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NSC BRIEFING

12 June 1956

INCREASING CHINESE COMMUNIST CAPABILITIES

1. With our perfectly natural tendency to keep our eyes on Soviet military and technological advances, there is ~~often~~ danger ~~a tendency to~~ we may ignore or discount advances being made by the Chinese Communists in their development of a modern industrial state. Lest we find ourselves "surprised" by these Chinese advances at some future date, I should like to tell the Council of some of this Chinese progress.

A. For example, we have good reason to believe that the Chinese Communists will be producing their own modern jet fighter planes by the end of this year. This production, which will involve the assembly of locally-produced airframes with such imported Soviet components as engines, armament and electronic equipment, is to be based at a new factory in one of Manchuria's major industrial cities, Mukden, 25X1

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B. This infant Chinese aircraft industry will be dependent for some years on components imported from the USSR and thus is expected to limit itself to Soviet models and lean heavily on Soviet technical support. However, general Chinese industrial development is such that some present imports will eventually come from

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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local production. For example, the aluminum industry being developed at Harbin should be able to supply some types of shapes and castings for aircraft production this year.

2. As another example of increasing Chinese know-how-- 25X1

there is the naval production effort in Shanghai during the past 18 months. 25X1

A. In the shipyards there 25X1

the Chinese Communists have been at work on motor torpedo craft, sub-chasers, DESTROYERS and even SUBMARINES of Soviet design. the Chinese launched their first modern escort destroyer--a vessel of the 1500-ton RIGA class--and at least one other RIGA is on the ways. 25X1

3. These two developments in Chinese Communist military technology are only a part--although a major part--of the general rapid advance in Chinese industrial development. ~~Under these circumstances, we will be well advised to keep a close eye on this rapidly-maturing "junior partner" in the Bloc.~~

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