

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	China	REPORT NO.	[REDACTED]
SUBJECT	Status of U.S. Plane Crew Downed in Swatow Area	DATE DISTR.	5 August 1953
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		REFERENCES	

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

Appraisal of Content: 6.

China, Changchou (May 1953)

- In mid-January 1953 an American plane making a low altitude reconnaissance flight over Nanaotao (N 23-26, E 117-04) was shot down by Chinese Communist anti-aircraft fire. Later two other American planes arrived separately to effect a rescue. One of these planes was also shot down.¹ No living American airmen were captured by the Communists. The two wrecked planes were towed ashore and taken to Swatow.²
- At noon one day in mid-January an American plane coming from the direction of Swatow was circling the area south of Tungshantao (N 23-50, E 117-30), when suddenly it caught fire. The plane crashed into the sea approximately ten nautical miles south of Tungshantao. Subsequently one American plane arrived on the scene, subsequently followed by another. The planes landed on the water³ and apparently attempted to effect a rescue. One of the planes subsequently fell into the sea.¹

Taiwan, Taipei (May 1953)

- At 1300 hours on 18 February, an air raid alarm was sounded in Swatow. At 1400 hours the radar installation at Mayu (sic) discovered a plane in the sea 1.5 miles southeast of Swatow.⁴ Three Chinese Communist gunboats were dispatched to search the area, but encountered United States warships in the area and returned to Swatow.

Approved for Release
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4. On 19 January the Communist marines at Mayu, Tahao (N 23-18, E 116-44), and Nanmei (0589/1253) searched the coast in the area of the crash and found one corpse wearing a United States Air Force uniform⁵ and two wounded American airmen. The wounded airmen attempted to escape but were easily captured. The marines took the wounded men to Swatow where they arrived at 1500 hours the same day. The captives were not paraded through the streets but were placed in the municipal hospital.
5. The Swatow army control board demanded the custody of the prisoners, but were refused by the navy who gave the captives medical treatment at navy headquarters. At 1700 hours on 20 January one of the wounded men died. The same day the navy headquarters ordered the dead and wounded Americans sent to Canton. Enroute to Tahao the other airman died.⁶
6. On 20 January additional dead airmen were found at Mayu beach. A search of the corpses netted \$200, one pen, a pistol, and ID papers. All personal effects were sent to Canton.

Comment. For other accounts of the Swatow incident,

1. Comment. According to the account of the incident in [redacted] 7-13 February, the second plane crashed while taking off from Swatow because of the failure of one engine.
2. Comment. On 23 January 1953 an article appeared in the Hong Kong newspaper Chiao Jih Pao stating that the Communist authorities in Swatow were instructed by Canton to offer rewards to fishermen who succeeded in bringing in from the sea any parts of the wreckage of the planes or survivors or the bodies of those killed in the crash. The article stated that the Communists were probably offering the rewards in hopes of getting more information about the planes.
3. Comment. According to the [redacted] cited above, only one plane [redacted] to rescue survivors of the [redacted] shot down by Communist fire.
4. Comment. According to the [redacted] cited above, the plane went [redacted] northeast of Swatow.
5. Comment. According to other information available to this office, the planes that crashed were navy aircraft, not air force planes.
6. Comment. Another agency reported that according to a resident of Swatow, two Americans in tattered khaki were exhibited publicly in Swatow about 7 March and sent to Canton about 10 March.