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14 July 1966

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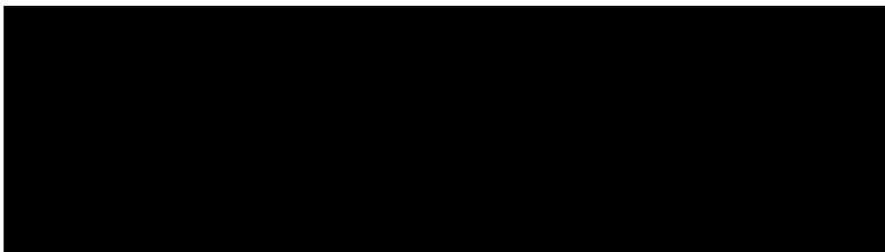
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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

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DATE: AUG 2001

IMPROVEMENTS IN COMMUNIST CHINA'S AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM



DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS

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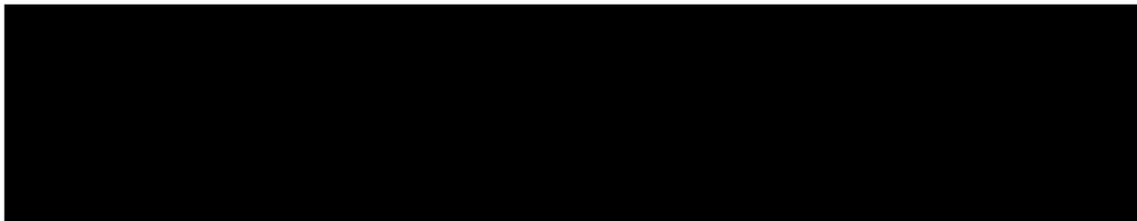
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
14 July 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM*

Improvements in Communist China's
Air Defense System

SUMMARY

Peking is making substantial efforts to improve its air defenses, with special emphasis on the protection of its southern borders and of its advanced weapons facilities in western China. Programs inaugurated in the past two years include expansion of the air defense establishment in West China, new airfield construction there and elsewhere in China, and the resumption of production of MIG-19 (Farmer) fighter aircraft. All of these programs are being pushed at a steady pace.



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Accent on West China's Air Defense Capabilities

1. Obviously concerned over the safety of their advanced weapons centers and perhaps seeing a threat from a quarter where no threat had existed before, the Chinese in recent years have launched a program to upgrade the West China Air Defense District. This district covers almost the entire western half of China. Its area includes the Shuang-cheng-tzu Missile Test Range and the Lop Nor Nuclear Test Site; its borders include the entire Sino-Indian border and a large portion of the Sino-Soviet border. (See map)

2. One of the first steps to strengthen the West China Air Defense District was the establishment of a high-level air defense authority there. In the fall of 1964 Communist China's 9th Air Army was established at Urumchi and placed in control of air defenses for all of Sinkiang Province. This air army controls and coordinates flight activity at Ha-mi, Ho-tien, and Chang-chi airfields. The headquarters at Urumchi, the sector headquarters at Ho-tien, and the West China district headquarters at Sian are all outstations of a joint operations radio net controlled by air force headquarters in Peking.

3. Air surveillance capabilities of the West China district have also been increased. In the summer of 1965 air surveillance sector headquarters at Sumukuerh, on the southwest slope of the mountains facing Kashmir, was moved back across the mountains to Ho-tien. The purpose of this move probably was to consolidate sector responsibilities at the recently reconstructed Ho-tien airfield, which has assumed an increasingly important role in district air operations.

4. During the last half of 1965 at least 21 new radar stations were activated in the West China district. This increased by 30 percent the number of air surveillance radar stations in this part of China. Most of the new stations are in the Ho-tien, Lhasa, and Cheng-tu sectors, providing additional coverage of the Sino-Indian border.

MIG-19 (Farmer) Production and Deployment

5. The mainstay of the Chinese jet interceptor force has been for years, and still is, the aging

MIG-17 (Fresco). Since 1964, however, the Chinese have gradually been re-equipping units with high-performance MIG-19 (Farmers). This has followed the resumption of series production at the MIG-19 plant at Shen-yang in northeast China. Current production there is estimated to be 10 to 15 aircraft per month.

6. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] during the past two years the number of MIG-19s at tactical airfields throughout China has increased from less than 100 to around 350. Some 170 of these are stationed at airfields in the South and Southwest Air Defense Districts adjacent to North Vietnam. Other MIG-19 units are at airfields in Northeast, North, and East China. It is estimated that thus far in 1966 about 60 new MIG-19s have been delivered to tactical units throughout China.

Jet Fighter Base Construction

7. Perhaps the most striking evidence of Peking's growing emphasis on air defense is its program of airfield construction and rehabilitation. Though this has been evident throughout China, most of the improvements have been in western China and in the regions adjacent to North Vietnam. Over the past four years some 29 airfields capable of supporting at least limited jet fighter operations have been built, reconstructed, or improved. Most of this work has been done since the middle of 1964. (See list of airfields)

8. Before the current program got under way, Sinkiang Province had no airfields able to handle jet operations. It now has four such fields, three of them with runways of over 3,000 feet. Altogether, nine airfields capable of sustaining jet fighter operations have been added to the West China Air Defense District. These airfields could handle a large force of tactical aircraft, roughly 225 jet fighters or light bombers.

9. In the South and Southwest districts the airfield capacity has increased by about a fourth. The installations at Ning-ming, Ping-yuan, and

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Tien-yang--all begun after the August 1964 Tonkin Gulf crisis--were obviously planned to fill gaps in the air defense of the critical border with Vietnam. Each of the nine new airfields in this area is or will be capable of servicing jet aircraft units up to regimental size.

10. In addition to the new airfields built in western and southern China, 11 airfields have been constructed in other parts of China. The only area in which no new fields have been added in the last two years is the Southeast Air Defense District adjacent to the Taiwan Strait.

Prospects

11. Peking's concern over the vulnerability of its advanced weapons development centers in West China will continue. Since the Chinese do not have sufficient surface-to-air missile equipment to protect these widely dispersed centers, they will probably continue to expand jet fighter operations in this remote area and to increase their radar coverage of the border regions.

12. The Chinese will also almost certainly continue to push airfield construction in southern China, where the airfield density is still well below that in North and East China.

13. Recently China has begun to look beyond its southern borders into North Vietnam itself. China and North Vietnam have for some time been sharing air warning and weather data, and since last August Chinese antiaircraft artillery units have been in North Vietnam protecting Chinese engineer units there. The activity of these engineer units includes the building of two airfields in northwest North Vietnam. Although these airfields probably are being built for North Vietnamese use, they could be intended also for contingency use by the Chinese.

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Communist Chinese Airfield Improvements 1962 - 1965

<u>Airfield</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Air Defense District (ADD)</u>	<u>Runway Dimensions</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Use</u>
Canton/White Cloud	2311N11316E	South ADD	11,400 x 220 ft.	Improved 11/64	Civil; could be converted for military use
Chang-yeh	3848N10051E	West ADD	(1) 8,600 x 190 ft. (2) 7,800 x 190 ft.	Completed 9/63	Civil/military
Cheng-tu/Shuang-liu	3035N10357E	West ADD	7,900 x 190 ft.	Improved late 65	Civil; could be converted for military use
Chia-lai-shih	1942N10944E	South ADD	8,200 x 110 ft.	Reconstructed 7/65	Unoccupied
Hailer	4910N11942E	Northeast	7,000 x 200 ft.	Improved 8/63	Civil/military
Ha-mi II	4251N9338E	West ADD	7,200 x 150 ft.	Improved late 65	Civil/military
Ho-tien	3703N7951E	West ADD	9,500 x 170 ft.	Reconstructed 1/65	Civil/military
Hsing-cheng	4034N12042E	Northeast ADD	8,500 x 280 ft.	Improved mid-63	Civil/military
Hung-chiao	3112N12120E	East ADD	10,370 x 230 ft.	Improved 63-64	Civil/military
La-lin	4516N12653E	Northeast ADD	8,400 x 230 ft.	Reconstructed 8/63	Civil/military
Lan-chou/Wan-tzu (Alt. Cheng-chi)	4357N8705E	West ADD	8,800 x 160 ft.	Completed late 65	Civil/military
Lhasa (Alt. Tang-hsiung)	3029N9106E	West ADD	(1) 14,500 x 120 ft. (2) 9,000 x 180 ft.	Improved early 65	Civil/military
Li-chia-tsun	2512N11019E	South ADD	8,500 x 190 ft.	Reconstructed 62	Civil/military

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Airfield	Location	Air Defense District (ADD)	Runway Dimensions	Status	Use
Ling-shui	1830NL0959E	South ADD	9,100 x 210 ft.	Improved 4/65	Civil/military
Lin-tao	3519NL0350E	West ADD	8,200 x 200 ft.	U/C late 65	Civil/military
Liu-ting	3616NL2023E	North ADD	7,600 x 200 ft.	Improved early 64	Civil/military
Meng-tzu	2324NL0319E	Southwest ADD	8,400 x 210 ft.	Completed 62	Civil/military
Motou	3215NL2031E	East ADD	7,200 x 170 ft.	Completed 65	Civil/military
Ning-ming	2217NL0708E	South ADD	7,600 x 150 ft.	Completed mid-65	Civil/military
Pei-tun	2527NL0043E	Southwest ADD	7,800 x 150 ft.	Reconstructed early 64	Civil/military
Peng-shen	3016NL0351E	West ADD	8,300 x 200 ft.	Reconstructed early 65	Civil/military
Ping-yuan	2343NL0349E	Southwest ADD	8,400 x 160 ft.	Completed 12/65	Unoccupied
Shaho	3653NL1426E	North ADD	8,200 x 190 ft.	U/C Mid-65	Civil/military
Ssu-ping	4309NL2418E	Northeast ADD	6,600 x 220 ft.	Improved 9/65	Civil/military
Tan-yang	3155NL1947E	East ADD	7,200 x 200 ft.	Completed 9/64	Civil/military
Tien-yang	2344NL0658E	South ADD	9,000 x 200 ft.	U/C 7/65	Unoccupied
Tung-hsin-chuang	4006NL1754E	North ADD	7,500 x 200 ft.	U/C late 65	Civil/military
Wu-sha-tala (Alt. Chiu-ho-shih)	4211N8714E	West ADD	10,600 x 160 ft.	U/C late 65	Civil/military
Ying-cheng-tzu	3933NL2123E	Northeast ADD	7,000 x 200 ft.	Improved 1963	Civil/military

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