Osgood, alliances "are one of the primary means by which states seek the

co-operation of other states in order to enhance their power to protect and advance their interest."² An alliance can take the form of either multilateral or bilateral agreement. The United States formed an alliance with Western European countries through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, while the Soviet Union established the Warsaw Treaty Organization in Eastern Europe.

Before the eruption of the Korean War, the Cold War was mainly limited to Europe. With its intervention in Korea, the United States applied a containment policy against the Chinese Communists through alliances with many Far Eastern countries. Different from its multilateral pact system in Europe, the United States signed bilateral security treaties with the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, South Korea, and finally Taiwan (the Republic of China). The Americans believed that this global strategic arrangement would protect their national interests.

Common confrontation with the People's Republic of China served as a base for the Chinese Nationalists and the Americans to stand together. However, Taiwan and the United States were in many ways pursuing diverging interests in the Far East, and thus experienced various bitter diplomatic conflicts. The Chinese Nationalists' objective was to survive in Taiwan and "invade the mainland", which required U.S. military assistance. Jiang's foreign policy toward the United States was guided by this objective. On the other hand, during the Cold War, the American policy makers perceived two primary threats to their national interests: the spread of international communism and the danger of World War III. It was the objective of U.S. foreign policy to avoid these two threats.³ Assisting the Chinese Nationalists to return to the mainland certainly ran the risk of a general war with mainland China, and eventually World War III. The U.S. government was not willing to take this risk. The pursuits of conflicting national interests in the Taiwan area contained the major cause for the Taiwan-U.S. diplomatic controversy.

As a super power, the United States had to defend its "national interest" through global strategy. Moreover, the Americans had traditionally identified their global interests with European affairs. The interests of Asian countries, especially a small power like Taiwan, were secondary to the U.S. government: Jiang was expected to define policy within a framework established by Washington. However, Jiang Jieshi, the leader of a refugee regime on the island of Taiwan, attempted to carry on his own political agenda through an independent foreign policy. His policy was contrary to what the U.S. government had expected it to entail. Jiang spared no efforts in bargaining with American officials. By employing his skillful political and diplomatic maneuvers, he wished to achieve maximum benefits.

In international politics, weak states must draw on the strength of powerful states. Sometimes, the weak states are not entirely weak. They even try to manipulate the great powers in order to secure their own interests.⁴ The Chinese Nationalists had a tradition of doing so vis a vis the United States. During the Second World War, for example, Jiang repeatedly threatened the U.S. government that he would sign a separate peace treaty with Japan or break off relations with the United States.⁵ Jiang had been confident that his "gamble" would only increase U.S. assistance, since he was aware that the the Americans believed they were dependent on his fighting the Japanese in the Far East. During the Taiwan Strait crisis from 1954 to 1955, Jiang again attempted to utilize the American fear of losing Taiwan for the purpose of drawing them into a renewed Chinese civil war.

U.S. foreign policy toward Taiwan was considerably affected by American bureaucratic politics. Unlike the Taiwan government with Jiang Jieshi as the ultimate decision-maker for its foreign policy, American foreign policy involved a complicated decision making process.⁶ Despite the fact that all major American officials were national interest defenders, diversity and conflict among different

interest political groups permeated the policy process. The president, although powerful, had to take various political actors' opinions into consideration. This often produced a foreign policy regarded as being inconsistent by a government such as Taiwan whose political organizations were so different.

Recently, there has been a cultural approach to the study of diplomatic history. This thesis is not a cultural study of diplomatic history, but it pays attention to the roles played by cultural factors in U.S.-Taiwan relations in the 1950s. The cultural approach to diplomatic history examines international affairs "in terms of dreams, aspirations, and other manifestations of human consciousness".⁷ So far, there has not been a satisfactory definition of culture for the study of diplomatic history. In the context of this thesis, culture is defined as emotions, beliefs, ways of thinking, and other symbols. It will explore the relevant aspects of Chinese culture as far as U.S.-Taiwan relations are concerned. The focus will be on the importance of the cultural bearing which affected the ways in which Jiang and his advisers viewed their relationship with the Americans.

Confucianism is the main component of traditional Chinese culture. In Confucianism, "Junzi" (the superior man) is supposed to keep his promises (Shounuo), and friendship between Junzi is maintained on the base of virtues,⁸ such as Zhong (loyalty) and Yi (righteousness). Breaking one's promise (Shinuo) is regarded not only as a disgraceful act, but also as a breach of one's friendship. Jiang and most of his advisers had traditional Chinese education;⁹ thus, their philosophy was influenced by Confucianism. Although Jiang and his aides tried to manipulate the U.S. government, they still regarded the United States as "a friendly nation", and American officials as their friends. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Nationalist officials stressed the significance of "Zhong", "Yi", and "Shounuo" in dealing with the U.S. policy makers.

The main text of this thesis is chronologically divided into four chapters. Chapter One looks at the early stage of the Taiwan Strait crisis, from September to October of 1954. Despite the Joint Chiefs of Staff's advocacy of aggressive action against the Chinese Communists, Eisenhower approved Dulles's suggestion of the UN cease-fire solution. As a means for the Taiwan government to accept the UN proposal, the U.S. government decided to enter into negotiation with Jiang for a military pact. Although he expressed his dislike of Dulles's plan, Jiang decided to go along due to his eagerness for signing a mutual defense treaty with the United States.

Chapter Two explores the complete process of the negotiations and signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty between Taiwan and the United States. It centers on the prolonged disputes between the U.S. and Taiwan representatives over the two crucial issues, namely, the defense of the off-shore islands and the Chinese Nationalist military action against the People's Republic of China. Through detailed descriptive and analytical work, it is intended to display the conflicting interests in the Far East pursued by the U.S. and Taiwan governments.

Chapter Three is concerned with the period of crisis from early January to late February of 1955 when the situation in the Taiwan Strait continued to deteriorate. The announcement of the Formosa Resolution revealed the Eisenhower administration's firm intention to defend Taiwan and Penghu. But the United States was cautious regarding the defense of the off-shore islands. Jiang agreed to comply with the U.S. proposal of the Tachen withdrawal, since he expected this would result in U.S. commitment for the defense of Jinmen and Mazu.

Chapter Four deals with the last stage of the Taiwan Strait crisis. In spite of his advisers' intention of going to "the nuclear brink" to terminate the tension, Eisenhower preferred a less aggressive move. The American failure to convince

Jiang Jieshi to evacuate Jinmen and Mazu resulted not only from contradicting objectives between the U.S.-Taiwan, but also American misunderstanding of Chinese culture.

Historical Background

After its defeat in mainland China, the Chinese Nationalist Government fled to Taiwan in December, 1949. Three months later, Jiang Jieshi, the President of the Republic of China, announced his plan for "return to the mainland", "the first year for preparation, counter-attack in the second year, mopping-up in the third year, completion in the fifth year."¹⁰ His envisaged resumption of rule on the mainland would have been 1955.

In reality, not only the ambitious Chinese Nationalist goal of recovering the mainland, but even their survival in Taiwan would require enormous amount of American military assistance. Jiang appealed to the U.S. to send him economic and military assistance; at the same time, he dispatched his delegates to lobby in Washington in an effort to convince the American Congress that the Chinese Nationalist defeat was temporary and that the United States should assist them to return to the mainland.¹¹

Unfortunately, the Truman administration was not very interested in Jiang's ambition. In early 1949, when the Communists had controlled most of the mainland, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency estimated that "Taiwan will eventually pass to the control of the Chinese Communists" in the absence of American active involvement. The CIA's report also expressed doubt whether the Chinese Nationalist government on Taiwan, which it referred to as "a refugee regime", could be relied upon to prevent the Communist control of the island.¹² In August, the Department of State requested the military assessment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

(JCS) asking if these islands carried sufficient military importance to the United States to commit U.S. forces to their occupation.¹³ In reply, the JCS recommended that despite its "strategic importance" Taiwan did not justify overt American military commitment. The JCS's decision was based on the consideration of U.S. military budgetary limitations and its global obligations, particularly its commitment "implicit in the North Atlantic Treaty".¹⁴ In other words, the defense of Taiwan was not significant enough, in contrast to Europe, to justify an all-out American commitment.

The JCS recommendation was accepted by the State Department and the White House. On January 5, 1950 President Truman issued a policy statement regarding Formosa:

...the United States has no desire to obtain special rights or privileges, or to establish military bases on Formosa at this time. Nor does it have any intention to interfere in the present situation. The United States Government will not pursue a course which will lead to involvement in the civil conflict in China. Similarly, the United States Government will not provide military aid or advice to Chinese forces on Formosa.¹⁵

A week later, Secretary of State Dean Acheson made a speech before the National Press Club, entitled "Crisis in Asia". He described the defensive perimeter of the U.S. in the Western Pacific as running along the Aleutian Islands, Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines. Taiwan was excluded. According to Acheson, if the people in the area outside the defensive line were confronted with a military attack they must rely upon themselves or "the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations."¹⁶ Evidently, the U.S. government did not intend to protect Taiwan from potential Communist seizure.

The statements by Truman and Acheson have been widely interpreted by historians as the U.S. "hands-off" policy toward the Chinese Nationalists.¹⁷ However,

if we have a close look at the newly declassified documents, the conclusion of "U.S. abandonment of Taiwan" becomes doubtful. First of all, neither the State Department nor the military establishment denied the "strategic importance" of Taiwan. Secondly, Truman's and Acheson's statements only expressed that the United States would not commit itself militarily to the defense of Taiwan, but they did not rule out other means to keep Taiwan from falling into Communist hands. In early 1949, the National Security Council decided that Taiwan's strategic importance was "great"; consequently, the United States should develop and support a local non-Communist government in Taiwan and supply economic assistance to help Taiwan develop a "viable, self-supporting economy".¹⁸ The NSC on December 29, 1949 stated that the United States should "continue the policy...attempting to deny Formosa and the Pescadores (Penghu) to the Chinese Communists through *diplomatic* and *economic* means."¹⁹ It was also recommended that Taiwan should be placed under United States guardianship and UN trusteeship.²⁰ All these contemplated measures reflected the American desire to keep Taiwan from falling under Communist control.

The Truman administration never intended to abandon either Taiwan or Jiang Jieshi's government. It not only valued the great strategic importance of Taiwan, especially "in the event of war", but also considered the Chinese Nationalists as an important anti-Communist force in Asia. On the other hand, the U.S. government indeed considered the possibility of recognizing the People's Republic of China. Faced with this dilemma, the Americans tried to leave their choices open. In the NSC paper of October 25, 1949, it was stated that every effort should be made to explore the possibility of recognizing a Communist regime in part of China and recognizing another government in non-Communist China.²¹ In other words, the Truman administration was adopting a "wait-and-see" policy.

The sudden outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950 occasioned a dramatic switch of U.S. policy both towards China and Taiwan. Reversing his previous declaration that the United States would not get involved in the Chinese conflict, President Truman, on June 27, 1950, announced that "the occupation of Formosa by Communist forces would be a direct threat to the security of the Pacific area and to United States forces performing their lawful and necessary functions in that area." In order to protect the U.S. interest, Truman ordered the Seventh Fleet to "neutralize" the Taiwan Strait thus preventing "any attack on Formosa".²²

U.S. China policy was greatly affected by the eruption of the war in Korea. The Truman administration finally gave up its expectation of establishing a relationship with the People's Republic of China. With the Chinese Communists becoming the relentless enemies, the Chinese Nationalist government was now widely regarded not as a corrupt remnant of a former ally but as "a close and indispensable associate in the struggle against Communism".²³ On May 1951, Dean Rusk, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, issued a statement which said the United States "recognize(s) the National Government of the Republic of China even though the territory under its control is severely restricted." He further revealed that the United States would continue to send military aid to the Chinese Nationalists.²⁴ Rusk's announcement explicitly expressed the U.S. support for the Chinese Nationalists.

Over all, the hostilities in Korea between the Chinese Communists and the Americans brought about considerable benefits to the Chinese Nationalist government in Taiwan. The war provided those, such as John Foster Dulles, the "China Lobby", and the Republican Party, who had advocated a more aggressive Taiwan policy, with an unexpected opportunity to increase U.S. support for the Chinese Nationalists. The island of Taiwan, which prior to the Korean War had

been regarded as non-crucial to the U.S. vital interests, now became "essential" in the "strategic defense of our (U.S.) off-shore island chain" stretching from Japan through the Philippines.²⁵ By early 1952, the JCS had concluded that the denial of Taiwan to the Communist "is of major importance to United States security interests, and is of vital importance to the long-term United States position in the Far East". As a result, the "self-interest" of the United States required that "Formosa be strengthened as an anti-Communist base militarily, economically, politically, and psychologically."²⁶ With the improvement of the evaluation of the Nationalists on Taiwan and the importance of the island itself, American military assistance to the Nationalists, which was stopped temporarily prior to the Korean War, was resumed and substantial military materials plus a large number of military advisers arrived in Taipei.²⁷

The war in Korea also provided Jiang Jieshi and the Chinese Nationalists a gleam of hope for them to "recover the mainland". The Taiwan Ambassador Shao Yulin in Seoul wrote in his memoir that the Korean War was a great advantage to Taiwan. It caused drastic change to the situation with which his government was faced - the Communist military menace and the abandonment by the Americans. Shao was speculating that the War would turn into the Third World War which would allow the Chinese Nationalist government to "return to the mainland".²⁸ Shao's description was a typical example of the views for many officials in Taipei. They were not content with simply "watching and hoping"; instead, the Nationalist government was more willing to get involved in the war. Shortly after the war in Korea erupted, Jiang indicated to the U.S. government that he wished to send 33,000 Nationalist troops to fight the Communists in Korea.²⁹ Seemingly, Jiang had hoped the war would enlarge; therefore, it would help his return to the mainland.

The Korean War had caused the Truman administration to go so far as to provide military protection to Taiwan, but not far enough to assist the Chinese Nationalists in "returning to the mainland". As a matter of fact, Truman's declaration on January 5, 1950 of "Neutralizing" Taiwan had negated the Chinese Nationalist goal of recovering the mainland. Further, the Americans were even reluctant to accept Jiang's offer of sending his troops to fight in Korea. The U.S. government was afraid that Chinese Nationalist engagement in the Korean War might expand the war to the Taiwan area, thereby involving the United States in the fighting against the PRC for the territory of the Chinese mainland.³⁰ Jiang felt very humiliated by the American refusal of his offer and he complained that the United States had "seriously undermined the international status of the Republic of China."³¹ Even though the Chinese Nationalists were very discontented with the Truman administration's lack of interest in helping them recover the mainland, they had no choice but to put hope in a new American administration.

The Eisenhower administration began its Far East policy by announcing the so-called "deneutralizing Taiwan" or "unleashing Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi)", namely, remove the restrictions on Chinese Nationalist attacks against the Chinese mainland. On February 2, 1953, in his State of the Union address, President Eisenhower announced that there was "no longer any logic or sense in a condition that required the United States Navy to assume defensive responsibilities on behalf of the Chinese Communists." Therefore, he declared that "the Seventh Fleet no longer be employed to shield Communist China."³²

Following the "deneutralizing Taiwan" announcement, President Eisenhower appointed Karl Rankin, who was then American Minister in Taipei,³³ as the United States Ambassador in the Republic of China. This was the first time that the United States sent its Ambassador to Taipei since 1949. Compared with the Truman

administration, the new American government seemed to fully support the Chinese Nationalists.

Taipei had been closely observing the development of American domestic politics. In November 1952, when the Republicans won in the election, Taipei "jubilantly hailed" it "as the precursor of a 'positive' U.S. China policy", which would be founded upon "Liberation" rather than "Containment". After the Eisenhower administration came to power in early 1953, Jiang and his officials carefully studied the advancement of U.S. Far Eastern policy. With high hopes for a seemingly pro-Nationalist administration in Washington, Taipei predicted that a series of new steps favorable to the Chinese Nationalists would be taken by the United States. Among those predictions made by Taipei, the most significant one was the belief that "the new Administration in Washington ... would endorse the idea of an eventual large scale Chinese counter-offensive against the mainland, and would provide in due course the wherewithal for its realization."³⁴ These positive prognostications heightened the hope of the Chinese Nationalists to "recover the mainland". In his New Year's message of January, 1953, Jiang Jieshi announced that "1953 would be the last year of preparation for the counter offensive."³⁵ Jiang was hoping that with U.S. support, he would soon be able to return to power in the mainland.

Contrary to Taipei's wish, the Eisenhower administration had no intention of supporting a Nationalist attack on mainland China. Three days before his announcement of the "denuclearizing Taiwan" statement, President Eisenhower instructed the U.S. Embassy in Taipei to inform Jiang Jieshi that the foregoing statement "implies no aggressive intent on part of U.S." Moreover, the Embassy was told to "carefully avoid any implication that the United States Government is inviting Chinese requests for increased military or economic assistance."³⁶ These

instructions indicated Washington was not willing to make Jiang consider its "new policy" as "permission" to attack the PRC.

If the United States did not intend to assist Taipei in "recovering the mainland", why did Eisenhower decide to unleash Jiang? There were several reasons. First of all, the President was simply fulfilling the promise he made during his presidential campaign. By 1952, the American people had become tired of the war in Korea. Naturally the Truman administration's Far Eastern policy was attacked by the Republicans. Eisenhower accused Truman of "allowing the nation to become militarily weak" and of "announcing to all the world that it had written off most of the Far East as beyond our direct concern." The former general assured that he would check the Communist aggression and pledged: "I shall go to Korea to end the Korean War."³⁷ One month after he assumed office, Eisenhower announced the displacement of the shielding of mainland China by the U.S. 7th Fleet, indicating his firm determination to resist Communism. Secondly, and more importantly, Eisenhower hoped the "unleashing" of Jiang would serve his desired purpose of accelerating the negotiation with the Communists for a cease-fire in Korea.³⁸ It was expected that through the Nationalist "harassment and talk of invasion" of the mainland the Chinese Communists would be forced to divert their military forces from the Korean front and to sue for a peace settlement.³⁹ Finally, exerting political and military pressures on the PRC by unleashing Jiang would also meet the need for the administration to seek bi-partisan support for its Far Eastern policy.⁴⁰

As far as the Chinese Nationalist government was concerned, "deneutralizing Taiwan" was not a significant move by Washington. Admiral Radford later admitted that "unleashing" Jiang "had produced simply a puff of smoke - nothing substantive came out of it."⁴¹ Occasional assaults across the Taiwan Strait were frequently carried out in the Truman period. The Republican administration would never

approve military attacks serious enough to cause large scale conflicts between Taiwan and the PRC.⁴² The large number of casualties and heavy military expenses had severely disturbed the American people. The domestic front required the Eisenhower administration to quickly end the war in Korea, and not to start another one in China. Faced with this reality, Washington did not have the slightest intention of establishing a Nationalist authority on the mainland.

On the other hand, the Americans had to be very cautious in dealing with the Chinese Nationalists, who publicly repeated their determination to recover the mainland. Officials in Washington were convinced that the Nationalist government wanted to manipulate the United States into the Chinese civil conflict, serving their purpose of "returning to the mainland". In order to prevent this from happening, the Eisenhower administration decided to put restraints on Chinese Nationalist activities. In notifying Jiang in advance of Washington's announcement of "deneutralizing" Taiwan, Karl Rankin asked for "an oral promise" that the Nationalists "would undertake no significant attacks on Communist territory without consulting the United States."⁴³ At the 139th meeting of the National Security Council in early April, 1953 Secretary of State Dulles expressed his fear that Taipei might make use of American jet bombers to undertake offensive action against the Chinese mainland. He suggested that the deliveries of jet aircraft be suspended until Jiang Jieshi pledged "he would not use these aircraft recklessly". President Eisenhower and other NSC members agreed to Dulles's recommendation.⁴⁴ In late April, the United States received a reluctant "*note verbale*" containing the required promise from Jiang Jieshi.⁴⁵ These steps by Washington actually restrained the Chinese Nationalists.

Washington's indication of non-support for a "counteroffensive" against the PRC had deeply disillusioned the Chinese Nationalists. However, they spared no

efforts to urge the Eisenhower administration to take a firm stand against Communism in Asia. Jiang related the Chinese Communists to the Soviet Union. He described that these two Communist countries were assembling their "vast manpower and natural resources" for the purpose of world conquest. Asserting the elimination of the Chinese Communists on the mainland as "prerequisite" to stopping the expansion of the Soviets, he was "prepared to bear brunt of effort by spearheading invasion with our own ground forces plus necessary US support."⁴⁶ Taipei even submitted to the U.S. government its detailed plan for invading the mainland.⁴⁷

In the meantime, Jiang also attempted to gain the support from American top officials. In late 1953, a succession of important American officials visited Taiwan. They included U.S. senators, members of the House of Representatives and admirals. Jiang personally interviewed almost every visitor. In receiving these American officials, Jiang was affable and "smiled most of the time during conversation." He tried to develop personal relationships with them; more importantly, Jiang endeavored to impress these official visitors with his opinion that the Chinese Communists were a menace to the stability of Asia. After having convinced his listeners of his initial opinion, Jiang would expand on his central theme: by using his armed forces, which were the only sufficient ground troops in Asia, China could be liberated from Communist control and at the same time the "Red threat" could be removed from Asia. On several occasions, Jiang criticized U.S. Far Eastern policy and expressed the hope that these officials would exert pressures on their government. Despite trying hard to keep his patience, Jiang became so angry in front of the American officials that he stated that the United States was doing everything wrong and "has no Far Eastern policy."⁴⁸ Apparently, Jiang Jieshi would remain restless until he returned to power on the mainland.

U.S. Taiwan policy largely resulted from its policy toward China as a whole. When the Korean War approached its end in June 1953, Washington started formulating a post-Korean War China policy, which would allow both China and Taiwan into the General Assembly in the United Nations.⁴⁹ The "Two-Chinas" concept was not a new idea in Washington; it was particularly familiar to those who had been trying to create two Chinas for years. As early as January, 1950 John Foster Dulles, then-special ambassador for the State Department, recommended that Taiwan should be neutralized by the UN and made an independent republic, which would prevent its fall to the Communists.⁵⁰

Although American officials disliked the establishment of a strong Communist government in China, they had to admit its existence by the end of the Korean War. Refusing to assist the Chinese Nationalists in counterattacking the mainland not only derived from the American fear of starting a general war with the PRC, but also resulted from its recognition of reality. In November, 1953, the NSC had concluded that it was not in the U.S. national interest to overthrow the Chinese Communist regime either by "the use of U.S. armed force" or by supporting the Chinese Nationalists. A major war with the PRC would involve "full U.S. mobilization" and also would result in "a split of the U.S.-led coalition."⁵¹

However, at the same time, the NSC decided that no more concessions should be made to the Communists. The council report specifically pointed out that Communist "recovery of Formosa and other historically Chinese territory" should be prevented.⁵² At another meeting in November, the NSC stated that the United States would defend Taiwan "at grave risk of general war." It made the decision that the U.S. would continue to develop the military abilities of the Nationalist forces for defensive purposes. The Chinese Nationalists were also encouraged to defend "the

off-shore islands" by their own strength, and make use of these islands to "raid Chinese Communist territory and commerce."⁵³

US China policy was in some ways contradictory. On the one hand, it tried to avoid a war with the PRC, and also stop Jiang Jieshi from taking offensive action against the mainland; but on the other hand, in order to put pressure on the PRC the U.S. government encouraged the Chinese Nationalists to hold the off-shore islands and use them as a base to harass the China coast. This ambiguous policy provided the Nationalist government an opportunity to bargain with the Americans over the defense of the off-shore islands. The United States was involved in a severe policy dilemma.

When Jiang Jieshi and his troops retreated to Taiwan in 1949, they occupied three small groups of islands, including the Tachens, the Mazu (Matsu), and the Jinmen (Quemoy). Collectively they were often referred to as "the off-shore island".⁵⁴ The Jinmen group, two miles from the mainland, served to block the Chinese port of Xiamen. To the North, the Mazu islands were located only ten miles from the mainland. The third group, the Tachens, two hundred miles north to Taiwan, possessed less importance to the Nationalists.⁵⁵

From a strictly military point of view, it would have been sensible for the Chinese Nationalists to concentrate its forces on Taiwan and Penghu; but the Taiwan government was determined to defend these off-shore islands and, therefore, deployed a large number of troops on them. By the early fall of 1954, the Nationalist forces had reached 42,100 on Jinmen, 9,000 on Mazu, and 15,000 On the Tachens. These troops consisted of a large part of Jiang's best combat forces.⁵⁶ Jiang's dedication to defending these islands was mainly due to his view of them as potential stepping stones for a return to China. Since the off-shore islands kept alive Jiang and his troops' hopes of returning to their homeland, they held a certain

amount of psychological importance. Militarily, they were useful to Taiwan for "radar surveillance, passing agents onto the mainland", and protection against invasion of Taiwan itself.⁵⁷ Jiang also used these islands to harass the mainland with commando raids against the China coast.⁵⁸

The off-shore islands bore equal importance to the PRC. They, no less than Taiwan and Penghu, were part of Chinese national territory. The Nationalist control of the off-shore islands posed a threat to PRC national security. Deeply annoyed at the continuing harassment by Jiang's troops stationed on the off-shore islands, the Chinese Communists "were determined not to tolerate this situation any longer."⁵⁹

The Chinese Nationalist Government wanted the United States to extend its protection to the off-shore islands. They maintained that these islands "form an integral part of the defense of Taiwan and Pescadores."⁶⁰ Although encouraging Taipei to hold the off-shore islands, the United States was unwilling to be committed to their defense. Except for Admiral Radford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), who considered the off-shore islands integral to Taiwan's defense, most of the JCS members and the Department of State agreed that these islands "could not be considered essential to the defense of Formosa."⁶¹

As the PRC's intention to take Taiwan became more explicit in 1954, the defense of the off-shore islands possessed greater importance thanks to the assumption that the "liberation" of Taiwan would be preceded by an attack on the off-shore islands.⁶² The Taiwan government continued to urge Washington to provide a shield over the islands, while the Eisenhower administration was reluctant either to let the off-shore islands go or to be fully committed to their defense. Throughout 1954-1955, Taipei and Washington disputed over the issue of the defense of the off-shore islands, with no final solution until the crisis finally cooled down in May, 1955.

Notes to Introduction

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Tension build-up and the UN Proposal

On the morning of September 3 1954, the Chinese Communists launched a heavy artillery shelling against the Chinese Nationalist positions on the island of Jinmen. Two American personnel were killed, and the Nationalists suffered more casualties. Jiang's forces reacted quickly by striking at the targets on the mainland.¹ The offshore island crisis had begun.

When the shelling started, President Eisenhower was vacationing in Colorado and Dulles was in Manila to develop the SEATO treaty.² Despite that Ambassador Rankin in Taipei did not take the situation in Jinmen very seriously "from a purely military standpoint",³ in Washington, the firing set off intensive debate. The majority of the Joint Chiefs of Staff advocated a belligerent response. In a paper presented to the State Department, the Chairman of JCS, Arthur Radford, together with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Robert Carney, and the Chief Of Naval Operations, Nathan Twining, recommended that national policy be changed to permit U.S. Naval and Air Forces to assist in the defense of Jinmen and other offshore islands.⁴ On September 6, Radford, Carney and Twining urged again that Jiang be authorized to bomb mainland China, and if this provoked an assault on Jinmen, that American forces be ordered to defend these offshore islands.⁵ They maintained that the possession of Jinmen by the Nationalists was substantially related to the defense of Taiwan. Their conclusion not only resulted from military considerations, but also because they believed that the loss of these island groups would undermine Chinese Nationalist morale, which was important to the defense of Taiwan.⁶

The advocacy of aggressive action by the majority of JCS was not shared by many other Washington officials. Even within JCS, the views were split. General

Matthew B. Ridgway, Chief of Staff of the Army, dissented from this majority view, criticizing others for having based the importance of Jinmen largely upon political and psychological considerations. Ridgway contended that none of these offshore islands were "of sufficient military importance to warrant a commitment of the United States to hold them." Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson agreed with Ridgway. He argued that there was "a great deal of difference" between Taiwan and the Offshore Islands. The islands were a tough problem, since the United States would have to attack mainland China in order to defend the islands successfully. Wilson was strongly opposed to getting into war over these "dogged little islands." He was concerned how to explain to the American people and American allies "why, after refusing to go to war with Communist China over Korea and Indochina, we were perfectly willing to fight over these small islands." Both the Acting Secretary of State, Walter Bedell Smith and the Director of the CIA, Allen Dulles, agreed that the defense of the offshore islands required the commitment of United States armed forces and militarily they were not worth it.⁷

Secretary Dulles was out of the country at the time, but he had been in full communication with the State Department on the subject of the offshore islands. Dulles took the view that the United States should assist the Taiwan government to defend these islands, "provided these islands were militarily defensible."⁸

In answering the question by Dulles that if the Jinmen island "was defensible by the Chinese Nationalists with U.S. assistance", Admiral Radford and the majority of the JCS maintained that although they could not present a simple 'yes or no' to Dulles's question, the Jinmen island was defensible; its defensibility would require increased American reconnaissance forces over the Amoy (Xiamen) area, the commitment by the U.S. Naval and Air forces, the freedom of action for the responsible U.S. commander to strike where necessary to defeat an actual invasion

of the islands, and finally, the use of atomic weapons which might be essential to victory, according to the majority of the JCS.⁹

General Ridgway had a different opinion. He believed that U.S. Naval and Air forces alone were not sufficient to defend successfully the Jinmen islands; rather, U.S. ground forces were needed. Ridgway warned that the participation of the armed forces in the defense of Jinmen would "inevitably result in all-out war with Communist China, and would increase the risk of general war." Ridgway further anticipated that the United States might have to stand alone to shoulder the burdens of the general war, since the allies "might not view sympathetically such U.S. military operations against Communist China."¹⁰

On September 12, with Dulles back from the Far East, President Eisenhower arranged a National Security Council meeting in Denver at which his advisers debated the proposal by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.¹¹ Secretary of Defense Wilson pointed out that the choice for the Eisenhower Administration was "between the loss of morale resulting from the loss of the islands, and the danger of precipitating war with Communist China." "Wars with China are traditionally hard to stop." Wilson summarized his position by suggesting that the United States should stick to its present policy rather than risking a war with China to defend the islands as advocated by the majority of the Joint Chiefs.¹²

President Eisenhower did not react favorably to the proposal by Radford and three other Chiefs. He was skeptical about the military importance of the offshore islands for the defense of Taiwan. The President stated that "Quemoy was not really important except psychologically." He pointed out that there were several things to be considered. First, "if Communists, by making faces and raising hell, can tie down U.S. forces, they will use that device everywhere." Eisenhower stressed that in each crisis the United States should consider what was in its best interests, rather than

"making too many promises to hold areas around the world and then having to stay there to defend them." Secondly, the President stated that if the United States had to go to a general war, he would rather have it with Russia instead of China; since he would "want to go to the head of the snake." Finally, Eisenhower warned the NSC to "get one thing clear in their heads, and that is that they are talking about war"; therefore, to defend the offshore islands Congressional authorization would be necessary, otherwise, "there would be logical grounds for impeachment." Once again he asserted that the offshore islands were only of importance psychologically.¹³

Secretary Dulles, who originally showed his enthusiasm for the Joint Chief's recommendation, now backed away from the use of force, and started analyzing the situation more cautiously.¹⁴ He described the confrontation, which the United States faced as a "horrible dilemma." On the one hand, unless the United States stopped the Chinese Communists, "a Chinese Nationalist retreat from the islands would have disastrous consequences in Korea, Japan, Formosa and the Philippines." On the other hand, to defend the islands and thereby to go to war would bring about condemnation by American allies, "as well as a substantial part of the U.S. people." Nevertheless, the situation was not yet hopeless; Dulles quickly presented his plan for possibly overcoming the dilemma, which would be "to take the offshore island situation to the UN Security Council to obtain an injunction to maintain the status quo, on the theory that what Communist China were proclaiming was not directed only against Quemoy but also against Formosa."¹⁵

Dulles then listed several benefits for the United States by taking the islands problem to the United Nations. First of all it would be advantageous for the U.S. whether the Russians vetoed for the UN action or not. If they did, then the domestic and world opinion would be favorable to the United States since the

Communists "would be taking action against the will of the majority of the UN"; if they did not, then the Far East would begin to be stabilized. In the second place, Dulles was confident that if the United States could gain UN support the administration could act with or without Congressional authorization. lastly, Dulles added that the UN action would allow the administration to play for more time for not having to make any final decision regarding the defense of islands, which "therefore, gives us more time to consider the question."¹⁶

President Eisenhower's reaction to Dulles's UN proposal was very enthusiastic and he approved it.¹⁷ Moreover, Eisenhower instructed Dulles to do further study of it and find out how the British would react to the proposal. As President, Eisenhower had been worried about domestic and European allies' support for any U.S. action to defend the islands ever since he had learned of the Taiwan Strait crisis.¹⁸ Dulles' proposal was attractive to Eisenhower, because it would avoid a general war with the Communists which would alienate America's European allies. By approving Dulles' suggested alternative, Eisenhower had rejected the belligerent policy proposed by the JCS. At the end of the meeting, one relieved official said, "the President personally saved the situation."¹⁹

The Denver meeting ended with the Eisenhower administration having decided to make no decision regarding the offshore islands problem. Dulles's UN proposal only provided a temporary solution to the crisis. Dulles needed time to "cool off" the present flame so as to "explore ways and means of a comprehensive settlement".²⁰ No wonder Dulles wished this "cooling off" period to last for a long time, and "the longer ... the better."²¹

Shortly after the Denver meeting, Dulles started working hard on gaining support from the British for his UN proposal. By the end of September of 1954, British authorities had agreed to support the UN move, and proposed that this

action be made by a government "not closely identified with the situation although having a legitimate interest."²² British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden further recommended New Zealand, which at the time occupied a seat on the Security Council, play such a role.²³

Secretary Dulles and President Eisenhower seemed to have found a way through the UN move for a resolution to the flaming crisis, but it was not welcomed by an all-out approval. Secretary of Defense Wilson and Mutual Director Harold Stassen feared that the UN initiative might get Taiwan and Penghu also injected into the UN process, which might open debate over the issue of Chinese admission to the UN.²⁴

Washington's ambassador in Taiwan, Karl Rankin, was concerned that Taiwan would not react to the resolution favorably. Rankin believed that unless some offsetting steps were taken the Taiwan government would regard such a move in the UN as appeasement to the Communists. In order to offset the disastrous effect resulting from the UN action on the morale of the Chinese Nationalists, Ambassador Rankin recommended an immediate United States undertaking to sign a mutual defense treaty which the Taiwan government had been seeking, and notification to the Nationalists of the American intention to negotiate the treaty before discussing the prospective step in the United Nations.²⁵ The Assistant Secretary of State Walton Robertson shared the concern with Rankin, believing that the conclusion of a treaty with Taiwan would be not only an essential move to offset the effects of the contemplated UN resolution, but also the best means of deterring a Communist attack against Formosa. Robertson's recommendation to Secretary Dulles was that the negotiation of the mutual defense treaty be approved and Jiang Jieshi be informed of this decision at the same time as the UN resolution was discussed with him.²⁶

In the meantime, Dulles himself had concluded that a mutual defense treaty with Taiwan was needed. The Eisenhower administration was quite determined to protect Taiwan and Penghu. Dulles and Eisenhower had been considering the issue of signing a mutual defense treaty with Taipei for some time, but they were confronted with the problem of Jinmen and other offshore islands. The Communist shelling of the Jinmen in September 1954 brought the problem of the offshore islands to a point that a resolution had to be found immediately. Dulles expected that the contemplated New Zealand resolution would solve this problem. He hoped that a mutual defense treaty would protect Taiwan and Penghu, with the combination of the New Zealand resolution which would enable the United Nations to throw a protective mantle around Quemoy and the other offshore islands.²⁷

President Eisenhower once again agreed to Dulles's plan. In early October, Eisenhower and Dulles talked about who should be sent to Taiwan in direct discussion with Jiang Jieshi. The President thought it would be a good approach for Douglas MacArthur to take. The Secretary of State preferred Walter Robertson, who Dulles believed had much more personal influence in Taipei. Eventually, Robertson was sent to Taiwan.²⁸

Jiang was surprised by Robertson's visit. He thought that a UN cease-fire was a formidable idea, despite Robertson's argument that the resolution combined with a mutual defense pact would improve the position of Nationalist China. Jiang vividly described the New Zealand resolution as a scheme of the Communists to take over Taiwan, and warned that "harm rather than benefit would result from the resolution." He firmly refused to consent to the proposal which Jiang believed would have "a destructive effect on the morale of his troops, the common people living on Formosa, the overseas Chinese, and their enslaved fellow countrymen on the mainland." Acting Foreign Minister Shen Changhuan articulated his concern that

the Chinese Communists would make use of the UN resolution as a wedge to promote their participation in the UN proceedings and capitalize on the opportunity to bring up the entire "Taiwan Question". Shen believed this "would tend to pave the way for eventual seating of Communist China in the UN."²⁹

The proposed New Zealand resolution appeared to be extremely unpopular with the Chinese Nationalists, because it would destroy their dreams for returning to the mainland China. Jiang told Robertson that the resolution would deprive the Chinese of their mission and objectives, the agreement to it would be like a betrayal of his people. While Jiang voiced his wish that the U.S. government drop the UN proposal and assist him in defending the off-shore islands, he also said resolutely that he and his people were prepared to "fight alone to the last". He informed Robertson that he had ordered his troops on the off-shore islands to "fight to the last man, with or without the assistance of the U.S. Seventh Fleet."³⁰

Jiang resented being manipulated by the Americans and claimed his government "must decide for itself what it will say to its own people". Nevertheless, he understood that in reality his survival and his goal of returning to the mainland depended on American support. As a result, Jiang was very eager to sign a mutual defense treaty with the United States. He believed it would secure him assistance from the United States on a long-term basis. On account of his anxiety for such a pact, Jiang did not completely reject the proposal. He admitted that the prospect of a treaty did have a bearing on his evaluation of the proposed UN resolution. What he was really concerned about was the timing; as long as a formal announcement of an intention by the United States and China to negotiate the treaty preceded the New Zealand resolution whose harmful effects therefore might be mitigated, Jiang would probably accept UN cease-fire proposal.³¹ Robertson showed his sympathy with Jiang by promising that he would strongly recommend to the Secretary that the

negotiations of a defense pact be announced, at the very least, at the same time as the New Zealand action.³²

Restrained by his own military capacity, Jiang Jieshi had to move within the framework set up by Dulles. However, Jiang attempted to accomplish as much as possible by bargaining with the Americans regarding his struggle with the Chinese Communists over the control of China. Recovering the "lost territory" from the Communists was his long-range plan, Jiang realized he had to fortify his position in Taiwan through gaining guaranteed support from the U.S. government. The only way to do this was to sign a mutual security treaty with the United States. Jiang and the Chinese Nationalists had been seeking such a treaty since early 1953. The offshore islands crisis offered them the opportunity for such a treaty. They worked hard in the treaty negotiations to provide protection not only for Taiwan and Penghu, but also the offshore islands, which they regarded as stepping stones for eventual return to the mainland.

Notes to Chapter 1

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29. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs (McConaughy), Oct. 13, 1954, Ibid., pp. 728-753.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

Signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty

Forced to flee the mainland, and insecure in his island refuge, Jiang Jieshi was very eager to obtain a formal American commitment to the defense of his occupied territory. Observing Americans signing security pacts with other Asian countries, Jiang engaged in a sustained effort to obtain comparable treatment. The Chinese Nationalist government carefully studied the text of the American agreement with the Philippines. They were also "keenly aware of the negotiations for a similar treaty between the U.S. and Japan."¹

As early as March 1953, Taiwan ambassador Koo in Washington informed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles that Taipei wished to seek Dulles's view on the conclusion of a mutual security agreement between the U.S. and the Taiwan government. Koo suggested that the inclusion of a pact with Taiwan would complement the existing American security pacts with Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines, and would therefore "forge an additional link for a pact among Asiatic nations."² He further pointed out that the morale effect of the conclusion of such a pact would be significant for the Chinese Nationalists. "It would have particular influence with the overseas Chinese and encourage them in their present trend in favor of the Government of Formosa."³

Dulles replied that he quite liked the Chinese proposal. But signing a mutual defense pact with the Taiwan government was a very thorny issue. Dulles told Koo that the U.S. government was concerned with the problem of the off-shore islands. On the one hand, the U.S. was not willing to assume the responsibility for their defense, particularly covering them within the scope of a military pact. On the other hand, his government did not want to "exclude" these islands in the pact and let the Communists take them over. In a word, Dulles stated that it was difficult to

conclude a military treaty with a country which was "torn by civil war." Dulles's response underlined the American government's reluctance to be involved in the Chinese civil conflict by a mutual defense treaty with Taipei.⁴

Although with no satisfactory reaction from Dulles, the Chinese Nationalists were not at all discouraged. On the contrary, they intensified their efforts to achieve such a security pact. Ambassador Koo, in "various speeches" and "conversations with State Department and Congressional figures," promoted the desirability of a Taiwan-U.S. mutual defense treaty.⁵ In late June, 1953 when the Chinese Communists and the Americans were negotiating a truce agreement over the Korean War, Jiang Jieshi seized hold of the opportunity to proclaim the urgency to set up the security system in the Far East. He warned the Americans of the threat posed by the Communists and suggested that the crisis facing the free nations would worsen even if a truce was signed. He advocated the conclusion of a multilateral security pact in the Pacific or several bilateral pacts with the United States. In June 1953, Jiang wrote a personal note to Eisenhower, urging him to act. Jiang recommended strongly to Eisenhower that the signing of a mutual security pact between the United States and the Republic of Korea precede any truce arrangements. Such a pact, Jiang emphasized to Eisenhower, would "not only ease the tension that is now daily being heightened in Korea," but would buttress the morale of the weaker nations.⁶ While pressing for a U.S.-Korea pact, Jiang also mentioned the need for U.S.-Taiwan mutual security arrangement.⁷

After the signing of the security treaty between the United States and South Korea, Taipei's will for an equivalent treaty between the United States and the Republic of China became stronger. In October 1953, the Foreign Minister of Taiwan informed Rankin that they had prepared a draft for a bilateral treaty with the United States which was quite similar to the provisions of the Philippines-

American agreement.⁸ Rankin seemed to strongly favor of such a treaty. He was of the opinion that although the United States supplied Taiwan with military assistance and was ready to support Taiwan in the event of military attack from the Communists, their legal position was unilateral. The aid could be terminated at anytime. Therefore, only by a formal bilateral agreement could Nationalist morale be maintained and maximum benefits to the Republic of China be achieved.⁹

With the encouragement of Rankin, Taiwan Ambassador Koo handed a copy of the draft mutual defense pact to the Department of State in December 1953.¹⁰ Article IV in the draft deserves special attention:

Each party regards and attack in the Pacific area on either of the parties in territories which are now or may hereafter be under its control as an attack on both parties and would act to meet the common danger in accordance with the constitutional processes.¹¹

This article required both party members to defend the territories under the Chinese nationalist control "now" and "hereafter". It indicated Taiwan's intention to embroil the U.S. into the Chinese civil conflict.

Meanwhile, Jiang continued to work to persuade American influential officials to assist him in concluding a mutual defense treaty with the U.S. He had personally talked to a number of U.S. top official visitors in Taipei. Jiang was very successful in persuading these official visitors and he won a large amount of support from them.¹²

Among the visits of American officials, the one of Vice President Richard Nixon was a special case. Nixon was well-known for his firm anti-Communism standing. Vice President and Mrs. Nixon were invited by Jiang as his house guests, and they spent nearly eight hours together. Jiang deliberately mentioned the matter of the security pact to Nixon as something to think about.¹³ After he had left Taiwan

and continued his trip to other Asian countries, Nixon and Foreign Minister of Taiwan George Yeh corresponded, discussing the advisability of concluding a mutual security pact. In his personal letter to Vice President Nixon, who was on the way to Ceylon, George Yeh recapitulated the points in his conversation with Nixon regarding the mutual security pact. Although the Eisenhower administration had been giving its support to the Government of Taiwan, Yeh pointed out, "there still exists nothing of a concrete character" in American-Taiwan relationship. Therefore, such a pact was needed, which would not only serve to place the American-Taiwan relationship on a permanent basis, but "would also dispel the apprehension that may arise from time to time that the U.S. would abandon free China and recognize the Chinese Communists."¹⁴

The other important American official visitor for Taiwan was Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson. Wilson arrived in Taipei on May 20, 1954 to attend Jiang's inaugural for another Presidential term, and Jiang seized the opportunity to broach the subject of the mutual defense treaty.¹⁵ Wilson had three lengthy talks with Jiang during his visit. Jiang expressed his unhappiness with not being treated as an equal ally and urged that "the United States should develop and pursue a policy in East Asia independent of old colonial influences." Jiang again raised the question of a mutual defense treaty. He attributed the lack of progress on a mutual security pact to America holding the door open for future recognition of Communist China. Foreign Minister Yeh interjected that such a pact "was prerequisite to a collective security arrangement among the four Asian countries most directly concerned: Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and the Republic of China."¹⁶ Thereafter, Jiang's government used many occasions to push the United States for the conclusion of a mutual defense pact.¹⁷

Americans were reluctant to respond concretely to the Chinese Nationalists' proposal regarding the mutual security pact, which chiefly resulted from three problems. The first was that of territorial scope of application. The United States was ready to assist the Chinese Nationalists in the defense of Taiwan and Penghu,¹⁸ but not the offshore islands. Jiang claimed the defense of the offshore islands was as essential as the defense of Taiwan itself. He stationed a large number of high-quality combat forces on these islands. The U.S. did not want to make a formal commitment to the defense of the off-shore islands. The second problem was the timing of negotiating such a treaty. In other words, whether Washington should commence conducting the treaty prior to the Geneva Conference or after. The last problem, which was also the most troublesome one, stemmed from Jiang's ambition to invade the mainland "in the near future." Jiang's ambition was not widely shared by many Americans, who were not willing to be involved in another Asian war after three years of war in Korea.

These problems regarding the proposed defense pact aroused intensive debates among American policy-makers and officials, ranging from Jiang sympathizers and 'Asian firsters' to those primarily concerned with Washington's global, Europe-centered strategy.²⁰ Walter Robertson, Assistant Secretary of state for Far Eastern Affairs, favored Taiwan's proposal in principle, despite the fact that he suggested "such a pact should contain safeguard against involuntary extension of current U.S. commitments as to the defense of Formosa and the Pescadores."²¹ To Robertson, the timing of negotiating such a pact was the critical factor. He disagreed with those who objected that conducting the Geneva Conference to resolve the conflicts in Korea and Indochina was an inopportune time for even exploring the idea of a treaty. Robertson argued "it is highly important to announce the negotiation" before the Geneva talk. The American decision to negotiate with

the Chinese Communists at Geneva, Robertson continued, had lowered the morale not only of the Chinese Nationalists, but also other non-Communist Asians.²² Therefore, the United States should conclude a security pact with Taiwan, making clear to the Communists American determination to support the Nationalists so as to "offset their misgivings as to the Geneva Conference" and "improve morale of the Chinese armed forces and officials on Formosa."²³

A memorandum on the proposed treaty prepared in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs was circulated to concerned State Department bureaus. Substantive objections to the pact were raised by European and other departments in the State Department. They feared that the Americans could be embroiled in a war over these insignificant offshore islands. Bowie, the Director of the Policy Planning Staff, expressed his objection as to the language of Article IV of the draft treaty. He stated that they might be applied to the Nationalist-held offshore islands, and a formula should be sought to free the United States from any obligation to defend these islands.²⁴ These European specialists insisted that Washington's relations with its allies were to take priority over Taipei's needs. They were opposed to commencing any treaty arrangements before or during the Geneva Conference. An arduous negotiation of a defense treaty with the Chinese Nationalists would be considered as U.S. inflexibility and would be exploited by the Soviets.²⁵ Moreover, the Near East and South Asian office displayed their fear that the Indians might be driven closer to the Chinese Communists as a result of a mutual security pact between the United States and Taiwan.²⁶

From early 1953 until the Autumn of 1954, Dulles did not feel the pressure to take seriously the matter of negotiating a defense pact with Taiwan. Rather, he preferred to wait and see to make any final decision. On the one hand, Dulles made it clear to the Chinese Nationalists that the U.S. did not want to make a treaty

which would "result in a commitment for the United States to go to war on the mainland of Asia." On the other hand, Dulles recognized Taiwan's strategic significance as the link of the island chain in Asia. He was convinced that the U.S. could not hold the off-shore chain without Taiwan. As a result, Dulles did not want to discard completely the possibility of signing a defense treaty with Taiwan. When Taiwan Ambassador Koo raised the question of a possible treaty in March 1953, Dulles suggested that they continue to think about this issue and see how the situation developed.²⁷ As for the debate on the timing of negotiating the pact, Dulles was of the opinion that any announcement of a defense treaty with Taiwan before the Geneva Conference would be unacceptable to American allies, such as France and Britain; nor would it be helpful to reach any agreement at Geneva. While authorizing the NSC Planning Board to start the project of a treaty with Taiwan, Dulles decided to postpone his own decision on it until after he returned from the Tenth Inter-American Conference at Caracas.²⁸ At the end of March Dulles disapproved the Far Eastern Bureau's recommendations to negotiate the treaty before the Geneva Conference and showed his caution for concluding a defense treaty with Taiwan.²⁹

Compared with Secretary of State Dulles, President Eisenhower's position was more explicit. According to Eisenhower, the reason the U.S. had as yet no mutual defense agreement with Taiwan was that the United States had not wished to make any public declaration about the offshore islands. Nevertheless, Eisenhower did not intend to give up those islands, whose loss, in his opinion, would make the defense of Taiwan more difficult, even perhaps impossible. Therefore, Eisenhower recommended that the U.S. Seventh Fleet "make calls on these islands and perhaps stay for a few days." This show of American strength was expected to make the U.S. position clear.³⁰

In the next month, the Chinese Nationalists continued urging the U.S. to make a concrete decision on the question of negotiating a mutual defense pact. On April 7, Taiwan Ambassador Koo requested to see Walter Robertson to determine whether the U.S. government had made a decision. Robertson replied that "this matter could not be taken up before the Geneva Conference" because Dulles was so "preoccupied" with the Indo-China situation and he had to prepare for the Geneva Conference.³¹ The Taiwan government was very disappointed that the United States had not decided to start negotiations over the proposed pact before the Geneva Conference. Ambassador Koo told Everett Drumright, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, that American indecisiveness plus the participation of the Chinese Communists in the Geneva Conference, had produced a "depressing effect" on the people in Taiwan. In order to offset this negative effect, Koo suggested that the American government soon make an announcement of its intention to "enter into negotiations for such a pact."³²

When Secretary of State Dulles returned from Geneva in May, 1954 the Far Eastern Bureau forwarded him Ambassador Koo's request for an appointment. The FE Bureau continued to hold the view that a military pact with Taiwan "is desirable and should be negotiated." It recommended the Secretary agree to see the Taiwan Ambassador soon.³³ On the 20th of May, Dulles met with Koo. He told Koo that he had given the treaty issue very thorough consideration, but he had not changed his previous position. The instability of the situation made Dulles still indecisive. He reemphasized his previous opinion that the United States was not willing to assume treaty obligations in terms of which might bring about its direct involvement in the Chinese civil war. Dulles pointed out that China was a large, heavily-populated country; war with the mainland China would inevitably be an unlimited war. The United States did not want to commit its military resources and prestige in the vast

area of mainland China.³⁴ Clearly Dulles revealed his priority of consideration of Europe over Asia. On the other hand, the U.S. did not want to give up Taiwan as an important force against the Communism in the Far East. Due to these considerations, Dulles preferred to have "complete latitude" and keep the Chinese Communists guessing so that he could keep options open.³⁵

Jiang was greatly disappointed with the U.S. response to his proposal regarding the mutual defense treaty. During his meeting with Admiral Van Fleet and Admiral McNeil, Jiang bluntly blamed Americans for the loss of mainland China because they withdrew their political and moral support. He warned Americans of "another potential disaster in Asia" - "political and moral factors have weight as 70 as compared with 30 for military considerations under present circumstances." Whatever the U.S. position would be, Jiang was determined to return to the mainland.³⁶

Although Jiang tried to stand firm on his own position when bargaining with the Americans over a bilateral treaty, his eagerness for the treaty forced him to be more flexible. Jiang's desperate need for a formal defense treaty from the U.S. derived from his mistrust of the Americans. Based on his previous experience with the U.S. government, he suspected American support for him could be stopped any time and it was even possible that the United States would eventually accept the Beijing Government.³⁷ In order to eventually achieve the conclusion of such a treaty, Jiang had realized he had to back up from his previous firm position and show his understanding of the American situation. In June, 1954, Jiang's foreign Minister Yeh told American Ambassador Rankin that the purpose of the proposed pact was political rather than military, and it would not increase U.S. military commitments.³⁸ Furthermore, Jiang claimed that his government did not expect an American commitment to sponsor its return to the mainland; rather, it was seeking a

confirmation of intention to support in the defense of Taiwan on a longer term basis.³⁹ Among the support, political and moral factors were more important than military support.⁴⁰ Yeh also stated that President Jiang had promised the Chinese would not launch any major military action against the mainland without prior consultation with the United States. However, when Rankin inquired whether the Chinese Nationalists would offer a firm understanding to avoid major military operation independently if the U.S. government objected, Yeh replied that "such an understanding should not be incorporated in the pact." Jiang agreed to talk about this point only after a concrete assurance of the conclusion of a defense treaty.⁴¹

American politicians continued debating the issue of a mutual defense pact with Taiwan. On August 26, the Far Eastern Bureau submitted to the Secretary of State another memorandum recommending a mutual defense treaty with Taiwan. That recommendation aroused intensive debate among policy makers. Jernegan, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, raised again the potential impact on India and other Asian countries might result from a pact with Taiwan. He contended that the proposed treaty would be regarded by India as an unnecessary provocation to Communist China and it would probably further antagonize India and might drive India and other Near East countries closer to Communist China.⁴² Department Counselor Douglas MacArthur also expressed his objection to the recommendation from the Far Eastern Bureau. Since nothing had changed from March and April on, MacArthur believed the decision not to proceed with the arrangement of a treaty with Taiwan should remain valid.⁴³

This time, the Policy Planning Staff of the Department and the European experts showed some changes in their opinion. European Affairs withdrew its earlier objection. Robert Bowie, the Director of the Policy Planning Staff, stated that it seemed appropriate to negotiate a treaty with Taiwan. Nevertheless, both

Livingston Merchant, the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, and Bowie agreed that negotiations of such a treaty should not be initiated until after the Manila Conference and that American allies in SEATO should get prior warning of the treaty. Bowie emphasized that the treaty must be defensive in nature, which would discourage Jiang from operating any offensive actions against mainland China. While believing that the defense of the offshore islands should be explicitly excluded from U.S. commitment, Bowie suggested the use of some formula in the treaty such as agreeing to defend Taiwan and Penghu and "such other islands as are mutually agreed to be militarily important to the defense of Formosa and the Pescadores." Merchant further stressed Bowie's point that the treaty should not give the impression that the United States would assist the Chinese Nationalists to extend the territory already under its control.⁴⁴

Secretary of State Dulles still preferred to delay making his decision due to the complexities of the offshore island problem, although he recognized the necessity for Washington ultimately to negotiate a mutual defense treaty with Taiwan. Dulles was hoping the situation would clarify during his visit to Taiwan.⁴⁵

In early September, after he attended the Manila Conference, Dulles stopped by Taiwan for a short visit. Dulles had a two-hour meeting with Jiang Jieshi. Jiang naturally brought up the issue of the proposed bilateral pact. He complained that the U.S. had no firm policy on Taiwan. He vehemently disagreed with the Americans who based their hesitation of concluding the treaty on the grounds that "the Chinese Government is considered in a fluid state and unstable." Jiang pointed out the "fluid" situation was actually "a result of American policy." Only a conclusion of the proposed U.S.-Taiwan bilateral treaty could result in a "decisive" U.S. policy toward Taiwan; thereafter the situation in Taiwan area could be stabilized. Jiang further argued against the American concern over Taiwan's intention of utilizing a

treaty to involve the U.S. "in the whirlpool of war". He assured Dulles that the proposed pact would be "defensive and not offensive in nature, political and not military." Jiang stated that of course the Nationalists needed U.S. support to return to the mainland. The aid needed was American "arms and economic and technical aid", not its "participating directly in the war."⁴⁶

Dulles was of the opinion that Jiang had "over-estimated" the "efficacy" of the proposed treaty. He told Jiang that the people in Manila thought "they had an inferior deal to Taiwan". According to Dulles, Taiwan enjoyed "better security" provided by the Seventh Fleet than other countries because a treaty required "constitutional processes" to be implemented. Clearly, Dulles attempted to discourage Jiang from pursuing a military pact.⁴⁷ At this point, Dulles was not quite decided to conclude a military pact with the Chinese Nationalist government.

A turning point on the negotiation of a mutual defense pact between the United States and Taiwan came when the Chinese Communists initiated shelling of the offshore islands in September, 1954. The Eisenhower Administration was confronted with a severe dilemma. As Dulles suggested, the United States had to choose between committing large forces to Jinmen or else to risk the loss of these offshore islands which would constitute a serious blow to the prestige of the United States.⁴⁸

In spite of tremendous pressure from the pro-Nationalist hawks advocating defending the offshore islands with American military assistance, President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles decided to quench the inflammable situation so as to avoid war. Dulles proposed to take a resolution to the United Nations Security Council calling for a cease fire in the Taiwan Straits. In order to persuade Jiang to go along with the UN proposal, it was agreed that the U.S. should

inform the Chinese Nationalists of its willingness to conclude their long-desired mutual defense treaty.

On October 13, Assistant Secretary Robertson was sent to Taipei to meet with Jiang to convey Washington's decision. Robertson first displayed the potential advantages to the Taiwan government of the UN proposal as a factor stabilizing the situation in the Taiwan Strait. He then informed Jiang that the U.S. government had considered starting negotiating a mutual defense pact with the Nationalists. Robertson tried to convince Jiang that the proposed UN resolution combined with a mutual security treaty would "improve the position of Nationalist China." Finally, Robertson pointed out to Jiang that the U.S. government wanted the Treaty to be defensive in nature and the off-shore islands would not be included in it.⁴⁹

Jiang was apparently not happy with Washington's plan. He showed his dissatisfaction by criticizing the United States government for its slow response to the Chinese draft treaty "submitted to the Department many months ago." Jiang indicated to Robertson that he wanted the following three objectives to be achieved: delay the process of the UN proposal; Second, include the off-shore islands in the proposal treaty; Finally, if the U.S. insisted on the UN proposal, it should announce the initiation of negotiations for the treaty before the announcement of the UN move. As far as the offshore islands were concerned, Jiang proposed that the problem could be solved by working out appropriate language, acceptable to both sides, making no mention of the offshore islands. Jiang also made the suggestion that two understandings should be incorporated in a separate exchange of notes. After making his key points clear, Jiang again urged sincere and formal negotiations be opened immediately after Robertson's return from to Washington.⁵⁰

Dulles was not surprised by Jiang's strongly negative response to the proposed UN move. While being determined to use his best efforts to keep

Nationalist opposition within tolerable bounds, Dulles also realized that it was time for the American Government to reach some understanding with Jiang regarding a defense security treaty.⁵¹ In order to remove Jiang's grave doubts about Washington's intention to negotiate a treaty, Dulles sent him a personal message confirming that "we are in principle prepared to make with you a defensive treaty along the lines which you discussed with me." Dulles also agreed to Jiang's demand that public announcement of negotiations precede contemplated action by New Zealand.⁵² However, Dulles cautioned that no announcement of American intention to negotiate a treaty with the Chinese Nationalists could be revealed to the public until the Congressional consultations were completed. Therefore, the negotiations could not be commenced as soon as Jiang had expected.⁵³

In late October of 1954, while he was attending the Conference of the United Nations, Taiwan Foreign Minister George Yeh, together with Ambassador Koo had met with Secretary Dulles.⁵⁴ Dulles confirmed that the United States wanted to work out a mutual security treaty. But the main problem was still the defense of the offshore islands, and "the Department was wrestling with this problem at the moment." Nor could Senate approval be taken for granted.⁵⁵ George Yeh claimed that his government appreciated the various problems the United States had and promised that it "does not have the slightest intention of making a treaty with the United States serve as a basis for action against the mainland of China." On the other hand, Yeh continued, his government wanted to be certain that the Treaty would not confine its sovereignty to Formosa and the Pescadores, since such a limitation would be unacceptable to the people in Taiwan both "politically and psychologically."⁵⁶

Yeh had stressed the urgency for the prompt treaty negotiations, while Dulles continued to emphasize the advisability of a cease-fire plan in the Taiwan

Strait by the UN proposal. Dulles made it clear that the U.S. did not want to make a formal commitment in the treaty to the defense of the off-shore islands, but at the same time, neither did it want to abandon them. The UN plan could stabilize the situation and keep the islands from falling into the Communist hands.⁵⁷ As for their goal of returning to the mainland, Dulles reminded Yeh of the reality the Chinese Nationalists faced - they did not have the capability at that time for large scale offensive action against the mainland. Dulles encouraged the Taiwan government to put its hope in the future:

It is not unrealism to envisage the possibility of a sudden unexpected collapse of the ruthless dictatorial regime. We would want to be ready, if the opportunity comes, to take immediate advantage of it. The opportunity might come in one year or in five years. No one could tell.

However, Dulles warned, if Jiang's government tried to move prematurely, it would probably be destroyed.⁵⁸

With the development of the situation, Dulles became more enthusiastic to proceed with the mutual security treaty. The proposed treaty was initiated to persuade Jiang to agree with the New Zealand resolution; however, now Dulles realized that it would serve some other purposes. American policy towards the Taiwan government would be strengthened, making it clear to Beijing that the United States would support the Nationalists. Moreover, American assistance to Taiwan would be formalized to a great extent, which would satisfy the Taiwan government.⁵⁹ Most of all, Dulles had started thinking that a mutual defense treaty with the Chinese Nationalists would intensify American control over them. The condition of concluding a mutual security treaty with the United States, Dulles simply told the Nationalists, was for them to promise that they would not take any offensive action against the Mainland without American consent. In doing so, "the

proposed treaty would certainly limit Chinese Nationalist aspirations in the direction of offensive action against the mainland."⁶⁰ Predictably, the Taiwan government would resent this condition. But Dulles was quite confident that the Chinese Nationalists would have to accept his conditions, since in reality, "their return to the Mainland was inconceivable without United States support." Jiang's government would desire the treaty for its own benefits. Such a treaty put Taiwan in the same category with respect to relations with the United States, as other Asian Allies. It would also avoid any future danger that Taiwan would be returned to Communist China or placed under UN trusteeship.⁶¹

The Joint Chiefs were not favorable to the idea of a proposed treaty and the UN move. They were of the opinion that from a military viewpoint the *status quo* in American-Taiwan relationships was preferable to a firm bilateral security pact between the two countries.⁶² Admirals complained the proposed actions would remove a significant amount of pressure and uncertainty from the Chinese Communists regarding Washington's intentions.⁶³ Furthermore, the Joint Strategic Survey Committee argued that the proposed treaty, through restricting the Chinese Nationalist military operation solely to the defense of Taiwan and Penghu, would terminate the chances of success for Jiang to return to the Mainland and thereby act "as a tacit admission that the Chinese Nationalists could no longer lay claim to being the legitimate government to China."⁶⁴ Overall the treaty and UN move were considered by the Chiefs of Staff to be a failure in providing the broad basis of a sound policy in East Asia, and it would "jeopardize the entire United States military position in the Far East."⁶⁵

At this juncture, however, the standpoint of the military did not weigh heavily. At the time when Admiral Radford was expressing his strong opposition to the proposed treaty, Secretary Dulles informed Taiwan Foreign Minister Yeh that

he was "ready to get down to a discussion of a bilateral defense treaty."⁶⁶ From November 2 to November 23, 1954, Taiwan Foreign Minister Yeh and Ambassador Koo had nine meetings altogether with Robertson and the Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs, Walter McConaughy. They negotiated on the drafts based on the treaties signed between the United States and other Asian countries, and eventually reached a final agreement in early December of the year. Like the pacts between the United States and other Asian countries, the Taiwan-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty included the assumption of mutual responsibility against external attacks on either side:

Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the West Pacific Area directed against the territories of either of the Parties would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with this constitutional process. (Article V)

It was further agreed that the Parties settle any international dispute according to the Charter of the United Nations (Article I), and all measures taken as a result of external attack "shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.(Article V)" The treaty did not grant the Taiwan government any special right from the United States, but it did grant the United States "the right to dispose such United States land, air and sea forces in and about Taiwan and the Pescadores as may be required for their defense. (Article VII)"⁶⁷

In the course of negotiations, both Parties did not have many difficulties in achieving the above agreements. However, several controversial problems did emerge, and the negotiators focused their bargaining on those issues. The first controversy concerned the territorial scope for application of the treaty. The second one concerned the Nationalist freedom to use force and deploy their troops, particularly military action against Mainland China.

On the issue of territorial scope for application of the treaty, the Taiwan government wanted "all of its territory" to be covered, which would include not only the Taiwan area but also the mainland.⁶⁸ However, this was rejected by Dulles, since Washington was not willing to get involved in drawing the boundary line for the Chinese. Dulles told Yeh the treaty had to be limited to Taiwan and Penghu. Dulles asserted that the United States would not extend protection to the offshore islands in the proposed treaty. Defending the offshore islands would mean entailing the risk of general war with Communist China, and the United States "is not prepared to engage in actions at this time which might lead to general war with Communist China."⁶⁹

Foreign Minister Yeh stated that his government hoped the treaty would avoid any implications tending to confine "Free China" to the island of Taiwan forever; otherwise, he suggested a reference in the treaty "preamble to the general sovereignty of the Republic of China over all the territory of China." The restriction on the territory to be defended under the treaty, if necessary, could be made in the particular article defining the scope of application. Moreover, Yeh proceeded with his suggestion, additional territory, if the Taiwan government gained any in the future, should come within the territory by subsequent agreement. Dulles was reluctant to take Yeh's suggestions, and insisted on "a fairly close definition of the mutual defense area."⁷⁰ After prolonged negotiations, a compromise was reached. It was agreed that the term territories should apply to the Republic of China, Taiwan and Penghu. It was further agreed that the treaty would also "be applicable to such other territories as may be determined by mutual agreement." (Article VI)⁷¹ The Chinese Nationalist Government was not wholly satisfied with such treaty terms; however, this was the maximum concession it could achieve from the United States Government.⁷²

Another problem concerning the territorial scope was the degree of reciprocity in the treaty. The United States draft provided that the treaty would cover Taiwan and the Penghu. Nothing was mentioned about United States territory. The Taiwan government considered that the omission of United States territory in the treaty would make it appear as if the Chinese Nationalists would accept unilateral protection from the United States.⁷³ The Chinese draft suggested that the Taiwan Government be given joint control over the use of American Forces stationed on the United States islands in the Western Pacific. The Chinese representatives further explained that of course their government would not plan to interfere with the use of United States forces on American territory; it was nevertheless only the appearance of reciprocity which concerned the Taiwan government.⁷⁴ Eventually, the United States agreed to place part of its territory under the treaty, "which was the island territories in the West Pacific under its jurisdiction."⁷⁵ But it refused to grant the Chinese Nationalists any control over United States actions on these island territories.⁷⁶

In the course of negotiations, the most bothersome hurdle was that the United States insisted that it have the veto right to any military actions against the Mainland taken by the Chinese Nationalists. On the third meeting of the negotiations, Robertson handed Yeh a draft Protocol to the treaty. The Protocol was meant to formalize the understanding that the Chinese Nationalists would not take any offensive actions without mutual agreement. Washington was concerned that "provocative action taken from Formosa or the offshore islands might lead to reprisals by the Communists which would bring the Treaty into play." Although Jiang had already on several occasions promised to consult Washington before he took offensive operation, Robertson insisted that a firmer and formal commitment be needed, without which the Senate would not ratify the Treaty.⁷⁷

The Chinese representatives were strongly opposed to the Protocol. They argued that returning to the Mainland was a glorious mission for the Taiwan government, and no government was willing to sign a treaty to abandon its right of "recovering its lost territory".⁷⁸ Dr. Yeh urged the Americans to consider the negative psychological impact which the proposed Protocol would exert on the Chinese people. Furthermore, Yeh stated, besides Jiang's grave objections he would have "an awful time" getting the Legislative Yuan to accept "anything in the nature of the proposed Protocol."⁷⁹ With no concession from Washington, Taipei realized that it had to formalize its commitment in order to accomplish signing the treaty. Considering that making this commitment publicly would be too embarrassing, even possibly invoking discontent from the people in Taiwan, Jiang's government requested that they confirm the commitment through an exchange of notes, instead of a Treaty.⁸⁰ Dulles agreed, but only on the condition that "the substance of the exchange of notes to be essentially the same as that proposed for the draft Protocol."⁸¹

After having made the Americans agree to change the Protocol into a less formal note, the Chinese Nationalists kept on bargaining for more "gains". On November 8, George Yeh instructed Koo to "fight for the exchange of note separately from the treaty" and to decline firmly referring to the exchange of notes in the joint statement.⁸² The Chinese Nationalist representatives tried their best to minimize the significance of the "note" which they regarded as a serious restriction by the U.S. government.

Dulles seemed to be quite willing to offer some surface concession to the Taiwan government. But he soon made another move so as to accomplish the control over Jiang's military action against the mainland. After the initial negotiations, he brought up an important issue of the 'disposition of forces' between

Taiwan and the offshore island. Dulles requested joint control over military dispositions between Taiwan and the offshore islands area, thanks to his concern about two possibilities. First of all, he was worried that some day the Taiwan government's secret maneuver of a large number of troops from Taiwan to the offshore islands might provoke attacks from the Chinese Communists. This would get the United States involved in a Chinese civil war.⁸³ Secondly, if this maneuver happened, and few Chinese forces were left to defend Taiwan itself, the United States would have to bring in American infantry to defend Taiwan. But the United States did not anticipate this to occur. Therefore "the Treaty should realistically cover all contingencies so far as possible, even if they were remote."⁸⁴

Dulles's demand for control over the military deployment of the Nationalist troops brought negotiations to a difficult stage. Jiang instructed his representatives in Washington to resist American efforts at any American control of the Chinese disposition of forces between Taiwan and the offshore islands. Dr. Yeh told Robertson that although his government did not object to a provision for joint agreement as to use of force, the restriction on the disposition of forces would be a different matter. Since the American purpose of the latter was to interfere with the Taiwan government deploying its forces within its own territory, this was unacceptable. Militarily, Yeh complained, serious delays might be created if the despatch of urgently required Chinese troop reinforcements to the offshore islands needed joint governmental approval. Politically, mutual agreement as to disposition of forces was an infringement of "Chinese sovereignty" and an affront to "Chinese prestige". After all, it was inappropriate for the Americans to ask for joint control over the disposition of troops to the offshore islands, since the United States assumed no responsibility for the defense of these islands. However, if the mutual control of the military dispositions was imperative for Washington finally to sign the

Treaty, Jiang suggested that "perhaps agreement might be reached on a provision for keeping certain specified forces on Formosa as a minimum," rather than disputing the stationing of forces on the offshore islands.⁸⁵

Jiang's recommendation was accepted by the American representatives, and the impasse over the deployment of forces was eventually broken. On November 19, at the seventh meeting, representatives of both Parties agreed that military forces would not be removed from Taiwan and Penghu "to a degree which would substantially diminish the defensibility of such territories" without mutual agreement. Although their request for full logistic support for the defense of the offshore islands to "offset the provisions about removal of military elements from the Treaty area" were decisively rejected by Robertson.⁸⁶ The Chinese Nationalists were mollified when the U.S. side later agreed to Yeh's request that the exchange of notes be a kind of supplement to the treaty and not be simultaneous with signing it.⁸⁷

Secretary Dulles and Foreign Minister Yeh initiated the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and Taiwan on November 23, 1954 and signed it on December 2.⁸⁸ Dulles was quite satisfied with the final result. He believed the Treaty would stake out absolutely U.S. interest in Taiwan and Penghu and "does so on a basis which will not enable the Chinese Nationalists to involve us (US) in a war with Communist China."⁸⁹ Dulles was happy because he had succeeded in signing a treaty with the Chinese Nationalists which protected only Taiwan and Penghu. More importantly, the "note" would serve as a "check" on Taipei's military action against the mainland. Dulles's attitude evidently implied the American will for a "limited commitment" to the Taiwan area and their inclination to utilize Jiang for their global interest.

The Chinese Nationalists at last achieved the Treaty which they had long been seeking, various newspaper editorials celebrated the U.S. determination to protect Taiwan against the Chinese Communists.⁹⁰ However, not everyone in Taipei was happy. Before it was submitted to the Legislative Yuan, Yeh already expected the treaty would meet opposition from the members, "the critics would say that the treaty unnecessarily ties the hands of the Chinese government."⁹¹ An editorial in the Zili Wanbao (Self-Independence Evening Paper) in Taiwan commented. "... the most serious shortcoming of the Treaty is its deterring us from returning to the mainland." "According to the Treaty, we must consult with the Americans if we take non-defensive action against the mainland; as a matter of fact, it will be unlikely to win American agreement."⁹² The Treaty was even viewed as simply "a tool" for the United States to "halt a counter attack against the mainland by the Republic of China."⁹³

Although Dulles was confident that he had "released" Jiang Jieshi through the Mutual Defense Treaty, the Taiwan government had its own interpretation of the Treaty. According to the Chinese Nationalists, the Treaty carried no stipulations preventing them from attacking the mainland. Taiwan Foreign Minister Yeh was of the opinion that the Treaty was defensive in nature, and it had no prohibiting role on the attack against the mainland by Taiwan since it was a completely different issue. Yeh also believed that "recovering its lost territory" was the right of self-defense for the Taiwan government, a right which could not be denied by anyone else.⁹⁴ In the government official newspaper Zhongyang Ribao (Central Daily), Yeh asserted that "the Treaty does not imply in any way that Free China does not have the right to recover the mainland."⁹⁵ Yeh's view was reiterated in the report on negotiating the treaty with the United States by the Executive Yuan to Legislative Yuan.⁹⁶ Many other important officials in Taiwan held the same view. Acting

Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Changhuan indicated at a press conference, "A counter attack against the mainland is an affair which lies within the scope of our sovereignty. The national policy of mainland recovery was mapped out long ago and will continue to be carried out in the future, without interference from any quarter."⁹⁷ The Minister of the Executive Yuan Yu Hongjun even went further to interpret the Treaty as an encouragement for the Nationalist "mission" to return to the mainland:

The Treaty provides us with sufficient U.S. assistance, which will enable us to overcome all the difficulties. We are determined to liberate our countrymen in the mainland. This glorious mission, as a result of the conclusion of the Mutual Defense Treaty, will be accomplished at a much greater speed.⁹⁸

Finally, Jiang Jieshi, the ultimate decision-maker of the Taiwan government, declared that the Treaty placed Taiwan under United States protection, thereby putting his regime in a strong position to attack mainland China.⁹⁹

The perspective of the Nationalists was certainly not shared by Washington. At a press conference on December 1, 1954, when answering a question whether the Treaty recognized the claim of the Chinese Nationalists to sovereignty over the mainland, Secretary Dulles stated: "It does not deal specifically with that matter one way or another." Later, Dulles informed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "the reference in article V to 'the territories of either of the Parties' was language carefully chosen to avoid denoting anything one way or another as to their sovereignty."¹⁰⁰ On January 6, 1955, Dulles sent the Treaty to the Senate, and he made it clear that the Taiwan government must gain consent from the United States if it took military actions against the mainland.¹⁰¹

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee agreed with Dulles. On February 8, 1955, it submitted its report to the Senate. It included an understanding that

"military operations by either party from the territories held by the Republic of China shall not be taken except by joint agreement."¹⁰² In a word, Taipei and Washington did not reach a clear agreement on the issue of the Nationalist "invading the mainland". Dulles never bothered to deny the interpretation by the Taiwan government that "the treaty carries no stipulations prohibiting the attack against the mainland."¹⁰³ The controversy on this matter did not count since in reality it was impossible for the Chinese Nationalists to recover its lost territory without the U.S. assistance. The Senate, by a vote of 64 to 6, approved the Treaty, the President ratified it on February 11.¹⁰⁴ A little earlier the Legislative Yuan of the Taiwan government accepted the Treaty by a unanimous vote.¹⁰⁵ On March 3, instruments of ratification were exchanged at Taipei between Taiwan Foreign Minister Yeh and Secretary of State Dulles.¹⁰⁶ The Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and Taiwan was thereby brought into effect.

Notes to Chapter 2

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5. Ibid., p. 241.
6. The Charge in the Republic of China (Jones) to the Department of State, June 24, 1953. *FRUS*, Vol. 14, p. 213.
7. Koo, *Memoir*, Vol. VII, Part H p. 242.
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9. The Ambassador in the Republic of China (Rankin) to the Department of State, Nov. 18, 1953. *FRUS*, Vol. 14, p. 333.
10. Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs (McConaughy) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), Nov. 4, 1953. *FRUS*, Vol. 14, p. 263.
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22. Ibid., p. 370.
23. Ibid., p. 368.
24. Memorandum by Robertson to Dulles, Mar. 31, 1954. Ibid., p.400.
25. Memorandum from Bowie to Robertson, March 20, 1954, Decimal Files, 793.5/3-2054, RG 59, National Archives, Washington.
26. Nancy Tucker, "A House Divided: The United States, the Department of State, and China," p. 46.
27. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Allison), March 19, 1953. FRUS, Vol. 14, p.158.
28. Memorandum for the File by McConaughy, Feb. 27, 1954, Ibid., p.369.
29. Memorandum by Robertson to Dulles, March 31, 1954, Ibid., p.401.
30. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Cutler), May 22, 1954. Ibid., p. 429.
31. Notes of Conversation Between Koo and Robertson, April 7, 1954, Koo Papers, Box 191, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
32. Notes of Conversation Between Koo and Everett F. Drumright, April 29, 1954, Ibid. See also "Memorandum of Conversation," Record of the Chinese Affairs, 611.93/4-2954, RG 59, the National Archives.
33. Drumright to the Secretary, May 19, 1954, Record of the Chinese Affairs, 611.93/5-1754, RG 59, National Archives.
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35. Ibid.
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38. Telegram from Rankin to Dulles, June 22, 1954, Decimal Files 795.5/6-2254, RG 59, National Archives.
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The Tachen Withdrawal

The signing of the Mutual Defense Treaty between Taipei and Washington notably irritated the People's Republic of China. In late December of 1954, Beijing were engaged in considerable propaganda activities protesting the Taiwan-US Treaty. On the New Year day of 1955, the PRC's government newspaper Remmin Ribao (People's Daily) carried its editorial warning that it would "strive for the defeat of the Treaty".¹ From January 10 on, the Chinese Communists commenced their heavy shelling over the Tachen islands held by 10,000 regular troops of the Chinese Nationalists.² A new crisis in the Taiwan Strait had begun.

Taipei immediately expressed to the American government grave concern over the military situation around Tachen islands and appealed for urgent assistance. On January 12, Ambassador Wellington Koo, under instructions from Jiang Jieshi, met with Assistant Secretary Robertson and the Director of Chinese Affairs Walter McConaughy. Koo described the danger of imminent attack by the Communists on the Tachens islands and indicated that their loss would definitely be a serious blow to the Chinese Nationalists. He declared that his government did not intend to involve the United States in combat action; however, material and moral support "would be of great psychological value to the Chinese Armed forces defending the islands." Koo informed Robertson of Taipei's requests for the U.S. government to publicly condemn the Communist assault on the Tachen islands, at the same time, provide assurances of "generous logistic support for the defense of the off-shore islands" and accelerate military supplies already scheduled. Koo asked Robertson to convey these requests to Secretary Dulles urgently.³

McConaughy sympathized with the Chinese Nationalists and considered their request "a matter of the utmost importance and urgency." In his memorandum of

January 14 to Robertson, McConaughy listed three alternative courses open to the U.S. government. He recommended the U.S. should either meet Taipei's requests "as expeditiously and wholeheartedly as possible", or take the matter to the UN, or advise the Chinese Nationalists to evacuate the material and personnel on the Tachen islands "to the extent they desire". McConaughy proposed quick action for the U.S. government, since he believed that the Nationalist forces were "halfhearted" to defend the Tachens and the loss of these islands "would considerably enhance the likelihood of the loss of the other off-shore islands."⁴

U.S. policy towards the offshore islands was shaped by the National Security Council on the 22nd of December, 1954. The council recommended that prior to the ratification of the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taipei the U.S. should continue its unilateral arrangement to defend Taiwan and Penghu, however, "excluding the Nationalist held off-shore islands". The United States also should proceed with its UN action in an effort to preserve the status quo of these islands; at the same time, "without committing U.S. forces" the United States would "provide to the Chinese Nationalist forces military equipment and training to assist them to defend such off-shore islands."⁵

American determination to defend Taiwan and Penghu was very firm, but its approach to the off-shore islands was rather vague. The U.S. government desired these islands to remain in the hands of the Chinese Nationalists, and was willing to provide military assistance for their defense; however, it was reluctant to make an explicit commitment to the defense of the offshore islands. The sudden shelling of the Tachen islands by the Chinese Communists forced the Eisenhower administration to reconsider its basic policy to the off-shore islands.

On January 19, Dulles indicated to Eisenhower that probably it was time for the U.S. to modify its NSC decision of December 22, 1954. Dulles contended that

the U.S. should "make our intentions clear and then stick to them", because the doubt as to American intentions "was having a bad effect" on U.S. prestige in the area.⁶

Dulles recommended encouraging the Chinese Nationalists to evacuate the Tachens and some other islands. He expressed his doubt about the feasibility of announcing American abandonment of all off-shore islands, since "this would be such a shock to the Republic of China that they might turn against us." Consequently, Dulles proposed that the United States indicate its intention to hold Jinmen, which was more defensible and militarily more valuable than the Tachens.⁷ President Eisenhower generally agreed with Dulles's plan, while Admiral Radford reiterated his previous advocacy that all the offshore islands should be held, but he was prepared to compromise if the United States would defend Jinmen.⁸

Announcing the intention to hold Jinmen was a deal for persuading the Chinese Nationalists to withdraw from the Tachens and other islands. Dulles indicated that he had to discuss it with the Taiwan Foreign Minister George Yeh in the hope that the Taiwan government would accept the "deal". In the meantime, the British should be consulted. Dulles also planned to meet with the Congressional leaders in order to ascertain whether Congress would grant the President explicit authority to carry out the course of action Dulles had outlined.⁹

Secretary Dulles informed his plan to George Yeh, who was visiting Washington at the time. As to Mazu, the Secretary left the choice to the Nationalists, though his strong advice was "to pull out". Dulles told Yeh that the U.S. could not "play a fuzzy game any longer". The American Government must make its position clear and be prepared to carry out the obligations, "otherwise the U.S. reputation would become tarnished." As to the offshore islands, Dulles simply commented that "it did not make sense to tie up major forces to hold a bunch of

rocks." On the other hand, Dulles admitted that "there would be a bad effect on morale throughout the Far East "if all the offshore islands were abandoned. As a result, the United States had decided to join in the defense of Jinmen. Dulles persuaded Yeh that the adverse morale resulting from a withdrawal from the Tachens could be largely offset by the American announcement of the protection of Jinmen.¹⁰

Whether Dulles realized it or not, these "bunch of rocks" were of considerable value to the Chinese Nationalists, who had always been determined to defend them. Taiwan Foreign Minister George Yeh expressed his strong disagreement with Dulles on the strategic value of the Tachen islands. Yeh concurred that "fuzziness" regarding the off-shore islands "had existed for too long". But "the matter was of great moment and considerable delicacy", since he had to consult not only the Generalissimo (Jiang Jieshi) but also the Executive Yuan.¹¹

Dulles was aware that he could not put too much pressure on the Chinese Nationalists. He expressed to Yeh that the U.S. Government was willing to consider the ideas of the Taiwan Government. Dulles tried to explain to Yeh that the proposal was actually "very much in the interest of the Chinese Government." Dulles hoped Taipei would go along with his proposal, because the proposed course of action required the concurrence of the Taiwan government. "if the Chinese Government rejected the proposal," he concluded, "it would lose the whole business."¹²

At the same time, on January 20th, Secretary Dulles and Admiral Radford met with Congressional leaders from the Senate and the House. Speaking on behalf of President Eisenhower, Dulles introduced their plan of regrouping the Nationalist forces stationed on the off-shore islands, namely, withdraw from the Tachens and try to hold Jinmen. Dulles explained to the Congressional leadership the difference

between Jinmen and the Tachen from both military and psychological perspectives. He stated that these islands were important thanks to their involvement to the morale, "not only of the Nationalist Chinese, but of all other countries in the Far East"; Military, Jinmen "can be covered by the Nationalist air force from Formosa," while the Tachens, relatively near Communist bases, "could only be protected from carrier based planes. As a parallel step, Dulles wanted to proceed with his UN cease-fire proposal, which he hoped would also be a "stabilizing factor" for the situation.¹³

After the introduction of his plan for dealing with the crisis in Taiwan Strait, Dulles told the congressional leaders that some authority would be needed from Congress for the President "to use the armed forces of the United States in the area for the protection and security of Formosa and Pescadores." It might be necessary to strike the Communist positions on the mainland. Besides, the evacuation of the Nationalist forces of the Tachens would require the assistance of U.S. armed forces. Dulles described the President's present "war powers" deriving from the Korean War as more and more doubtful since the armistice in Korea. As a result, President Eisenhower requested Congress to grant him the power to "commit the armed forces of the United States to the defense of Formosa and related areas."¹⁴

Finally, Dulles pointed out to the Congressional leaders that the United States certainly did not plan any permanent commitment of the U.S. armed forces to hold these offshore islands. If the cease-fire could be accomplished in the Taiwan Strait, "the commitment insofar as the off-shore islands is concerned would disappear."¹⁵

Although Senator Alexander Wiley raised some concern that the requested Presidential authority would be "intervening on the part of the sides to a civil war," and therefore "the whole Far East would be against us"; most of the members of

Congress had seemed to approve the course of action which Dulles had outlined. They showed their appreciation of the dangers inherent in the situation and the great importance of an unequivocal statement of the U.S. position. Representative Richard said that on his trip to the Far Eastern countries he found most people there wanted to know what the Americans were doing. He expressed strongly the view that if the United States planned to withdraw from some of the islands it must tell the world how far it was going and that "we are going no further," Senator Earle Clements agreed by stating that "the time has come when we need to make our position clear" and the United States should not retreat any more. Many other leaders indicated their consent to Dulles's proposal and urged quick action.¹⁶

At home, Dulles received substantial support from Congress, but the response from the British government was negative. The British did not like the idea of a "provisional guarantee" of Jinmen. They reiterated the previous agreement reached with the Americans that a situation be worked out under which the People's Republic of China would accept a separation of Taiwan, and the Republic of China would abandon the off-shore islands. The British Cabinet doubted the feasibility of Dulles's expectation that the "provisional guarantee" should only last until stability was achieved in the Taiwan Strait, since stability could never be reached as long as the Chinese Nationalists held Jinmen. The British were also afraid that the commitment to Jinmen might involve the use of atomic weapons. Nevertheless, they might go along with Dulles' program if President Eisenhower requested Congressional authority "without publicly identifying those offshore islands which the United States would help to defend."¹⁷

Dulles's plan was also met with considerable objection in Washington. At two NSC meetings, a few officials articulated their disagreement with Dulles. Robert Cutler, the President's national security adviser, contended that by adopting

the policy proposed by Dulles the United States was "greatly enhancing the risk of war with Communist China." He warned the NSC members not to look only on the "rosy alternative" as to what was going to occur if Dulles's plan was adopted but also look at the "darker alternative" - namely war with China.¹⁸

President Eisenhower refuted Cutler's argument by claiming that the proposed course of action would not enhance the risk of war with China, but instead it would decrease it. Dulles added that making U.S. position clear regarding the offshore islands would certainly run less risk than leaving it unclear.¹⁹

Treasury Secretary George Humphrey agreed that the United States should draw a sensible defense line in the Taiwan Strait, however, he stated "the real question ... was where to draw this defense line, and why Jinmen should be included within it." Humphry went on to say that it was very hard for him to justify the proposal to retain the Jinmens, "which was a 'hot spot' in the middle of Chinese Communist territory";²⁰ It would be even harder to explain to the American people "why we were finding it necessary to hold on to Quemoy."²¹

Defense Secretary Charles Wilson restated the position he held at the Denver meeting in September 1954. He felt the United States should just hold Taiwan and the Penghu and "let the others go." This was the only way to stabilize the situation in the Far East. As long as any of the offshore islands remained in the hands of the Chinese Nationalists, there could be no "cooling off of the hot situation," because the former was simply an invitation to Chinese Communist military action. To sum up, Wilson was ardently opposed to fighting a war with China only for holding "all these little islands."²²

Dulles claimed that he by no means disagreed with the position taken by Culter, Humphrey and Wilson "over the period." He explained that he did not want to be pinned down to a permanent defense of Jinmen and Matsu. However, at the

moment, the United States could not instruct the Chinese Nationalists to abandon all the offshore islands. "To do so would at present have a catastrophic effect on Chinese Nationalist morale."²³ Obviously defending Jinmen was only a side-effect component of his proposal, the ultimate aim was to defend Taiwan and stabilize the situation in the Far East.

President Eisenhower's opinion was very much in accord with Dulles's. "Our ultimate objective is to defend Formosa and the Pescadores," Eisenhower argued to the NSC; "the other offshore islands were incidental to this objective."²⁴ The psychological consequences of abandoning all the offshore islands were too serious. Eisenhower reminded NSC members that Jiang Jieshi might in despair give up Taiwan itself as a result of it.²⁵ Eisenhower stated that the United States would change its policy, and "get out of the offshore islands" when the stability was realized in the Taiwan area, but, at the moment, he was "absolutely determined" to hold Jinmen at all costs. Briefly, President Eisenhower declared, "no matter how a congressional resolution was worded", if an emergency happened, "he would do whatever had to be done to protect the vital interest of the United States", and would rather take the risk of being impeached than fail to do his duty, "even if his actions should be interpreted as acts of war."²⁶

The 232nd and 233rd NSC meetings ended with the decision that Dulles's plan would be proceeded and a message would be sent to the Congress seeking Presidential authority to send armed forces to Taiwan. However, perhaps due to the pressure from the British and strong objection by Secretary Wilson and several other decision makers, Eisenhower and Dulles changed their mind about making a public commitment to Jinmen and Mazu. They came to a conclusion that, in the Presidential statement to Congress, "it would be best not to nail the flag to the mast by a detailed statement respecting our plans and intentions on evacuating or holding

certain of these islands." Instead, American commitment to hold Jinmen could be told privately to Taipei.²⁷

On January 21, Dulles notified George Yeh that the United States had decided to assist in the defense of Mazu as well as Jinmen; however, no public announcement would be made as to this intention. George Yeh and Taiwan Ambassador Koo were very surprised. Dulles maintained that it was a matter of U.S. policy instead of agreement with the Chinese Nationalists, therefore, "could be changed by the United States just as any other policy."²⁸

The following day, Ambassador Koo reported to the Department of State of Jiang Jieshi's response. Jiang had reluctantly agreed to evacuate from the Tachens. Jiang described the withdrawal from the Tachens as a "mistake", and "an undesirable alternative but the only one left." Jiang seemed to have ignored Washington's change of mind, and conveyed certain "understandings" to the Department of State. Besides demanding U.S. assistance for the evacuation of the Tachens, Jiang requested Washington make a public statement as to its support of the defense of Jinmen and Mazu, "at about the same time as the announcement of the withdrawal from the Tachens." George Yeh added that the U.S. announcement about the defense of Jinmen and Mazu was very important to offset adverse effects of the withdrawal from the Tachens. Finally, Jiang revealed his wish that Washington rethink the UN proposal, which Jiang labeled as an encouragement for those "who are working toward the goal of two 'Chinas'."²⁹

Taipei's wish did not make the Eisenhower Administration change its mind again. Two days later Eisenhower sent his special request to Congress. Stating that the seizure of Taiwan and the Penghu by an unfriendly power would seriously threaten peace and stability in the Pacific, Eisenhower stressed that it was necessary for the United States to take firm measures including preparations for the use of

American armed forces to "improve the prospects for peace." The message demanded special congressional authorization to commit American forces to Taiwan and the Penghu; however, it did not contain an explicit commitment to the defense of the offshore islands. It read as follows:

...the damage of armed attack directed against that area (Taiwan and the Penghu) compels us to take into account closely related localities and actions which...might determine the failure or the success of such an attack. The authority that may be accorded by the Congress would be used only in situations which are recognized as parts of, or define preliminaries to, an attack against the main position of Formosa and the Pescadores.³⁰

Eisenhower further explained that the Resolution would be only a temporary request and it should expire as soon as "the peace and security of the area are reasonably assured by international conditions."³¹

In Congress, the House approved the Resolution by a vote of 410 to 3. But the Senate insisted on holding hearings.³² The majority of the Senate Committee favored the Resolution, especially Senator Knowland, from California, who was also called 'The Senator From Formosa'. Knowland agreed with the President that Taiwan was important to American national security; hence the United States should keep it "in friendly hands". Knowland also advocated protection for the offshore islands as important to the defense of Taiwan and the Penghu.³³ Senator Smith from Maine argued the United States should stand firm to resist "Communist aggression", since "the Reds have given us no other choice." Senator Smith, together with some other Senators, called for an unanimous consent to the President's request.³⁴

Several Senators, however, were not in favor of the Resolution. Senator Estes Kefauver called the Resolution a "war resolution." He pointed out that "such positions and territories" meant Jinmen and Mazu islands. Although he had no

objection to the defense of Taiwan itself, Kefauver warned that the agreement to defend "the little coastal islands" would greatly increase the risk of involvement in a general war. Furthermore, he asserted that according to the American Constitution the power of committing an act of war against a sovereign country was vested not in the President but Congress. Consequently, Kefauver proposed that the references to "these islands" be eliminated from the resolution.³⁵

Senator Kefauver's view was shared by Senator Hubert Humphrey who was of the opinion that the differences between defending Taiwan and Penghu and defending the offshore islands was that the former was an American obligation while the latter was interfering in a domestic matter, thanks to the fact that Taiwan and Penghu were outside the jurisdiction of Communist China after World War II; but the offshore islands had always been Chinese territory. Humphrey consequently introduced an amendment to limit Presidential authority only to Taiwan and Penghu. Senator Morse pled for a United Nations trusteeship,³⁶ and Senator Herbert Lehman introduced an amendment "drawing a line back of Quemoy and Matzu and confine the use of American forces to the defense of Formosa and the Pescadores."³⁷

All the amendments were rejected by the Senate when President Eisenhower announced that American forces would be used purely for defensive purposes and that he would not commit them to the defense of Jinmen and Mazu "unless he was convinced that an attack against the islands were merely a prelude to an assault against Formosa itself."³⁸ On January 28, by the overwhelming vote of 83 to 3, the Senate passed the Presidential request, which became known as the Formosa Resolution.³⁹

Complementing the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan, Formosa Resolution confirmed Washington's determination to defend Taiwan and the

Penghu. However, with no reference to the offshore islands in the Resolution, U.S. commitment to the defense of such islands was uncertain. In his letter to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Eisenhower explained his positions on the offshore islands:

We must make a distinction - (this is a difficult one) - between an attack that has only as its objectives the capture of an offshore island and one that is primarily a preliminary movement to an all-out attack on Formosa.⁴⁰

This "distinction" was not an easy one, as Eisenhower admitted. And he himself had been wondering "what to do if something happens in Quemoy and Matzu."⁴¹ The offshore islands presented Eisenhower with the most difficult problem since he took office.

Unexpectedly, Washington's ambiguous resolution did not please its allies, neither the British nor the Chinese Nationalists. Churchill saw no point of holding on to Jinmen and Mazu, as he believed that there existed no decisive relationship between the offshore islands and an invasion of Taiwan.⁴² The reaction from the Chinese Nationalists was much stronger. Thus Washington had to work harder to persuade them to act in accordance.

During the negotiation of the Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States, the Chinese Nationalists had tried very hard to get the off-shore island included in the Treaty. Shortly after the Treaty was signed, on several occasions they contended that the off-shore islands were covered in the agreement. Now, at the moment when the U.S. was persuading them to abandon the Tachens, the Chinese Nationalists were as tenacious as ever before to attain an explicit American commitment to the defense of the off-shore islands. Jiang's understanding, based on Dulles's talk with Foreign Minister Yeh on January 19, had been that the United States would publicly announce its intention to join in the defense of Jinmen if the Chinese Nationalists

withdrew from the Tachens.⁴³ Despite several of indications of American changes of mind regarding a public announcement, Jiang insisted that the United States adhere to the original deal. On January 26, he sent a telegram to his Foreign Minister Yeh informing him that plans for the Tachen evacuation had begun but "a final decision must wait for the Chinese and American sides to issue public and official statements."⁴⁴

Vice-President of the Executive Yuan, Huang Shaoku, responsible for making publicity arrangements concerning the statements on the Tachens withdrawal, also cabled Koo and Yeh stating that Chinese and American statements regarding the defense of Jinmen and Mazu must be published simultaneously. Huang proposed that the Chinese statement should "leak out that the withdrawal was due to the proposal of President Eisenhower or the United States government." He was probably hoping this would obligate the U.S. to be responsible for the defense of the off-shore islands.⁴⁵ Acting Foreign Minister Shen Chunghuan suggested that Yeh and Koo ask the American government to inform Taipei "by note of the areas to be jointly defended" if a public statement was not made. Shen reasoned that the matter was related to the extension of the scope of the territory covered by the Treaty. If the U.S. could notify Taipei in a note, Shen pointed out "we could take it as an exchange of the notes for the purpose of carrying out Article VI of the Treaty." He was simply demanding a formal commitment by the U.S. government to the defense of the off-shore islands.⁴⁶

On January 27, Yeh submitted to Robertson a draft Chinese statement regarding withdrawal from the Tachens, which said "the United States has indicated to the Chinese Government its determination also to join in the defense of the Quemoy and Mazu areas." Yeh reiterated his understanding that after passage of

the Joint Resolution Washington would make the same announcement as his government regarding Jinmen and Mazu.⁴⁷

On the next day, Secretary Dulles's told Yeh that the United States wanted Taipei to avoid naming Jinmen and Mazu in its formal statements. In addition, Dulles's indicated to Yeh that the responsibilities which the United States assumed about the offshore islands were voluntary and unilateral so Taipei could not hold Washington to any agreement. Dulles's further warned that if through public statements Taipei put the United States in the position of having made a formal commitment to Jinmen and Mazu, the U.S. Government would have to deny such an implication.⁴⁸

On January 21, the U.S. Congress issued the Formosa Resolution that excluded any reference to Jinmen and Mazu.⁴⁹ Jiang was very upset that the offshore islands were not specifically mentioned in the Formosa Resolution.⁵⁰ He revealed his anger to American Ambassador Rankin that the United States had broken the promise it made prior to President's message to Congress. Jiang stated that in relations with his government the U.S. should "realize it was not dealing with children." During his conversation with Rankin, Jiang emphasized words such as "honor, probity, equity, sincerity." The Generalissimo told Rankin that he would never have gone back on his word to the United States and hoped the United States would "be guided by like principle."⁵¹ Jiang also criticized Washington for having no policy of its own. He was convinced that American foreign policy had been influenced by the British. In summary, Jiang asked Rankin to send an urgent request to the Department of State that the U.S. government make a statement announcing its intention to help in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu.⁵² In the meantime, Jiang would withhold the evacuation of the Tachen islands until the United States clarified its stand on the offshore islands.⁵³

Upon receiving the urgent request from Jiang, President Eisenhower had met with his advisers. Eisenhower confirmed that the U.S. could not make a public statement specifying the defense of Jinmen and Mazu. Although "originally ... we had contemplated such a statement, we had changed our view on this as a result of further consideration." The U.S. should not tie itself to only "one incident" in the great over-all struggle against Communism. Eisenhower cautioned that a public commitment could be construed as of "indefinite duration" by the Chinese Nationalists. He reminded his advisers that "NATO and what we are try to do in Europe is vital to our security and we must bear this constantly in mind in what we in the Formosa area."⁵⁴ The President's statement clearly indicated the characteristics of "Europe-First" in American foreign policy.

At the end of the meeting, Eisenhower indicated that the American purpose was to defend Taiwan and Penghu in the Far East. If an attack on Jinmen and Mazu occurred, U.S. forces would be employed only when he judged the attack "constitute a threat to Formosa and the Pescadores". No public announcement concerning this would be made, though Jiang would be informed in private. In other words, the American responsibilities as to the offshore islands were unilateral; it was up to the U.S. President to make the decision. Washington thus left its options open.⁵⁵

In the following few days, the Eisenhower administration continued to exert pressure on the Chinese Nationalists. When George Yeh complained to Robertson that the abrupt reversal of the U.S. position left Taipei in an awkward situation and Jiang harbored suspicions that he had been "double-crossed", Robertson responded by commenting that "Jiang was making a large issue." Robertson maintained that the Taipei government should be very satisfied with the overwhelming favorable vote in Congress on the Joint Resolution, and "the positive significance of the Resolution far outweighed the slightly negative impact of the U.S. decision not to

make a public commitment about the defense of Quemoy and Matsu." He further criticized that Jiang's world view "was nearly as restricted as that of a typical U.S. midwesterner." Robertson urged that the Chinese Nationalists understand the complexities of the U.S. political and diplomatic process, and "curb their suspicions and negotiate on a basis of full confidence."⁵⁶

Under American pressures, Jiang Jieshi finally relented. On February 2, he expressed to Rankin his understanding that the United States would not mention Jinmen and Matsu in public announcement, and Jiang quoted a Chinese proverb that "one never asks a friend to do the impossible."⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Jiang did not cease taking action on his own side. On February 3, he rejected the revised draft of Chinese statement prepared by George Yeh in which Yeh deleted the reference of Jinmen and Matsu as "being related positions and territories" which the United States would assist in defending.⁵⁸ On the same day, Yeh told Robertson Taipei wanted to know if the Chinese Nationalists alone could make a unilateral statement referring to Jinmen and Matsu. Robertson reiterated that the U.S. government might have to publicly repudiate any public implications of the Chinese Nationalists that the United States had a commitment to the defense of Jinmen and Matsu.⁵⁹

On February 4, Jiang Jieshi instructed George Yeh to inform the U.S. government that the Chinese statement must mention the American assurance of joining in the defense of Jinmen and Matsu, since otherwise "the announcement could not allay the unfavorable effect of evacuation from the Tachens upon the morale of the Chinese armed forces and the Chinese people." Acting Secretary of State, Herbert Hoover, told Yeh that although the United States would join in the defense of Jinmen and Matsu President Eisenhower would not make a public announcement, "nor could he (Eisenhower) agree to its mention in a Chinese announcement from Taipei."⁶⁰ But Jiang was quite determined to proceed without

listening to Washington's warning. He refused to receive Rankin, who carried President Eisenhower's "specific instructions."⁶¹ On February 6, Taiwan's acting Foreign Minister Shen Chunghuan handed to Rankin a draft Chinese statement in which Jinmen and Mazu were referred to. Jiang attached great importance to mentioning these islands.⁶² Before the advice for modification from Washington reached Taipei, the statement had already appeared in the local newspaper.⁶³ *The New York Times* quoted the text of the statement as following:

In order to meet the new challenge of international Communist aggression, the Government of the Republic of China has decided to redeploy the forces defending certain off-shore islands and to strengthen the defense of other important islands, such as Quemoy, Matsu, et cetera, with the forces now in the Tachen area...⁶⁴

Taipei took additional precautions in revising the statement, limited the mention of Jinmen and Mazu to the paragraph dealing only with Chinese forces, and placing a buffer paragraph between reference to Jinmen and to American assistance. Thus the U.S. government did not bother to repudiate the Chinese statement.⁶⁵

On the same day, Jiang issued a public statement addressed to all Chinese, domestic and abroad, which related the "redeployment of forces" on the offshore islands to the Nationalist objective of "recovering the mainland". Jiang stated the maneuver of redeployment was positive action strengthening the position of Jinmen and Mazu and "preparing for the counterattack " rather than a negative withdrawal. Jiang also encouraged 'his people' not to be disheartened by the loss of "one island", instead to keep firmly in mind the "glorious mission" of "recovering the mainland."⁶⁶

The two-week dispute between Taipei and Washington over the Tachen evacuation and the announcement regarding the defense of the off-shore islands revealed some differences in approaching their foreign policy. Contrary to Dulles's view that American assistance in the Tachen withdrawal was very much in the

interest of the Chinese Nationalists, Jiang Jieshi claimed "Tachen was given up to satisfy (the) US."⁶⁷ American policy makers regarded their commitment to the defense of Jinmen and Mazu as unilateral thereby it could be changed any time. Meanwhile Jiang criticized the Americans for having broken their promise. To Jiang, adhering to what one had said was the "principle". He told Rankin that "whatever promise I and our government make to any friendly country and the United Nations, I must carry out." In order to carry out his promise, if necessary, one might have to sacrifice his own interest and even his own country's, but "principle and righteousness must not be abandoned." Apparently, Jiang considered the Americans' change of mind as being unfaithful to their friends, and a disgraceful act.⁶⁸

The Tachen evacuation was eventually carried out, but the Chinese Nationalists and the Americans did not reach a clear agreement on the defense of the offshore islands. Jiang unilaterally made it public that the United States would assist the defense of Jinmen and Mazu, while the Eisenhower administration held its intention reserved, at least publicly so. The disagreement over the offshore islands between Taiwan and Washington became more acute as the Taiwan Strait crisis deteriorated in the spring of 1955.

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Talking Nuclear and "Out-Posts" Scheme

Despite the various efforts of the Eisenhower administration to relax the crisis in the Taiwan Strait, the tension continued to build up. Washington began considering extreme means to end the crisis. From late February to March, 1955, Dulles and Eisenhower went so far as to talk about using nuclear weapons in the Taiwan Strait. The administration appeared to have come closest to using atomic weapons over the off-shore island crisis since Eisenhower came to office.¹

Talking nuclear in the Far East was a reflection of the "containment" policy pursued by the Eisenhower administration. The U.S. post-W.W.II "containment" policy was initially designed by George Kennan, the Director of Policy Planning Staffs in the Truman administration. Kennan believed that the Communist world was not integrated and the United States should take advantage of that weakness to reduce the Soviet Union power. Kennan called for a "liberation" of the Soviet Satellites from Russian control.² The Eisenhower administration was convinced of the split existing between the Soviet Union and China. However, unlike Kennan, who thought the United States should try to conciliate the Soviet satellites so as to facilitate their break from Moscow, Dulles insisted that the United States ought to strain the relationship between the Soviet Union and the rest of the Communist world by "applying maximum pressure on it."³ Dulles's approach has been termed by historians as "wedge through pressure" or "New Look" strategy.

In Dulles's containment policy, it was intended to "achieve the maximum possible deterrence of Communism at the minimum possible cost."⁴ The administration excessively relied on atomic weapons as the primary instrument of deterrence. As early as 1953, President Eisenhower approved a policy paper recommending the use of nuclear weapons "even in limited-war situations."⁵ It was

assumed that resorting to atomic weapons would not bring about an all-out nuclear war. Instead, it would play the role of checking the expansion of war. Guided by this expectation, Eisenhower and Dulles agreed that the United States should reveal to the world its intention of possible use of nuclear weapons in the Taiwan Strait. They particularly wanted the PRC to know that this was a possibility. The Eisenhower administration anticipated that their "boldness" would not only check the Chinese Communist aggression but also widen the gap between Beijing and Moscow, since they believed that the Soviet Union would restrain rather than support the Chinese Communists if China was engaged in a war with the United States.⁶

Nevertheless, there existed some disagreement between Eisenhower and his advisers over the use of atomic weapons in the Taiwan Strait. Dulles, supported by the JCS, intended to stand for the defense of the offshore islands while Eisenhower showed more willingness to defend Taiwan itself rather than these islands. As a result, although Eisenhower agreed to Dulles's proposal of the possible use of atomic weapons to deter the Chinese Communists, he had been emphasizing using them for the purpose of defending Taiwan and Penghu instead of Jinmen and Mazu which Dulles had suggested to defend.

At the end of February, Secretary Dulles was in Bangkok for the first meeting of the Manila Pact Council (SEATO). During his trip to Taiwan, Dulles concluded that the crisis in the Taiwan Strait had become more intense than he had expected, neither the Mutual Defense Treaty with Taipei nor the Formosa Resolution had deterred Chinese Communist aggression. In his report to the Department of State, Dulles revealed his surprise about the Communist build-up of airfields, artillery emplacements and roads. Dulles stated that very soon "the Matsus and the Quemoy islands will be indefensible in the absence of massive US

intervention, perhaps with atomic weapons, and Taiwan itself will be much more vulnerable."⁷

Believing that the United States was confronted with severe challenge by the Communists, Dulles advocated no further retreat. Although the United States had initiated various means to settle the military hostilities in the Taiwan area, "the Chinese Communists have become more intemperate."⁸ Reversing his previous assumption that Beijing's immediate interest was only the offshore islands, Dulles was now firmly convinced that the Chinese Communists were seriously intending to take Taiwan by force. Hence, the Communists should be deterred "right in front of" the offshore islands. Dulles reasoned that the abandonment of Jinmen and Mazu would make the defense of Taiwan more difficult. Their withdrawal would have serious effect on the ability of the Chinese Nationalists holding Taiwan if their morale disintegrated.⁹ "We have gone as far as is prudent in making concessions," Dulles asserted, so it was time to stop pressuring Jiang Jieshi into surrender of Jinmen and Mazu.¹⁰

President Eisenhower's determination to defend Taiwan and Penghu was as adamant as before, but he was hesitant to display his willingness to defend the offshore islands. Eisenhower did not seem to be convinced by Dulles that Beijing was seriously intending to take Taiwan by force. On the one hand, he stressed that the United States would participate more directly if an attack against the islands by the Communists was really a military part of a campaign against Taiwan.¹¹ On the other hand, Eisenhower did not favor Dulles's proposition of defending Jinmen and Mazu. On February 21, he instructed Dulles to inform Jiang of his wish that Jiang completely or partially withdraw from Jinmen and Mazu and his belief that the withdrawal would improve the situation for Taipei.¹²

Meanwhile, Eisenhower had a journalist Roy Howard, who was on the way to the Far East, deliver a message to the Taiwan government. Eisenhower hoped that Jiang would not "center his whole question of the morale of his people on those two islands." After having glorified Jiang's mission of recovering the mainland, Eisenhower pointed out that Jinmen and Mazu were only good for defensive positions thus "they certainly would not be used in an offensive by Chiang (Jiang) against the mainland." Jiang was not moved. He simply told Roy Howard that Jinmen and Matsu would be defended with or without direct U.S. aid.¹³

On his return to Washington on March 6, Dulles reported to Eisenhower that he had transmitted the President's intention to Jiang which wished the Chinese Nationalists reorient their policies so that less importance would be attached to the offshore islands. However, Dulles continued, the loss of Jinmen and Mazu would be catastrophic to the morale not only for the Chinese Nationalists but also for the rest of Asia. Eisenhower appeared to be very concerned about the morale in the Far East. He thus agreed with Dulles that "under present conditions" the United States should help to support those two coastal positions. He further approved Dulles' suggestion that the defense of the islands would require the use of atomic weapons.¹⁴

On March 10, Dulles reported to the National Security Council that the situation in the Taiwan Straits was far more grave than it was thought to be and "the Chinese Communists were determined to capture Formosa." A fight over Taiwan would be merely a matter of time. As for the offshore islands, Dulles asserted that "no solution to the Formosa problem would be provided" if Jinmen and Mazu were given up. He further warned that the atomic weapons had to be used if the United States defended Jinmen and Mazu.¹⁵

Most of the officials at the NSC meeting were speechless, except Admiral Radford, who vigorously confirmed Dulles's position on the use of nuclear weapons to defend the off-shore islands. Radford observed that the JCS had consistently proposed such a move. He commented that holding these off-shore was of immense help to the morale of the Chinese Nationalists, and their morale was essential to the defending of Taiwan and Penghu. Radford also pointed out that Jiang Jieshi was not opposed to the use of atomic weapons against the Chinese people on the mainland. As long as "they were warned in advance," Jiang said, "the Chinese people would accept such attacks as a war necessity."¹⁶

President Eisenhower agreed with Dulles that the morale on Taiwan was important, but he also had doubt about "what the Quemoy and Matsu had to do with the business."¹⁷ Nevertheless, Eisenhower was not opposed to the idea that public opinion should be prepared if the use of nuclear weapons became necessary. He instructed Dulles to include a paragraph in the Secretary's speech indicating that the United States would "use atomic weapons as interchangeable with conventional weapons."¹⁸ Quite possibly, Eisenhower was referring to the defending of Taiwan instead of the off-shore islands as for the necessity of using atomic weapons.

Dulles immediately started his effort to educate the American people. In a public statement on March 12, he talked of "new and powerful weapons of precision which can utterly destroy military targets without endangering unrelated civilian centers." Three days later, Dulles again told the press that "the administration was prepared to use tactical atomic weapons in case of war in the Formosa Straits."¹⁹ On several public occasion, the President himself also talked about the use of nuclear weapons. When being asked at a press conference whether the United States would use tactical atomic weapons in a general war in Asia, Eisenhower replied, "the answer would be 'yes'." As long as they were used against a strictly military target he

could see no reason why atomic weapons would not be employed "just exactly as you would use a bullet or anything else."²⁰ However, in his memoirs, Eisenhower wrote, "I hoped this answer would have some effect in persuading the Chinese Communists of the strength of our determination"²¹

It was likely that Eisenhower was expecting his public statement would deter the Chinese Communists from attacking Taiwan more than he was preparing his people for the use of atomic weapons. In reality, he would be very reluctant to use nuclear weapons in the Taiwan area. On March 11, Eisenhower called a special meeting with his top advisers, in order to discuss the situation in the Taiwan Strait and to determine if it was really as serious as Dulles had described. At this meeting the President elucidated his strong desire to avoid U.S. involvement in defense of the off-shore islands, especially the use of nuclear weapons. He was concerned the U.S. intervention "might damage the nation's image in Western Europe."²² The United States should do "every practical thing" to help the Chinese Nationalists to "take care of themselves," Eisenhower told his advisers, if it became necessary for the United States to intervene, "we should do so with conventional weapons." and the use of atomic weapons "should come only at the end." After the meeting, President Eisenhower decided to send his trusted assistant, Andrew Goodpaster, to Honolulu to examine the whole matter regarding Jinmen and Mazu. Goodpaster was instructed that despite the defense of the off-shore islands "as the main concern" for Washington "at the present time" there was a need for "close analysis of alternatives and course of action."²³

In a few days, Goodpaster reported to the President from Honolulu the estimate of the military situation by Admiral Stump. In Stump's opinion, preparation for a full-scale attack against Jinmen and Mazu by the Chinese Communists would require at least four to eight week; in the meantime, the Communist artillery threat

to the off-shore islands was harassing but not critical. Admiral Stump further considered that the Nationalists alone could defend any Communist attack without the assistance of the U.S. air forces, and the support of American conventional operations would be sufficient to assure against the loss of these islands.²⁴

Goodpaster's optimistic report firmly convinced Eisenhower that war with China was not impending. A few days later, the President wrote in his diary, "I believe hostilities are not so imminent as is indicated by the foreboding of a number of my associates." He even expected that the anticipated calamities might never occur.²⁵ On March 25, Eisenhower became particularly agitated when he heard Admiral Carney briefed newspaper reporters that "the President was considering acting militarily on an all-out basis" against the Chinese Communist attacks and the war was expected to break out on April 15. While asking Carney to stop talking, Eisenhower instructed his Press Secretary Hagerty to "tell press people not to be led astray by such news as Carney gave out, to believe that Administration is being vigilant, and certainly trying to get by without a war."²⁶

The President stood almost alone, "as an advocate of restraint in language and commitments." One press report observed that Eisenhower was the "one member of the administration who is determined not to go to war over the off-shore islands if he found any possible way of avoiding it." Among those who disagreed with the President, the Joint Chiefs of Staff proposed the maximum of commitment to the defense of the off-shore islands. They sent Secretary of Defense a memorandum suggesting the Chinese Communists and Nationalists be informed "through diplomatic channels" that the United States would join in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu. On March 26, in a meeting in the State Department, Admiral Arden expressed his grave concern about "the build-up of the Chinese Communist airfields which would enable them to attack Foremast and do great damage." He asserted

that the situation could not be stabilized in the Far East "without hostilities and without the Chinese Communists getting a bloody nose."²⁷ The following day, Aardor recommended again that the United States directly tell Beijing and Moscow of the American intention to use every means possible to defend the off-shore islands.²⁸ Commenting on the JCS proposal, Secretary Dulles indicated his doubt that the President would approve it. Dulles pointed out that President Eisenhower was not willing to make a decision on the defense of Jinmen and Mazu "until a situation occurred which would clearly indicate that the defense of Quemoy and Mazu were related to the defense of Formosa."²⁹

As Dulles expected, Eisenhower rejected the advice of the military. On March 30, the President and the Secretary held a bipartisan luncheon meeting with the Congressional leaders. After Dulles long presentation accusing the Chinese Communists of aggression in the Far East, Representative Sam Rayburn said that as he understood the situation, the United States would intervene in the event of an attack on the off-shore islands. Before Dulles spoke, Eisenhower quickly corrected Rayburn's statement. The President stated that he had not made the decision and would not make it until he was "in possession of the particular circumstances surrounding such an attack." Eisenhower further explained that if the Chinese Nationalists themselves could successfully defend the coastal islands with American equipment he would personally "hold off and give them the opportunity." Their victory would have a tremendous morale effect "not only on Formosa but throughout that part of the world."³⁰ Nevertheless, Eisenhower did not clearly state what if the Chinese Nationalists could not defend the islands, instead he pointed out the difficulty in determining "whether or not an attack on Quemoy and Matsu, if made, is truly a local operation or a preliminary to a major effort against Formosa."³¹

President Eisenhower was unwilling to be fully committed to the defense of the off-shore islands, but he was equally reluctant to exert pressure on Jiang to abandon them. The defense of the islands had been such a troublesome problem in Washington-Taibei relations that Eisenhower could not wait any longer to solve it. Based on Goodpaster's optimistic report from Honolulu, the President was not as convinced as Dulles that a war was imminent, neither was he as eager as Radford to start one. Rather, Eisenhower wanted to settle the off-shore islands issue. In his opinion, Jinmen and Mazu were important only due to their psychological value to the Chinese Nationalists. If their loss would not be a significant blow to the morale of the Nationalist troops, Eisenhower would be happy to see them abandoned.

In his letter to Churchill on March 29, the President stated "we are not interested in Quemoy and Matsu" However, he was unwilling to put so much pressure on Jiang Jieshi that Jiang might give up the "entire struggle". Eisenhower warned, Jiang's troops were an essential land force in the Far East deterring the Communists, and "the loss of Formosa would doom the Philippines and eventually the remainder of the region." In order to hold Taiwan and the Far East, the morale of Jiang's troops must be sustained, but not the off-shore islands. Therefore, Eisenhower wrote to Churchill:

... I would personally be very happy, both as a political leader and as an ex-soldier who may have a bit of competence in the strategic field, to see Chiang voluntarily and in accordance with what he believed to be his own best interest, withdraw from Quemoy and the Matsus.³²

Apparently, he was expecting one stone to shoot two birds - voluntary withdrawal by Jiang from Jinmen and Mazu would not only solve the off-shore islands problem but also maintain the Nationalist morale in Taiwan.

On April 1, Eisenhower met with his advisers. For the first time, he clearly revealed his idea to solve the off-shore islands issue. Eisenhower remarked that the primary consideration was to "preserve the morale and the desire to fight on the part of the Chinese Nationalists". On the other hand, it would be undesirable for the United States to get involved in "an all-out fight" with the Chinese Communists to retain Jinmen and Mazu. The solution Eisenhower proposed for the dilemma was to persuade Jiang Jieshi to evacuate voluntarily from the off-shore islands, in return for the U.S. offer to deploy a division of American Marines and augment the U.S. Air Forces on Taiwan.³³ President Eisenhower expected his plan to make Jinmen and Mazu outposts rather than 'citadels' and symbols of prestige.

Four days later, Eisenhower presented his ideas in greater details to Dulles in a long memorandum and urged him to come up with a specific course of action. Eisenhower at length analyzed the nature of the existing situation in the Taiwan Strait. He first pointed out the Chinese Nationalist "morale and military efficiency are essential to the defense of Formosa and the security of Formosa is essential to the best interest of the United States and the Western world." Eisenhower expressed his anger with Jiang who was gambling his whole position in Taiwan and his future on the two island groups by committing to a full-out defense to these islands. The existing situation put the United States in a disadvantage in front of the American domestic and world opinion, since the off-shore islands had long been regarded as part of the mainland China and "world opinion most emphatically repudiates outside interference in any Communist attack on Quemoy and Matsu."³⁴

President Eisenhower instructed Dulles to attempt to alter the nature of the situation regarding the off-shore islands, so that the Communist attack on them would not produce "dire political consequences." Eisenhower believed his proposal for Jiang to abandon the commitment to a full-out defense of the islands would

appear most advantageous to the United States. It would solidify "American and free world opinion behind us, sustaining the morale of Chiang and his forces on Formosa." The crux, Eisenhower recognized, was to "bring to Jiang's attention the great advantages." Consequently, a skillful negotiator selected to present the matter to Jiang must be a man "who Jiang trusts and who is himself convinced of the soundness of this program." Immediately, President Eisenhower started searching for this 'suitable' man and placing his hope on this person to realize his plan.³⁵

In the meantime, however, the American officials in the Far East were promoting a more aggressive action. General William Chase, the Chief of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) in Taiwan supported the request by the Defense of Minister of Taiwan, Yu Tawei, that Washington authorize the Nationalists bombing of the Communist air bases along the China coast. Chase and Ambassador Rankin also recommended a blockade of the China coast of all shipping from "Swatow to Chekiang-Fukien boundary."³⁶ Another plea for Washington's permission of the Chinese Nationalists to strike the Communist airfields came from Admiral Felix who argued that a high likelihood of success by the Nationalists should be very stimulating to them "whereas total restriction might have a deleterious effect" on their morale.³⁷

In contrast to these belligerent proposals, Robert Bowie called for a complete retreat by the United States from the off-shore islands. Bowie seemed to favor Eisenhower's plan, but he went much further to advise the White House to make a "public statement of its firm intention not to participate in defense of the islands." Bowie expressed his doubt on the feasibility of Eisenhower's plan, since these islands actually offered Jiang the most likely means for "involving the United States in hostilities with the Chinese Communists which could expand to create his opportunity for invasion" of the mainland. As a result, Bowie argued, Jiang could

hardly be persuaded to withdraw unless he was completely convinced that Washington had no intention of participating in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu. Such a public statement by the United States would coerce Jiang to regard the islands as "expendable outposts" and perhaps even withdraw from them eventually.³⁸

A few weeks after receiving the April 5 memorandum from the President, Dulles presented Eisenhower with the ideas he had developed with Robert Anderson, Radford, Herbert Hoover, Robertson and Allen Dulles. They had reached an agreement that it would not be wise for the United States to engage in hostilities merely to defend the off-shore islands, but neither did they think the President's idea practical, particularly Radford. It would be better, Dulles expressed, "to encourage a clean break" - the Nationalists should evacuate Jinmen and Mazu. Taipei could not properly complain of this decision since the off-shore islands were not included in the Mutual Defense Treaty area. However, lest the loss of Jinmen and Mazu would seriously impair the defensibility of Taiwan, the United States should blockade the China coast along the entire Taiwan Strait. "Unless and until the Chinese Communists in good faith renounce their avowed purpose to take Formosa by force," the United States should join the Nationalists to maintain this blockade. Dulles predicted that his blockade plan would not only against a seaborne attack on Taiwan, but also demonstrate that the United States "is prepared to take strong measures in the defense of Formosa."³⁹

Despite the approval of Dulles's plan, President Eisenhower had some doubts about the "blockade" and was hesitant to give up his idea of holding the off-shore islands by the Chinese Nationalists as "outposts". Eisenhower insisted that Jiang should not be coerced into anything, but it also should be made clear that the Chinese Nationalists should not "strike the first major blow" between Taiwan and the mainland, and the United States would not merely defend Jinmen and Mazu.⁴⁰

Finally, on April 20, Admiral Radford and Robertson were sent to Taipei to present the "Dulles-Eisenhower Plan" to Jiang Jieshi.⁴¹

Before they met with Jiang, Karl Rankin predicted that Jiang would be very surprised to know the United States was withdrawing its assurance of support in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu and his reaction certainly would be against the proposal. In reality, Jiang's response was much more intense than predicted. Before Radford and Robertson's arrival in Taipei, 'rumors' had spread that their purpose of coming was to pressure Jiang to give up Jinmen and Mazu. Jiang was very concerned and held conferences to discuss the intention of the American representatives' forthcoming visit. When the 'rumors' were confirmed by Radford and Robertson, Jiang became so disturbed that he was "visibly shaken".⁴² During the following discussion with the American visitors, Jiang restrained himself from displaying outward emotional sighs, but he did stand firm on his position.

On April 25, Robertson and Radford had a seven-hour meeting with Jiang and a few other Nationalist officials. At the meeting, Jiang bluntly revealed his distrust towards Washington and his determination to defend the off-shore islands. Robertson tried to explain to Jiang the domestic problems the United States was facing and the advantage Taipei could gain from the proposal: the United States could not participate in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu due to the lack of domestic support and opinion abroad; if Jiang agreed to withdraw from the islands the United States would assist with the evacuation and President Eisenhower would publicly announce that "until it was evident Red China had renounced the purpose to take Formosa by force the United States will as measure of self-defense join with Chinese Nationalists to institute and maintain interdiction of sea lanes along China coast."⁴³

Jiang was not impressed. On the contrary, he was firmly against the proposal. Jiang said giving up Jinmen and Mazu would go against the best Chinese tradition of patriotism and it could make "his people" lose respect for the Nationalist government. Jiang professed that he was prepared to take the risk of receiving a full "onslaught of attack" by the Communists. "Soldiers must choose proper places to die. Chinese soldiers consider Quemoy-Matsu are proper places for them."⁴⁴

Robertson stated that the question was not one of a U.S. decision whether the off-shore islands should be defended but whether the United States should participate in their defense. Admiral Radford admitted that President Eisenhower had in fact changed his mind regarding American involvement in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu. This was caused by the change of the circumstances, Radford argued. Since January when the Formosa Resolution was passed, public and congressional opinion opposed to the American defense of Jinmen and Mazu had become stronger. Moreover, the majority of American allies had publicly raised objections to the U.S. joining the defense of Jinmen and Mazu due to their concern of the danger of bringing about a world war.⁴⁵ Robertson and Radford urged Jiang to give full consideration to the American position, and appreciate the "terrible responsibilities of President Eisenhower."⁴⁶

Jiang expressed sympathy to Eisenhower's domestic problem. Nevertheless, he asserted that he had agreed to withdraw from the Tachens in January because at that time he was assured by Washington that it would assist in the defense of Jinmen and Mazu.⁴⁷ Consequently, he had made pledges to his people and his government "had repeatedly declared that we must hold Quemoy and Matsu." Jiang contended that if the off-shore islands were given up, "not only would our own military and civilian people be unable to understand and excuse the government, but even the Overseas Chinese would lose their confidence in the government."⁴⁸

Jiang continued his complaint. He pointed out that in the original agreement for the Chinese Nationalists to withdraw from the Tachens, and included in part of the U.S. public announcement, that the United States would participate in the defense of the off-shore islands. Subsequently, American government could not make such an announcement, and Jiang had accepted President Eisenhower's explanation for not doing so. Jiang expressed his grievance that in his relations with Washington "he had always been guided by principle that where matters were in doubt China should be loser rather than the U.S." Up to now, Jiang had been fed up with giving concessions to the Americans. He had lost his trust on the U.S. government - "If his forces pulled out of Quemoy and Matsu, even a child would not believe that his government would be assisted by the U.S. in holding Taiwan itself," and it would only lead to "further pressure for establishment of trusteeship for Formosa."⁴⁹ At the end of the meeting, Jiang indicated quite clearly that his answer to Washington's proposal had been definitive. If the U.S. government was not happy with him, then it "would have to find another Chiang Kai-shek."⁵⁰

Robertson thought Jiang was overreacting. He was of the opinion that Jiang approached the issues "all from the point of view of Formosa and the interest of the Republic of China." Robertson indicated his disappointment with the Chinese Nationalists who did not seem to understand the fact that the United States must approach the Taiwan question "not purely as a local problem but in the perspective of the whole situation."⁵¹

The Taiwan government, however, appeared to be more unhappy with the Americans. To Jiang Jieshi and his close advisers the Eisenhower proposal was not only immensely puzzling but also emotionally disturbing.⁵² Jiang confided to George Yeh that "never in his darkest moments did he expect the United States to alter decisions as to the immediate situation."⁵³ Foreign Minister Yeh told Robertson and

Radford that "it would require a great deal of effort to repair the damage to the Chinese confidence in the United States" which had resulted from the "out-posts" proposal. Jiang evidently interpreted the "proposal" as an indication that either Washington was "incapable of pursuing a firm and consistent Far Eastern policy, or that the Administration's ultimate aim was the liquidation of the 'Formosa Problem' via neutralization, trusteeship."⁵⁴ Jiang declared that his refusal to accept the "proposal" was simply due to his lack of confidence in the American ability to adhere to the proposed blockade of the Chinese coast after his having given up the off-shore islands. The past events had taught him that "further concession would lead to ultimate calamity"⁵⁵

From the lessons they learned, Jiang and his advisers were convinced that further retreat would be impossible. In his cable to Ambassador Koo in Washington, George Yeh informed him that the Taiwan government should not propose any plan to them (U.S.) showing willingness to make any concessions. Koo replied to Yeh by commenting on Jiang's reaction to Robertson and Radford as "proper and dignified". Koo also agreed that Taipei's intention to not indicate "any retreat on our part (is) the best policy." The Chinese Nationalists were hoping that if they remained firm, things would work out for them in the end.⁵⁶

Eisenhower was discontented with Robertson and Radford. In his "out-post" theory, the President had not suggested complete abandonment of the islands, since "he himself had never expected that Jiang would give up outright on Quemoy and Matsus."⁵⁷ Eisenhower had wanted only the reduction of the garrison on the off-shore islands and he hoped that his envoys would lead Jiang around to make the decision voluntarily. Unfortunately, Robertson and Radford themselves could not "grasp the concept". Eisenhower wrote to Dulles, "as long as our representatives did not feel they could suggest any attractive position between evacuation ... and 'fight to

the death' ... there was no possibility of a meeting of minds." On the other hand, Eisenhower was also quite disappointed with Jiang Jieshi, since he had expected Jiang himself to see the "wisdom" of "out-posts" theory. With no progress on his proposal, the President regretted, "We are still on the horns of the dilemma."⁵⁸

In fact, the crisis had already subsided before Radford and Robertson talked with Jiang. On April 23, 1955 the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai unexpectedly announced that the PRC wanted no confrontation in the Taiwan Strait. He stated that "the Chinese people do not want to have a war with the United States of America." Zhou indicated that China was willing to "sit down" to negotiate with the U.S. government in order to relax the tension in the Taiwan area.⁵⁹

Zhou's announcement aroused great anxiety among the Chinese Nationalists. Like its reaction to the UN cease-fire plan, the Taiwan government was strongly opposed to the United States and the PRC entering negotiations. Taipei expressed to Washington that the Communists were launching a "peace offensive"; if they could not "detach Formosa by talk", they would surely attack Taiwan by force.⁶⁰ Dulles replied to Taiwan Ambassador Koo that the American view on the question of the desirability of a cease-fire in the Taiwan area was "not fully in accord" with the one of the Taiwan government. Dulles simply told Koo that the United States would be very happy "if the Communists agree to a cease-fire."⁶¹ Apparently the governments pursued different objectives in the Taiwan area. Naturally, the United States, the great power, had more control over the outcome of the situation. The Eisenhower administration seized the opportunity to respond to the Chinese Communists. The United States and PRC soon started direct negotiations.⁶² The Taiwan Strait Crisis was over for the time being.

Notes to Chapter 4

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Conclusion

After they fled to Taiwan from the mainland in late 1949, Jiang and his Nationalist government not only survived but actually strengthened their position with American protection and military assistance. The Taiwan government received more support from the United States during the Eisenhower administration. Jiang even dreamed of returning to power soon in the mainland in early 1953, shortly after Eisenhower assumed office.

The Republican administration claimed to implement a "new" and "positive" China policy, but, compared with the previous administration, its China policy was a change only in degree. Eisenhower and his advisers showed no more interest than had the Truman Administration in Jiang's ambition to invade the mainland. By signing a mutual defense treaty with Taiwan, the U.S. government formally included Taiwan and Penghu in their "off-shore defense chain". However, it firmly rejected the Chinese Nationalist request to cover the off-shore islands in the defense treaty. The Americans regarded these islands as an unstable factor in the Taiwan area. Although in 1953 the Eisenhower administration encouraged the Chinese Nationalists to hold the off-shore islands, with the tension being built up in the Taiwan Strait Washington started to realize the situation could be relaxed should the off-shore islands or some of these islands be abandoned. Despite the sustained U.S. effort to persuade Jiang to accept their proposal of withdrawing from the off-shore islands, Jiang and his Nationalist government refused to comply. Jiang desired not only to survive but also to return to the mainland. His foreign policy toward the United States was guided by this objective. The Chinese Nationalists tried hard to get the United States committed to the defense of the off-shore islands, which they regarded as a stepping stone for a re-conquest of the mainland. Bitterly disputing

the issue of the defense of the off-shore islands and the Chinese Nationalist offensive action against the mainland, Taiwan and the United States did not enjoy a harmonious relationship in the first term of the Eisenhower administration. Instead, it witnessed a diplomatic controversy.

An alliance is likely to be created only when two or more states share common interests that they need to support by military power against other states. The fundamental cause for the U.S.-Taiwan alliance was their common interest in fighting against the Chinese Communism in Asia. To the Chinese Nationalists, the American protection and assistance were essential for their survival in Taiwan. They were also vital for the Nationalist aim of returning home. To the Americans, Taiwan was an important link in their off-shore security chain in Asia. Besides, the large number of Nationalist armed forces were the "most significant concentrations of anti-Communist Asian military strength" in the Far East.¹ Therefore, the Eisenhower administration could not underestimate the morale factor of the Chinese Nationalist troops. In a word, the Cold War was a factor bonding the United States and Taiwan together.

On the other hand, Washington and Taipei pursued conflicting interests in the Far East which led them to take incompatible courses of action. Checking Russian communist aggression in Europe was the primary objective for the Eisenhower administration. Its finite military strength required the United States to seek peace and stability in Asia. From this objective derived Dulles's UN cease-fire proposal, Tachen withdrawal, and Eisenhower's "out-posts" plan. Washington had always been reluctant to be fully committed to the off-shore islands, since these islands were trivial to the context of U.S. global strategy. The Eisenhower administration's determination to defend Taiwan and Penghu was firm so that they eventually signed the Mutual Defense Treaty with the Taiwan government. But

Dulles's decision to conclude this pact also resulted from his expectation that such a treaty would provide the United States with strict control over the Chinese Nationalist military action. It was no wonder after the treaty was signed Dulles gladly informed President Eisenhower that it would not enable the Chinese Nationalists to involve the United States in a Chinese civil war.²

Jiang and his Nationalist government desired a military pact with the U.S. for a different purpose. They expected the concluded treaty would obligate the American government to provide commitment to the defense of not only Taiwan and Penghu, but also the off-shore islands. In order to meet this end, the Chinese Nationalists promised that they would not take any offensive action without consulting the Americans. But through stubborn bargaining, the Taiwan government succeeded in having Washington agree that the "promise" would be included in a less formal exchange of note rather than the treaty itself. Moreover, by interpreting the "promise" in their own way, Jiang and the Nationalists preserved their "glorious" right to invade the mainland some day.

A cease-fire plan in the Taiwan Strait would not serve Jiang's interest. He objected adamantly to the UN proposal. Neither was he willing to give up any of those island groups held by his forces. Disagreeing with the Americans, Jiang insisted that the defense of the off-shore islands was essential to Taiwan and Penghu, not only psychologically but also militarily. He had consistently attempted to link the defense of the off-shore islands to Taiwan and Penghu through both diplomatic and military means. Nevertheless, so as to achieve consolidated positions on the Jinmen and Mazu groups, Jiang agreed to the American suggestion of "Tachen withdrawal". But when confronted with the U.S. scheme of "Jinmen-Mazu evacuation", Jiang furiously replied with "no further retreat." Jiang finally ran out of

patience with the Americans apparently caring only for their own interests, and neglecting the ones of the Chinese Nationalists.

The Taiwan policy of the Eisenhower administration in its first three years can be characterized by caution and ambiguity. When it was making any concessions regarding the Taiwan government Washington had to be prudent not to be dragged into Jiang's large-scale hostilities with the Chinese Communists. In the meantime, the controversial views from different sectors of the U.S. government made it more unlikely for the administration to make a consistent and decisive policy. While the majority of JCS members advocated more aggressive action in the Taiwan Strait, Dulles and Eisenhower intended to take moderate courses. Even within the State Department, it could not be easily agreed on what course the U.S. should take. Despite the strong pro-Nationalist policy tendency from the Far East division, the European specialists were opposed to any American commitment beyond the limit of the defense of Taiwan and Penghu. President Eisenhower's decision on U.S. foreign policy was influenced not only by the various sectors of the administration, but also by Congressional leaders, the China lobby, American public opinion and European allies. Caught in this "horrible dilemma" of being beset by conflicting advice, the White House preferred to keep its options open. As a result, U.S. policy toward Taiwan often appeared ambiguous and inconsistent.

In order to restrain yet not alienate its allies, "a state may want to prevent them from being confident that it will fulfill its obligation."³ Eisenhower and Dulles might have believed that leaving the American commitment to the defense of the offshore islands ambiguous could avoid alienating, and at the same time being manipulated by Jiang Jieshi. By doing so, Washington wanted to keep its bargaining leverage in dealing with Taipei.

The ambiguous American policy towards the offshore islands brought about grievous dissatisfaction from the Taiwan government. Jiang repeatedly complained about the lack of a long-term U.S. Far Eastern policy. Nevertheless, Jiang Jieshi did not give up his attempt to manipulate the United States. He frequently urged the Eisenhower administration to clarify its intention regarding the defense of the offshore islands. Stationing a large number of troops on Jinmen and Mazu was also one of Jiang's political moves to ensure the American participation in their defense. In addition, Jiang tried to utilize the American domestic politics. He appealed to American public opinion, the China Lobby, and many U.S. government officials. Jiang's tactics gained him considerable amount of support from within the United States.

As the leader of a weak power, Jiang had to fight against the American arrogance toward the Chinese Nationalists. He complained that Washington rarely consulted with the Chinese Nationalist government before it had made any decisions concerning Taiwan. A few times, Jiang instructed his representatives in Washington to ask for "advance consultation" when the U.S. government was making decisions relating to matters "of vital concern" to Taipei.⁴ Jiang was not happy with the "unequal relationship" between the U.S. and Taiwan, and he demanded fair treatment from Washington.

The diplomatic controversy between the United States and the Chinese Nationalist governments mainly resulted from diverging national interests they pursued in the Far East. Nevertheless, the American ignorance of Chinese culture also contributed to the bitter U.S.-Taiwan relationship. Although several American officials in the Far East Bureau had some Chinese experience, the decision-makers in Washington generally lacked knowledge of Chinese culture. The Eisenhower administration attempted to justify their constant change of policies toward the

Taiwan government as an "unilateral" policy adjustment, but they neglected the fact that Jiang and the Chinese Nationalists viewed this differently. The Chinese Nationalists tended to personalize their relationships with the U.S. government. Consequently, the Taiwan government inclined to deal with the U.S. government on a friends-to-friends basis. As Jiang told Dulles, the Taiwan government based its national policy on the "traditional friendship" between China and the United States. His government never employed any "diplomatic artifices" in dealing with the United States.⁵ In return, Jiang expected a sincere and faithful friendship from the Americans. Jiang and other Nationalist officials were greatly disappointed with the U.S. government because they thought the Americans' "breaking promises" as betrays to their friends.

After all, the United States, as a super power, had more say in dealing with a much weaker government such as Taiwan. The Chinese Nationalists were merely an insignificant pawn for the Americans on the international political stage. It was not very surprising that in 1978 Washington finally derecognized Taiwan as the sole legal government of China.

Notes to Conclusion

1. "Instructions to all American Diplomatic and Consular Posts," Decimal Files, 793.00/4-2355, RG 59, National Archives.
2. Memorandum for the White House from the Secretary of State, November 23, 1954, John Foster Dulles Chronological Series, Dulles Papers, 1951-1959, Box 10, Eisenhower Library.
3. Robert Jervis, *The Logic of Images in International Relations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 87.
4. Memorandum of Conversation between the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Allison) and Koo, Feb. 2, 1953, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, Vol. 14, p. 137.
5. Notes of Conversation Between Dulles and Jiang, Sept. 9, 1954, Record of the Chinese Affairs, 611.93/9-1654, RG 59, National Archives.

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