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MEMORANDUM TO HOLDERS OF  
SPECIAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE  
NUMBER 13-8-66

COMMUNIST CHINA'S  
ADVANCED WEAPONS PROGRAM

Submitted by

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Concurred in by the  
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

as indicated overleaf

30 June 1967

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*The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate:*

The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, and the NSA.

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[Redacted]

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

30 June 1967

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM TO HOLDERS OF SNIE 13-8-66: COMMUNIST CHINA'S  
ADVANCED WEAPONS  
PROGRAM

1. Since the publication of SNIE 13-8-66, 3 November 1966, the Chinese have conducted two additional nuclear tests involving thermonuclear reactions. The first of these, in December 1966, represented the more significant technological advance since it demonstrated that the Chinese had discovered the two-stage design concept necessary for megaton yields.

[Redacted]

2. The more recent test conducted at Lop Nor on 17 June confirms that the Chinese have developed a two-stage thermonuclear device.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] There is good evidence that the device was air-dropped, probably by a jet medium bomber, and detonated at an altitude of about 11,000 feet.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

3.

[Redacted]

4.

[Redacted]

5. Though the Chinese still have a considerable way to go in trimming the weight and dimensions of their device, the progress demonstrated to date and the high priority being given to thermonuclear development indicate that the Chinese probably will be able to develop an ICBM warhead in the megaton range by about 1970. In SNIE 13-8-66, we estimated that the Chinese could have a few ICBMs operational by the early 1970's. In the interim the Chinese could have some multi-megaton thermonuclear bombs deliverable by medium bomber.

6. The broader implications of China's thermonuclear program will be discussed in NIE 13-8-67, "Communist China's Strategic Weapons Program," which is scheduled for publication in July.

[Redacted]

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