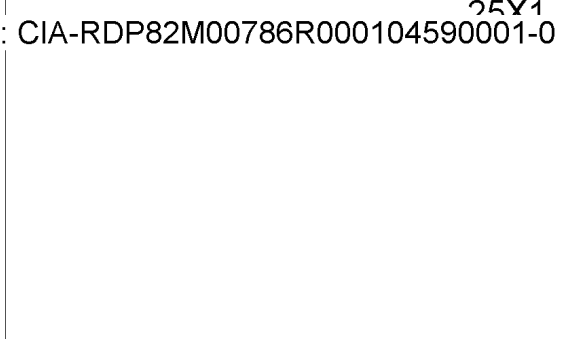




Director of
Intelligence

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China's Defense Policy and Armed Forces

National Intelligence Estimate

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NIE 13-4-80

9 September 1980

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CHINA'S DEFENSE POLICY
AND ARMED FORCES

Information available as of 9 September 1980 was
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THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS, EXCEPT AS NOTED IN THE TEXT.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence organization of the Department of State, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps

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KEY JUDGMENTS

China has the full range of military forces befitting a major power: the largest standing army in the world; a small strategic nuclear strike force; a large coastal defense navy moving gradually toward the open ocean; and large and growing air and air defense forces. Nevertheless, China's military forces and defense establishment are severely handicapped by an outdated technological and industrial base, which produces weapon systems roughly a generation behind those of modern Western and Soviet forces.

Chinese defense policy will continue to emphasize maintenance of conventional and nuclear forces sufficient to deter attack from any quarter, or to deny an attacker success in the event deterrence fails. We believe that, in the event of a Soviet counterforce nuclear attack, sufficient Chinese ballistic missiles would survive [redacted]

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[redacted] to deliver a small but destructive retaliatory strike. While we cannot be confident, we believe this constitutes a credible deterrent to a Soviet attack. Furthermore, we estimate that Chinese general purpose forces have perhaps an even chance of stalemating a conventional Soviet invasion somewhere short of Beijing. We believe, however, that the Chinese would probably be unable to halt a large-scale Soviet invasion supported by extensive use of nuclear weapons.

China views Vietnam both as a surrogate for Moscow in Southeast Asia and as a rival in its own right for influence in the area. China has "reserved the right" to teach Hanoi a "second lesson" and has increased its strength in the border area sharply over the prewar level, but considerable reinforcements would be required for a major conflict with Vietnam.

Beijing treats Taiwan essentially as a political and juridical question and does not appear to anticipate hostilities there in the near future. In any event, China is not capable at present of a successful amphibious invasion of Taiwan.

The leadership recognizes China's inferiority in modern weapons relative to its main adversaries and has set comprehensive modernization of its obsolescent forces as one of its key goals. However, among its goals for modernization--of agriculture, industry, science and tech-

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nology, and defense—defense clearly has the lowest priority. There is a broad consensus within the Chinese leadership that the civilian economy must be further developed as a prerequisite to effective military modernization.

Thus, significant improvement of China's military forces will depend on political stability and the commitment to modernization, the availability of foreign technology, and the avoidance of a costly conflict with the USSR or Vietnam. We estimate that some progress will be made, especially in the late 1980s.

- China's strategic missile force will grow slowly during the decade, but a couple of full-range ICBMs that can reach all of the continental United States will be operational within the next year or two.
- China will launch additional nuclear-powered submarines during the decade, and probably will have one or more operational SSBN/SLBM units by the late 1980s.
- A Spey-engined Chinese combat aircraft will become operational sometime after 1985.

Moreover, there are a number of critical gaps in China's capabilities that will receive early attention and some remedy through introduction of new technology and equipment, some perhaps acquired from foreign sources. Among the problems are:

- The need for good antitank guided missiles and low-altitude air defense weapons, particularly surface-to-air missiles.
- Serious deficiencies in battlefield mobility and tactical communications.
- The inability to design and develop modern airframes and engines for combat aircraft.
- Acute logistical deficiencies in a wartime environment.

China's military doctrine—"people's war under modern conditions"—is for China realistic and practical as a defense against the USSR, and is likely to change only slightly in the next 10 years. The Chinese will continue to rely on massive population, vast territory, and defense in depth to counter Soviet advantages in technology, and new weapons will only gradually be introduced into the forces. In sum, the Chinese perceive the USSR as a long-term threat and appear to believe that their current and future military capabilities and warming relations with the West will offer enough of a deterrent to keep the USSR at bay for the foreseeable future.

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Section I
CHINA'S DEFENSE POLICY

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War is now conducted in a way different from that in the past. Take our future war against aggression, for example. The target of attack, the scale of war and even the method of fighting are new to us. We must study and solve a number of new problems in light of new conditions. Our military thinking must tally with the changing conditions. If we treat and command a modern war in the way we commanded a war during the 1930s and 1940s, we are bound to meet with a big rebuff and suffer a serious defeat.

The modernization of our national defense will inevitably cause a deep going revolution in our army's setup. We will have a powerful fighting force when modern weaponry is combined with men who have advanced modern military thinking. To master advanced modern military thinking, we must combine Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the practice of modern warfare and realistically solve problems regarding the theory and practice of building a people's army and launching a people's war under modern conditions.

RU XIANGQIAN
Minister of Defense
October 1979

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I. CHINA'S DEFENSE POLICY

Current Defense Policy

1. The fundamental objective of the defense policy of the People's Republic of China is the maintenance and improvement of forces capable of ensuring national security against any external threat. The Chinese armed forces—collectively known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA)—are also tasked with bolstering public security (police) forces to defend the regime against any internal threat.

2. To achieve the first goal, Beijing seeks to establish forces sufficiently strong to deter a nuclear or conventional attack on China from any quarter. Recognizing its strategic inferiority relative to its main adversaries, China has set comprehensive modernization of its obsolescent forces as one of its key goals. There is a broad consensus within the Chinese leadership, however, that the civilian economy must be further developed before effective military modernization can be achieved. Consequently, the military modernization program has a lower priority and is proceeding at a gradual pace.

3. To achieve its internal security objective, Beijing has sought to maintain a politically aware, loyal, and obedient military, and has dispersed it throughout the country so that it can react quickly to local trouble. As political stability has returned to China following the disruptive Cultural Revolution, and the party apparatus has regained its administrative control of the country, the internal security dimension of the PLA's mission has diminished considerably.

Threat Perception and Foreign Policy

4. Although its military forces are the ultimate ensurers of China's security, the leadership regards the management of China's foreign relations, particularly its relations with the superpowers, as crucial to protecting national security. Beijing has pursued an active and flexible foreign policy since the early 1970s, emphasizing a pragmatic pursuit of common interests with various other countries opposed to Soviet domination. In general, Beijing has sought common diplomatic ground with others by stressing opposition to Soviet "expansionism."

5. China has perceived the Soviet Union as the "chief enemy" since a series of border clashes between the two countries in 1969. Those incidents, following Soviet moves into Czechoslovakia the previous year, brought about a profound change in Chinese defense policy and gave strong impetus to trends already nascent in foreign policy. Acknowledgment of a Soviet military threat precipitated the "turn to the West," and lay behind a decision to redeploy substantial forces to strengthen the northern border and to create a more realistic strategic reserve in central China. It also led Beijing to begin examining the problems of modernizing China's military forces.

6. The Sino-Soviet conflict is deeply rooted in fundamental geopolitical rivalry. The Chinese have recently been prepared to acknowledge that ideological issues are now largely irrelevant. Nor have individual personalities been decisive. The conflict has deepened since the political demise of Khrushchev and has survived the death of Mao undiminished. In the end, the Chinese invasion of Vietnam in February 1979 plunged Sino-Soviet relations to their lowest point in years. In April 1980, the 1950 Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the two countries lapsed. Talks on the troublesome border questions and on larger political issues have proved barren and, as of mid-1980, still were in virtual suspension. International rivalry between the two has been intense for most of the past two decades.

7. China's leaders view the continuing presence and buildup of Soviet forces along the border and in Mongolia as evidence of a serious, long-term Soviet threat to China's national security. While they may overstate the numbers of Soviet troops for political effect, there is no doubt that the Chinese are extremely concerned about the potential for a Soviet invasion. They do not, however, appear to believe that Soviet forces are poised for an attack in the near future. This belief probably was reinforced by the Soviet decision not to disturb the border equilibrium in response to China's invasion of Vietnam. While increased Chinese defensive preparations, including some civilian evacuation, were observed in the border areas at the time of the invasion, Chinese leaders seemed to enjoy drawing

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attention to the failure of the Soviets to respond. China has been consistently careful, however, to avoid provoking the Soviets by directly threatening behavior in the sensitive border area itself.

8. Although Chinese leaders usually describe the Soviet threat in terms of a conventional attack against Chinese territory, they are aware of the danger posed by Soviet strategic forces. China has long pursued development of its own nuclear arsenal, although its goal appears limited to the creation of a credible deterrent, a force sufficient to inflict unacceptable damage on any adversary.

9. To a lesser extent, China also perceives a political threat to its security from the Soviets, asserting on occasion that the USSR has "meddled" in Chinese internal political affairs—a charge it has not clearly documented. Soviet subversion of Chinese minorities—such as Mongols, Kazakhs, and Uighurs who live along the Sino-Soviet border—remains a continuing concern as well.

10. Although the threat to China's territorial integrity is central to Beijing's understanding of its military problems, the leadership views the threat from Moscow in much broader terms, and remains adamantly opposed to Soviet efforts to expand its influence abroad—particularly in areas contiguous to China. Thus the Chinese leadership has viewed with growing dismay Soviet projection of influence to South and Southeast Asia. Its response to events in Indochina and Afghanistan must be viewed in the light of grave concerns about Soviet attempts to isolate China in Asia, or even to encircle China with a ring of hostile states. In short, China views the Soviet Union as a strategic adversary, against which it must marshal countervailing political and military forces wherever these can be promoted. China's foreign policy, as a result, seeks mutual support and assistance from countries once considered China's enemies.

11. China no longer appears to view the United States as a direct threat. In fact, Beijing considers its growing relationship with the United States as a factor contributing to China's security, because US power constitutes a major counterweight to Soviet power.¹ Since the normalization of US-Chinese relations in early 1979, security considerations have continued to play an important role in the expanding relationship. Some Chinese leaders, however, view the United

States as a superpower in retreat, and fear Washington will not prove sufficiently resolute in opposing the USSR. They are concerned that China may eventually be left alone to face Soviet pressure, before economic and military modernization has prepared it to meet the challenge.

12. To forestall that eventuality, the Chinese have been trying to "buy time" for their own preparations by encouraging the United States and NATO to maintain strong forces against the Soviet threat, and by repeatedly entreating the West not to concede any advantages to the USSR through arms control or other detente-related agreements. China also hopes to secure military assistance from the advanced industrial states, including the United States.

13. Beijing does not appear to consider Taiwan a national security issue, treating it essentially as a political and juridical question. Since the normalization of relations with the United States, Chinese leaders have insisted that differences with Taiwan can and should be settled peaceably, although they have not renounced the use of force. While it maintains significant military forces in the Fuzhou Military Region opposite Taiwan, Beijing does not appear to anticipate hostilities there in the near future.

14. China views Vietnam—its most immediate enemy after the Soviet Union—both as a surrogate for Moscow in Southeast Asia and as a rival in its own right for influence in the area. Soviet-Vietnamese collaboration and evident Vietnamese ambitions in Indochina led to rapid cooling of Sino-Vietnamese relations after Hanoi's takeover of the south in 1975, but Vietnam's improved ties to the Soviet Union probably were primary. Concern about Soviet as well as Vietnamese intentions also underlay Beijing's decision to support the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea. Establishment of treaty relations between Vietnam and the Soviet Union was a crucial turning point, leading China to begin improvement of its military posture near the Vietnamese border. Hanoi's subsequent invasion of Kampuchea served both to expand Soviet influence and to damage China's credibility as a power capable of defending its own interests; hence, Beijing's attack on Vietnam. The attack was also intended as a lesson for the West on the need to stand up against "hegemonism."

15. The results of the war have not lessened Beijing's concern about the threat to its interests in Southeast Asia from Soviet involvement and Vietnamese ambitions. While it does not see an aggressive Viet-

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nam as a threat to Chinese territory, China finds worrisome the improved Soviet access to Vietnamese military facilities. As a result of continuing tensions, China has "reserved the right" to teach Hanoi a "second lesson." To this end, PLA strength in the border area has increased sharply over the prewar level, and logistics and communications networks opposite Vietnam have been upgraded. China has also used a variety of political, diplomatic, and economic pressures to keep Vietnam on the defensive and to influence its policies. Negotiations to settle the border dispute have been fruitless, and Sino-Vietnamese hostility remains at a high level. In any event Beijing must remain alert to the possibility of a coordinated Soviet-Vietnamese military attack.

16. Although its border problem with India remains unsettled, China does not view India as a credible threat to its territorial integrity. Again, it is the close Indian relationship with the Soviet Union that is troublesome. Beijing appears to believe this relationship is less encompassing than that between Moscow and Hanoi and it has attempted to nudge India into a more "neutral" stance.

17. At least since 1973 China has viewed Japan as a potential bulwark against the Soviet Union and has encouraged a close security relationship between Tokyo and Washington. The considerations that have led China to seek a harmonious relationship with the United States also apply to Japan. Beijing has encouraged Japan to augment its own military forces and would view a modest increase in Japanese military power with equanimity—so long as Japanese-US security ties remain strong. Indications that Japan was pursuing an independent military course might cause concern among some Chinese leaders, however.

18. In contrast to Vietnam, China perceives no threat from North Korea; its relations with Pyongyang are currently warmer than North Korean relations with Moscow. China is anxious to maintain this status, however, and would regard a growth of Soviet influence at Chinese expense a serious additional threat to its security. China remains concerned about a possible outbreak of hostilities between North and South Korea and continues to discourage Pyongyang from initiating military action.

19. China tends to view countries farther afield less in terms of a direct threat to itself than as factors in the international balance. As already noted, in the larger sense China attempts to keep this balance from swinging against it and in favor of the USSR primarily

through diplomatic, rather than military, means. China appears to believe that, to the degree Moscow is preoccupied elsewhere, it will be less capable of applying military and diplomatic pressure against China.

Decisionmaking

20. Chinese defense policy is formulated in a highly politicized atmosphere by the regime's most senior leaders. The supreme military authority, the Military Commission, is an organ of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee and is dominated by its civilian party members. Crucial military policy decisions in the context of other policy questions are dealt with by the Politburo, the pinnacle of Chinese decisionmaking authority.

21. Although personal and policy differences exist among the members of the current Politburo, it is generally more cohesive, less ideologically oriented, and more concerned with practical economic goals than any in two decades.

22. The military retains an important voice in Chinese decisionmaking, although its influence has declined since the Cultural Revolution. At the height of the Cultural Revolution—when party and government organs were virtually not functioning—the PLA assumed countrywide administrative duties unprecedented in a Communist country. As Defense Minister Lin Biao had been designated Mao's heir, the military enjoyed enormous influence in political affairs. Since the fall of Lin in 1971, however, the party leadership has sought to reduce the influence of the PLA in local and national level decisionmaking—an effort slowed by continued factionalism and political disorder throughout the country, which necessitated an active role for military leaders at all levels. Since the death of Mao and the purge of his radical supporters in 1976, the party's efforts have been more successful, in part because the internal security situation no longer required as much active military participation in the management of everyday affairs. Even before the demise of Mao many PLA officers holding jobs in government ministries and provincial bureaucracies were being replaced by civilians and transferred to strictly military posts, and this trend has continued.

23. As a result, direct military influence in the political arena appears to have declined considerably. Several key positions in the military hierarchy are held by civilians, most notably the Chairman and the Secretary General of the Military Commission and the

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Director of the General Political Department. In addition, military members of the Politburo embody a variety of backgrounds and competing interests, a tendency which obstructs the adoption of a unified stance on some issues. Personal rivalries and generational differences also dilute the potential effectiveness of a PLA "bloc." Moreover, most current military leaders seem to be advocates of military "professionalism," a tradition that is skeptical of excessive military interference in civilian decisionmaking.

24. The PLA has suffered little in the past three years from the purge of the leftist radicals, who did not enjoy widespread sympathy in the armed forces at any rate. There have been numerous dismissals, demotions, and transfers of military leaders at all levels in the past three years, but no broad attack on the PLA itself, as there was after the fall of Lin Biao. The party has gone out of its way to avoid the appearance of an antimilitary campaign and has not pressed as hard for a "rectification" of the military leadership as it has in the lower levels of the party itself. Overall party-military relations have returned largely to pre-Cultural Revolution norms and now appear relatively stable.

25. It is in this context that issues of major importance to the military establishment are discussed and decided. The qualitative improvement of China's largely obsolescent military forces now is widely recognized as an urgent, although clearly subordinate, priority if China is to achieve its ambitious economic and political goals in a world environment generally perceived by the Chinese as hostile. China has embarked on a far-reaching program of national economic development known as the "Four Modernizations"—agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense—to bring the nation into the modern world. Moreover, there appears to be widespread consensus within China, including the military, that much needs to be done in developing the civilian economy before effective military modernization can be accomplished. Consequently, although comprehensive force modernization, particularly in conventional weaponry, is a key component of current defense policy, significant change in military capabilities, achieved through the introduction of new weapons, is still years away.

26. *Areas of Potential Friction.* There are several areas of potential friction between the PLA and the party, and within both the military and the party, al-

though—in contrast to 1971—there are no indications of disloyalty of the PLA to the regime.

- **The low priority of military modernization.** While military leaders accept the logic of China's economic development plans, a number understandably have expressed concern about the slow pace of progress. Some PLA leaders may also be concerned that long-term prospects for comprehensive modernization of the military suffered a setback following the mid-1979 decision to "correct imbalances" in the economic system by decreasing investment in heavy industry, especially steel.
- **Import of foreign military technology.** Although civilian and military leaders appear to agree that foreign technology is essential to the overall modernization process, few important military-related purchases have been made. Despite the large number of high-level military trips to assess and discuss purchase of foreign weapons and technology, budgetary and political constraints have limited purchases, creating uncertainty and frustration among military planners and technology specialists.
- **The February 1979 Vietnam war.** Although official statements have declared that the PLA performed well in Vietnam, the issue of the Army's performance in that campaign continues to be questioned by some of China's leaders. Friction developed when some leaders questioned the wisdom of attacking Vietnam, and others demanded an explanation of the high costs. PLA weaknesses and shortcomings which became obvious during the campaign continue to fuel the debates.
- **The aging military leadership.** Many of China's key military leaders are in their late sixties and seventies—veterans of the Long March and anti-Japanese war—and have been at the top levels of the military hierarchy for 30 years or more. The technical expertise of some is questionable, but they are skilled at political infighting, using "old boy networks" to ensure their political survival. This situation has produced at the higher levels a conservative, factionalized, stagnant military bureaucracy dominated by "political" generals.
- **The rise of new military leaders.** Younger, better educated specialists have risen slowly in

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the hierarchy, though their prospects for advancement now seem improved with the recent emphasis on professional expertise. However, new interservice rivalries may emerge as the younger leaders develop professionalism in their service arms and compete for the scarce resources accorded to military modernization.

- **The social impact of economic modernization.** While recognizing the need for modernization and the changes it will bring, the PLA's top leadership maintains a conservative approach to questions of social change and political stability. It has therefore expressed growing concern about the decline of "revolutionary" values, the "liberalization" of social and economic policies, the slight increase in urban disorder, and the growth of western cultural influence that have accompanied modernization. Because the party is divided on these questions, the PLA could be drawn into political controversy.

Defense Modernization and Economics

27. The Chinese can produce the full range of basic, although largely obsolescent, weapons for all services of the PLA. Over the years, the defense industries have turned out a wide variety of weapons, including small arms, artillery and tanks, fighters and bombers, surface ships and diesel attack submarines, and strategic missiles and nuclear weapons. Indeed, even though some weapons have been produced in large numbers, at many of China's defense plants there appears to be considerable unused production capacity. While Chinese engineers are capable of copying or making prototypes of many weapons designs, shifting to series production of high-technology items is often beyond their capability. For example, new engines for air or naval use apparently present serious problems. Clearly these are areas where the Chinese require fairly massive infusions of Western technology.

Economic Policies and the Defense Sector

28. The development of a modern defense establishment is a fundamental objective in China's pursuit of economic modernization. The relatively low priority currently accorded military modernization reflects the leadership's recognition that fundamental weaknesses in the pattern and rate of economic development must be remedied before a systematic upgrading of defense capabilities can be undertaken. Over the

past three years the evolutionary approach of the leadership in remedying these fundamental economic weaknesses has led to significant downgrading in the priorities assigned to defense and a further subordination of military industrial, scientific, and technical activity to civilian authority.

29. In early 1979, after several top-level meetings, the party decreed a three-year program of "readjustment" and remedial action. Surveys and investigations of domestic economic conditions and production possibilities during 1978 revealed to the leadership the depth and extent of China's economic problems. Similarly, exposure to the developed world through the large number of delegations sent abroad and entertained in China during 1977 and 1978, reinforced Beijing's perception that the gap in development between China and the industrialized nations was much wider than had been assumed. By December the new leaders had also concluded that the Chinese Communist Party was not oriented toward the goals of economic modernization and could not be depended upon to be responsive to their orders. At the same time they concluded that other important institutional changes were necessary—in legal systems, education, and cultural policy—concurrent with economic modernization.

30. The underlying theme of Chinese economic policy since early 1979 is the interrelationship of consumer welfare, economic productivity, and political stability. The major premise is that existing stocks of Chinese capital and labor are capable of higher levels of productivity. To gain the increased productivity, the leadership is making major changes in economic policies—increasing material incentives and hence incomes in agriculture and industry, installing new systems of rewards and penalties for performance by individual managers and economic entities, and experimenting with new forms of more efficient industrial organization.

31. In effect, the regime is making an unprecedented appeal to the self-interest of the Chinese population. The leadership has already begun to grapple with the problem of managing and meeting consumer demand for more and better quality goods and services. The growth of consumer expectations is now a major problem for the government and will remain so for years to come. Political stability enters the relationship between consumer welfare and productivity because the leaders believe that their grasp on power and the permanence of their policies depends on dem-

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onstrating that modernization is in the best interest of most Chinese. In the absence of improvements in consumer welfare, productivity will remain low and the potentials for political disruption, as well as the leadership's vulnerability to challenges from within the party, will increase.

32. Resource allocation was also shifted by the leadership to support the new policy course. Investment in heavy industry, particularly iron and steel, was cut back while allocations to agriculture, light industry, and the building materials industry were increased. While maintaining interest in acquiring foreign equipment and technology, and continuing to solicit and receive long-term credits to pay for such imports, the leadership suspended or postponed a number of planned purchases from abroad. At the same time, the domestic construction program was cut back to concentrate resources on those projects which were most likely to ease longstanding constraints on industrial production—electric power, coal, building materials, and transportation. Poorly planned projects and those requiring long leadtimes were eliminated.

33. *Short-Term Prospects.* It is apparent that the leadership will not be able to complete its "readjustment" in the planned three-year period. The new policy still has not been completely accepted within the party, in part because the changes are such radical departures from the policies of the Maoist era and in part because of general bureaucratic resistance to change. Also, while the new incentives policies have taken hold and are giving new impetus to production in agriculture, the changes in industrial incentives and organizational policies are being implemented only slowly and have not so far stimulated industrial output. Finally, three to five years will be required to complete new construction in the bottleneck areas of Chinese industry; hence the present constraints in energy, raw materials, and transportation probably will not be loosened until sometime beyond 1981.

34. *Trends in Defense Spending.* China clearly continues to subordinate defense modernization to the needs of economic development. A comparison of indexes of defense procurement illustrates the relative priorities given to defense and nondefense sectors over the last decade. Before 1972 the growth of estimated defense procurement briefly exceeded that of industrial production; since 1972, industrial production has generally continued an upward trend while defense procurement has been relatively constant (see figure I-1).

35.

initial decline in defense procurement in 1972, which affected all the services. Diminution of PLA influence within the higher levels of the regime following Lin Biao's abortive coup against Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai in late 1971 undoubtedly was a factor.¹ Technological difficulties in developing replacement weapons, relative satisfaction with existing levels of obsolescent equipment, and the struggle over the succession to Mao probably limited subsequent growth. Moreover, the defense procurement level attained in 1971 probably was not sustainable over the long term. Thus, while overall defense spending (which includes operating costs as well as procurement) probably rose in 1979 as a result of the action against Vietnam and increases in border defense, we expect that Chinese policy will continue to hold military spending in check until overall economic modernization is more assured.

36. The present resource commitment to defense is sufficient to support selective and gradual military modernization. For the time being, force restructuring and increasing military professionalism probably will be emphasized. Such improvements demand few financial resources and are prerequisites for assimilating more modern equipment. Spending near the current level also will permit selective acquisition of foreign defense technology, including small quantities of weapons. The Chinese assessment of the PLA's experience in Vietnam will help focus the selection of some foreign acquisitions.

37. Further in the future, if the pace of economic advance increases, more resources likely would be made available for defense. Growth of defense spending may begin to approximate that of the general economy after a sufficient industrial and technological base has been created. A change from a pattern of selective modernization to a comprehensive program, however, would depend on the achievement of sustained economic advances for a decade or more.

Modernization of the Defense Industries

38. The fluctuation in Chinese economic modernization policies over the past 18 months has left the defense modernization effort in a state of flux. When the new leadership took power in 1976, Chinese military planners moved quickly to implement a

¹ The Air Force, which was deeply involved in the coup, suffered dramatically. Air Force procurement dropped especially sharply; a widespread purge of Air Force officers occurred, and military aircraft were grounded for more than a month.

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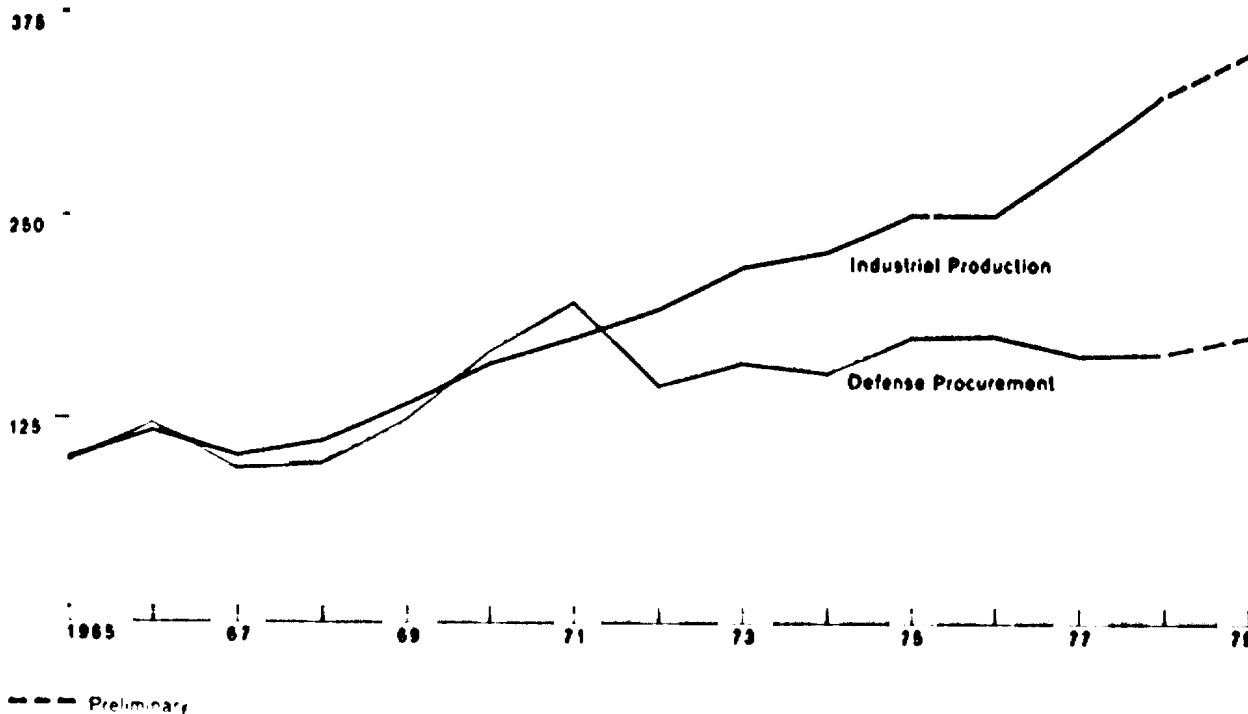
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Figure I-1

Indexes of Industrial Production and Defense Procurement in China, 1965-79

Index: 1965=100



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broad modernization program and to enlarge the military machine-building industries—aircraft, missile and aerospace, nuclear, land armaments, shipbuilding, and electronics. The Chinese began to expand more than 50 major military industrial facilities, made sweeping changes in the military scientific and technological structure, resumed testing a variety of weapons (after a hiatus of up to six years), and launched a massive program to study a broad spectrum of foreign military technology and equipment.

39. The magnitude of the military industrial modernization effort, and the potentially disruptive effect of the program on other modernization goals, apparently was not immediately understood by the leadership in Beijing because of the general lack of planning and coordination of China's overall modernization activities. In February 1978, however, Premier Hua Guofeng in his report to the Fifth National People's Congress, called for "integrating military with nonmilitary enterprises and peacetime produc-

tion with preparedness against war." This formulation suggested that some military production and research and development should be devoted to nonmilitary purposes. Subsequently, military industrial expansion declined, stronger civilian control was established within the military industrial bureaucracy, and a larger share of existing industrial capacity was dedicated to nonmilitary industrial production.

40. Further restrictions on the scope and pace of China's military industrial modernization effort began to emerge in early 1979. Preceding the shift to a three-year period of readjustment, criticism surfaced over the lack of good judgment and coordination in the importation of technology and equipment, including imports with military application. A dramatic illustration of the falloff in Chinese interest in purchasing foreign military equipment and technology is the marked decline of high-level technical and industrial delegations going to and from China through 1979. Senior Chinese officials have commented that "mod-

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ernization of the economy must come before modernization of the military."

41 **Trends in Construction.** There was a large and expensive buildup of China's defense industries during the late 1960s and early 1970s, but some time before 1976 Beijing apparently decided to reorder priorities and selectively curb new construction. Photography of nearly 100 defense plants and shipyards shows that since 1976 China has been expanding existing facilities rather than building new plants. Expansion in progress increased from about 10 projects in 1976 to more than 50 by the end of 1978.

42 Figure I-2 illustrates the trends in military industrial construction since 1966. As the aggregate curve illustrates, construction increased steadily from 1966 until 1971-72 and then started to decline. The downward trend was reversed in 1976, as expansion at existing plants began to increase, largely in industries that support the strategic weapons sector, then gradually leveling off in 1978. The rate of expansion apparently declined again in 1979, evidently reflecting both the completion of ongoing projects and stronger controls on new expansion.

Impediments to Defense Modernization

43 Chinese military officials have noted repeatedly that many foreign military forces—especially those of the United States and the USSR—are far ahead of the PLA technologically. The Chinese also recognize that the technological gap is widening and that "catching up" with their potential rivals is unlikely for the foreseeable future. The principal constraints to technological modernization of the PLA are inefficient industrial administration and management, weaknesses in key areas such as metallurgy and electronics, absence of a broad base of well-trained engineers and technicians, and outmoded machinery and test equipment.

44 Years will be required to update the basic industries on which the material modernization of the PLA depends. In general, most PLA leaders believe that new weapons ultimately must come primarily from a more advanced Chinese industrial base (in keeping with the principle of self-reliance), and consequently they have agreed with civilian economic planners that improvements in the overall industrial base must take precedence over military equipment needs.

45 Overall industrial performance—creditable in terms of overall output—has been uneven. Electric power and raw materials, particularly from the extractive industry, are chronically in short supply. Building materials, cement, finished steel, and other key materials are not produced in quantities sufficient for capital construction; regular import of these commodities has been required in recent years. Longstanding emphasis on volume of production, inappropriate pricing, and inadequate attention to matching output to the needs of consumers has meant that much of what is produced is of low quality or is stored because it is of little use. In general, China's industry provides only limited opportunities for expanded employment and embodies levels of technology that with few exceptions range from 10 to 30 years behind those of industry in the developed countries.

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Foreign Technical Assistance

47. China's military machine-building industry relies on Soviet design and manufacturing practices of the 1950s, and the need for Western design technology and manufacturing expertise is enormous. Since 1976, China has engaged in a massive effort to modernize its military machine-building industry by studying Western experience and thus skip intermediate stages of development. China's interest in and needs for modern military equipment appear to cover the entire military technological spectrum from basic materials to complete weapon systems (see figure I-3). The basic needs include high technologies such as electronic materials and equipment, machine tools, chemicals, and special metals. Weapon subsystem technologies which Chinese industrial and technical delegations have surveyed, studied, or negotiated for, include a broad

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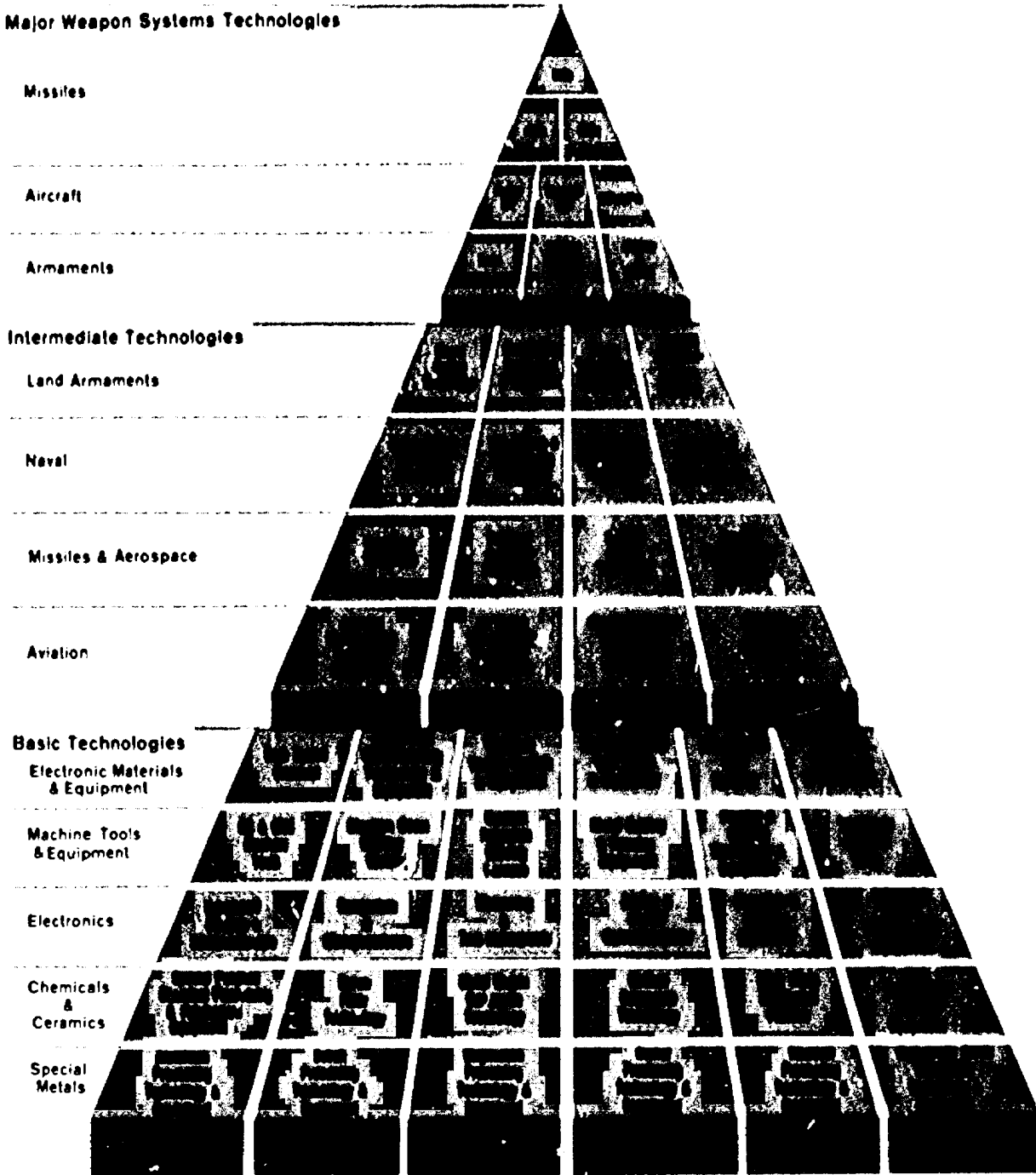
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**Figure I-3
Chinese Interest in Western Military Technology and Equipment, 1976-79**

Major Weapon Systems Technologies



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range of equipment design and manufacturing processes. Specific interests not only include conventional armaments, but technologies with application in nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development, testing, and manufacture.

48. During the period 1976-79, about 5,000 military, technical, and industrial personnel traveled to and from China to investigate or discuss Western military equipment and manufacturing know-how or to talk about Chinese purchases of these technologies. The greater proportion of this travel occurred in 1978, when China's interest in foreign military technology was at its peak.

49. Current interest appears to focus on basic and intermediate technologies that have civilian as well as military application. Groups of PLA officers and representatives of military industrial ministries routinely have been dispatched to Western Europe, Japan, and the United States to investigate Western state-of-the-art industrial processes and to negotiate for equipment and technology. Many foreign armament experts and retired military personnel have been invited to present seminars on various military industrial topics.

50. Most study groups have focused on aircraft and engine technology, but considerable attention has been paid to land armaments—especially antiarmor weapons and antiaircraft artillery, electronics and precision instruments, and special metals technology. These contacts have enabled the Chinese to obtain free technology and advice about advanced weapons, vast amounts of technical literature, and in some cases training for production engineers and technicians.

51. The Chinese have stated that they wish to obtain production technology and licensing arrangements rather than large quantities of finished items, but, with the notable exception of the Spey jet aircraft engine deal of 1975, no major purchases have been concluded. From their experience with the Spey, the Chinese may have come to appreciate the difficulties of absorbing advanced foreign technologies into their weak technical base and thus concluded that exhaustive study is required before making a purchase. Negotiations for HOT antitank missile and Harrier V/STOL aircraft production technology, quite active throughout 1978, slowed considerably in 1979, in early 1980 China indicated it had less interest in the Harrier. These developments may reflect Chinese concern over costs and the realization that more basic problems of technology and training have yet to be overcome. They may also reflect serious Chinese problems in

developing coordinated plans for specific future needs, both civil and military.

Military Doctrine, Strategy, and War-Fighting Capability

Doctrine

52. China's defense policy emphasizes the maintenance of large forces—the People's Liberation Army—to deter a nuclear or conventional attack on China from any quarter. If deterrence fails, Chinese forces are deployed to contain and defeat an attacker before key industrial and population centers could be reached, or before the political objectives of an attacker could be achieved. China's defense policy is based on the perception of military inferiority in modern weapons relative to its main adversaries, and the recognition that its forces are largely obsolescent. On the other hand, China has significant demographic and geographic assets: a population larger (and more easily mobilized) than the combined populations of NATO and the Warsaw Pact; the world's largest standing army; and extensive and defensible terrain. Moreover, the current leadership has demonstrated that it will commit forces for limited offensive operations to support its national security goals.

53. To implement its defense policy, China's basic military doctrine, "People's War Under Modern Conditions," was announced in August 1977. This doctrine is an outgrowth of Mao Zedong's concept of "People's War," which was formulated during the 1930s and 1940s when Communist forces fought the Nationalists and the Japanese. "People's War" involves the mobilization of the entire nation for the war effort. It recognizes that destruction of enemy forces is more important than seizing or holding territory and that the principles of surprise, economy of force, maneuver, and mass must be incorporated into tactical planning. "People's War" also posits that an inferior force can defeat a technologically superior force if it can maneuver and fight on favorable terrain, wear down and disperse the superior force over time, and eventually mobilize enough manpower to overwhelm the enemy. "People's War" includes all means of armed struggle from guerrilla warfare through use of nuclear weapons.

54. "People's War" stresses the organization of Chinese forces in accordance with the "Three-in-One" principle. The military is composed of main, regional (or local), and militia forces. Each has a separate and

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distinct role, but all three are coordinated in a single effort by the commander. "People's War" has the added dimension of depending on the civilian populace, under the leadership of the party, for production of military goods and as an inexhaustible supply of military recruits.

55. The concept of "People's War Under Modern Conditions" changes the emphasis, but not the substance, of Mao's original thesis. The Soviet Union still has the advantages of mobility and firepower, and the Chinese will continue to rely on their vast territory and huge and easily mobilized population as the primary assets for defeating an invasion. "Under Modern Conditions" stresses the need for gradual changes in force structure, weapons, and tactical doctrine to meet an increasingly sophisticated Soviet threat. Industrial and technological modernization over the next several decades will gradually make the necessary weapons and equipment available.

56. As they contemplate possible war with the Soviet Union, the Chinese military leaders believe that the advantages that arise from China's great territory are enhanced by the fact that the Soviets appear organized for a relatively short war. Through an ability to trade space for time the Chinese appear to believe they can deny the Soviets the early victory which they think Soviet doctrine requires. This ability, both deters a Soviet attack and complicates Soviet planning.

57. Although the Chinese have developed doctrine and strategy appropriate to their forces in being and the potential enemies they face, they are nevertheless showing great interest in foreign military doctrine and strategy. Delegations from the PLA Academy of Military Science toured the United Kingdom and Turkey to study methods of teaching doctrine and strategy, and the Chinese have hosted groups from the war colleges of Canada, the United Kingdom, France, West Germany, and the United States.

Although the Chinese are interested in the principles of organization and operation of various West European armies, the PLA is also interested in learning from these contacts what they can of Soviet doctrine and strategy. The Chinese are probably gaining valuable insights into the organization and capabilities of Soviet forces from the Europeans, along with an understanding of European plans to defeat those forces.

Strategy

58. China's military strategy is essentially defensive. It has a small but credible deterrent force of strategic nuclear missiles that would make any attack on China a risky and potentially costly prospect. Its conventional forces are deployed according to strategies ranging from a strong defense along the east coast and southern border to a defense in depth in the industrialized northeast. In the Urumqi Military Region in the northwest, PLA forces are thinly deployed and probably would yield territory more readily.

59. Main force units are trained and equipped to fight a conventional war in any part of China or at short distances beyond China's borders. Regional forces augment main forces, and they often man fixed defensive positions within compact geographical areas. Militia units are trained and equipped to defend their immediate locale and to reinforce and support regional or main force units as the need arises. The militia, together with stay-behind or bypassed units of main or regional forces, would be expected to fight as guerrillas in territory occupied by an invader. All three types of forces are trained to use available weaponry and to rely upon manpower and terrain as their primary means of resistance.

60. The Chinese armed forces will not, for the foreseeable future, be suitably armed and organized to discard the "People's War" concept and adopt a new strategic doctrine that would permit defense near all of China's borders instead of strategic withdrawal. Until such a change can be accomplished, we believe Chinese strategy will continue to require trading space for time, with the resulting loss of some key areas of the country. There are, however, indications that this policy is controversial within the Chinese military. Some military thinking apparently advocates a more forward defense—especially in the northeast—presumably to avoid the psychological and economic costs of allowing deep penetrations. This thinking reflects growing concern over the PLA's inability to react to a variety of limited-objective Soviet attacks, such as a strike at the Daqing oilfields. Such an alternate strategy obviously would require a more rapid modernization of the Chinese armed forces than the leadership now appears to contemplate. Indeed we do not see any convincing signs this point of view is prevailing in leadership circles.

61. The PLA is currently deployed to confront the Soviets in the north with successively larger and better equipped units. Lightly armed and dispersed border

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defense units would meet an enemy in forward areas, develop intelligence on the hostile forces, and inflict casualties to the degree possible. Better armed regional forces would fight from well-prepared, defensible positions along likely invasion routes, attempting further to channel the enemy into terrain favoring defense. Relatively mobile and well-armed main forces would reinforce regional troops on the enemy's main axes of advance, meet any breakthroughs, and delay or destroy enemy forces as they were able. There would be mounting guerrilla resistance within occupied areas to weaken the enemy—inflicting casualties, hindering supply efforts, and further channeling enemy movements.

62. China's preparations before its attack on Vietnam in 1979 (which included preparations and deployments in anticipation of a possible Soviet retaliatory attack on China) give us some insight into Chinese strategic planning for a conventional war with the USSR. Large numbers of civilians were evacuated from territory along the Soviet and Mongolian borders. Some Chinese main force units were deployed northward from garrison areas in southern Manchuria, but all major units remained well back from the border, a deployment pattern that would have required Soviet forces to advance relatively deeply into China to engage significant Chinese troop concentrations.

63. A key element of Chinese strategy for reinforcing threatened areas is the central reserve of the PLA, located in central and eastern China, primarily in the Wuhan Military Region. Forces there have ready access to China's main lines of communications and are not immediately threatened by any enemy. The Wuhan MR has China's only airborne forces, an army that could be deployed relatively quickly. Nine infantry and two armored divisions are also located there, and they could be deployed in any direction by rail, providing a measure of needed flexibility to Chinese military planners. Units from Wuhan participated in the Sino-Vietnamese war of February 1979 and, if a Soviet invasion should occur, central reserve units would be deployed north as reinforcements. In addition to furnishing troops, the central reserve areas probably would be used to operate training centers for new recruits and as main logistic bases for frontline forces.

War-Fighting Capability

64. Geography, level of warfare, and the military capabilities of neighboring states determine potential strategy and provide a measure of Chinese war-fighting capabilities.

65. *A Sino-Soviet Nuclear War.* China's program to ensure the survivability of its strategic missile force is the key to its nuclear deterrent strategy. China's missile force is small and technically inferior to those of the United States and the USSR, and Beijing continues to emphasize its "no first use" policy. However, China has a credible retaliatory capability, including medium- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs and IRBMs) that can hit targets in many parts of the USSR and throughout Asia.

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The Soviet Union could not be certain of eliminating the whole force in a first strike, and would have to expect to suffer some retaliatory damage after launching a nuclear attack on China.

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In the near future China probably will deploy a full-range ICBM and, somewhat later, a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM). These advances will improve China's nuclear capability.

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66. The remainder of the PLA is poorly organized, equipped, and trained to conduct effective operations in a nuclear environment. If deterrence failed, China's nuclear war-fighting capability would be no match for that of the Soviet Union.

67. Soviet doctrine contemplates rates of advance of up to 120 kilometers per day in a nuclear environment, and China's lack of tactical mobility could prove costly under such conditions. If dispersed, Chinese formations would be slow in reacting to Soviet breakthroughs; if massed, Chinese forces would become ideal nuclear targets.

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68. Air and naval forces would suffer from similar disadvantages. Dispersed and hardened air facilities could prolong the life of those forces only temporarily. Individual naval units could continue to fight, but coordinated large-scale naval operations would be almost impossible. Neither could offer effective resistance for more than a short time.

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69. The Chinese also would be extremely vulnerable to a large-scale chemical or biological warfare attack. They lack modern equipment to cope with such an attack, and the PLA receives only the most rudimentary training in unit or individual protective practices.

bulk of China's reinforced ground and air units, and would be farther from needed supplies and reinforcements. Concurrently, Chinese defenses probably would be able to deny a major port or beachhead to Soviet naval forces.

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73. The Chinese intend to provide air defense and ground attack support to their army. Over the battlefield, it is unlikely that the Chinese could prevent Soviet tactical aircraft from effectively supporting Soviet ground forces. Chinese air defenses would be somewhat more effective against Soviet interdiction; this effectiveness would increase with the depth of Soviet attacks.

70. *A Sino-Soviet Conventional War.* A limited Soviet incursion into China could be carried out with forces currently stationed in the border regions with considerable chance of success. However, a major Soviet conventional invasion aimed at seizing Beijing probably would require at least 80 divisions, about double the size of the current force. Despite the probability of sizable losses and acute logistic problems, we believe the PLA has perhaps an even chance of stalemating such an attack short of its objective.

74. Although lacking a close-air-support capability in the Western sense, the Chinese probably intend to conduct ground attack in the battle area and interdiction against Soviet supply lines. Ground attack operations would be costly because of Soviet air- and ground-based air defenses and difficult because of deficiencies in Chinese ground attack aircraft. These operations probably would not be effective. Interdiction attacks probably would be more successful, but heavy Chinese losses would occur. It is unlikely that Chinese air attacks would seriously hinder Soviet resupply efforts.

71. Geography and deployment of PLA forces in the border regions suggest that the Chinese intend to defend key territory from the Shenyang Military Region in the northeast to the Gansu corridor in the Lanzhou MR in western China. Moreover, China is strengthening its forces in the westernmost Urumqi MR. All across the front, invading Soviet forces would meet mounting resistance as they pushed deeper into China.

75. The Chinese Air Force is marked by obsolescent aircraft and armament, an unsophisticated ground-based air defense system, and inefficient command and control. However, most of China's combat airfields are located more than 300 kilometers (200 miles) from the northern border, affording some protection from surprise attack and increasing the available reaction time for Chinese fighters. In addition, China's large inventory of aircraft and numerous hardened storage facilities would enable at least some Air Force units to survive even sustained attacks. Thus, even after gaining air superiority the Soviets probably would face sporadic, limited Chinese air operations over the battlefield.

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72. Half of the Soviet forces along the Chinese border are deployed opposite the Shenyang MR and north of Beijing (see figure 1-4). The objectives of a Soviet campaign in the east probably would involve overrunning Heilongjiang and Jilin Provinces in northern and central Shenyang MR, and then continuing southward toward the cities of Shenyang and Beijing. Concurrent attacks could be launched into Beijing MR from Mongolia. Stiff Chinese resistance could be expected from regional forces in strong defensive complexes in mountainous areas. Main force armies located to the rear are prepared to react to enemy incursions. If the Soviets were to break through the mountains, poor defensive terrain and ineffective air support would seriously complicate further Chinese defense efforts. As Soviet forces advanced deeper into China, they would again encounter increasing resistance from the

76. The Soviets could launch operations into northwest China in isolation or coincident with an attack in the northeast. Defense of the Urumqi and Lanzhou MRs in the west would be aimed at denying the Soviets access to central China.

77. Chinese guerrilla forces probably would play a significant role in a Sino-Soviet conventional war, and would pose a major rear area security problem for the Soviets. Interdiction of supply routes and hit-and-run attacks upon outlying units would require the Soviets

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to use more troops and would make permanent occupation of Chinese territory costly.

78. *A War in Southeast Asia.* Chinese forces in the Guangzhou and Kunming MRs adjacent to Vietnam, Laos, and Burma could launch large military operations across China's borders. The invasion of Vietnam in February 1979 is a measure of China's war-fighting capability in the south.⁴ During four months of preparation, China increased its strength near the border from 50,000 to 500,000 troops and from 300 to 900 combat aircraft; it integrated main and local forces, with militia units in supporting roles, into the operation. The PLA built a 5:1 advantage in ground troops and pursued its military objectives cautiously and conservatively. Even so, the rate and depth of the PLA's advance were reduced by rugged terrain and tenacious Vietnamese defense, but perhaps even more by political limitations and cautious tactics.

79. Since the conflict, Vietnam has more than doubled its ground forces north of Hanoi to more than 250,000. Most Chinese main force units have returned to their home garrisons, and as a result about equal numbers of Chinese and Vietnamese forces are now in the border area. Moreover, the Soviets have delivered large quantities of combat aircraft, tanks, ships, and other military equipment to Vietnam since the war.

80. If China were to launch another attack against Vietnam, considerable augmentation of Chinese forces would again be required, especially for an advance deeper than in February 1979. A campaign to reach Hanoi and the Red River delta would require stockpiling additional supplies near the Vietnamese border to compensate for the limited capacity of the transportation system in the area. China could penetrate more deeply into Laos but would be hindered by poor roads and long supply lines in any effort to reach Vientiane or pivot east into Vietnam. China's South Sea Fleet could easily defeat an unassisted Vietnamese Navy, and could conduct raids, small amphibious operations, or even limited sealift for Chinese ground forces along the Vietnamese coastline. Soviet naval units and aircraft regularly operate from Vietnam, and the Chinese would have to reckon with these forces. Both air forces could be reinforced quickly, but Chinese numerical superiority probably would wear

down the unassisted Vietnamese Air Force despite its slight qualitative superiority. China will probably retain and improve its advantage over Vietnam, but will continue to require extensive preparations prior to launching any major offensive.

81. The terrain along the Sino-Vietnamese border is rugged and defensible on both sides. Thus, even in a defensive mode Chinese ground forces are deployed well forward.

82. *Capabilities in Other Areas.* The Chinese have a formidable naval, air, and ground coastal defense capability. The Navy can defend the coast against any seaborne invasion. China will not have a significant open-ocean war-fighting capability against a major adversary during the next decade, but some progress in this area is being made. Its submarine force already can conduct significant antishipping operations.

83. China is unlikely to initiate any major military action in the East and South China Seas through the mid-1980s with the possible exception of action against Vietnam over disputed islands or territorial seas. Both have claims to the Paracel (Xisha) and Spratly (Nansha) Islands, and dispute rights to some waters of the Tonkin Gulf and South China Sea. (See figure 1-5.) In the case of Taiwan, Beijing had adopted a patient and nonthreatening attitude even before the normalization of relations with the United States and certainly perceives little if any threat from Taiwan.

84. China is not capable at present of a successful amphibious invasion of Taiwan.⁵ The PLA has sufficient ground troops in the military regions opposite Taiwan to invade the island without weakening those forces confronting the Soviet Union, but, to be successful, China would first have to win air and sea superiority around Taiwan. Such air operations would require a drawdown of fighter-bomber and bomber aircraft from the four northern military regions. Acquiring the command and control capabilities, landing ships, means for naval bombardment, and training would probably take at least 10 years.

85. *Korea.* The PLA's capability to support a North Korean attack on South Korea has improved vastly since the early 1950s. If the Chinese were to fight in



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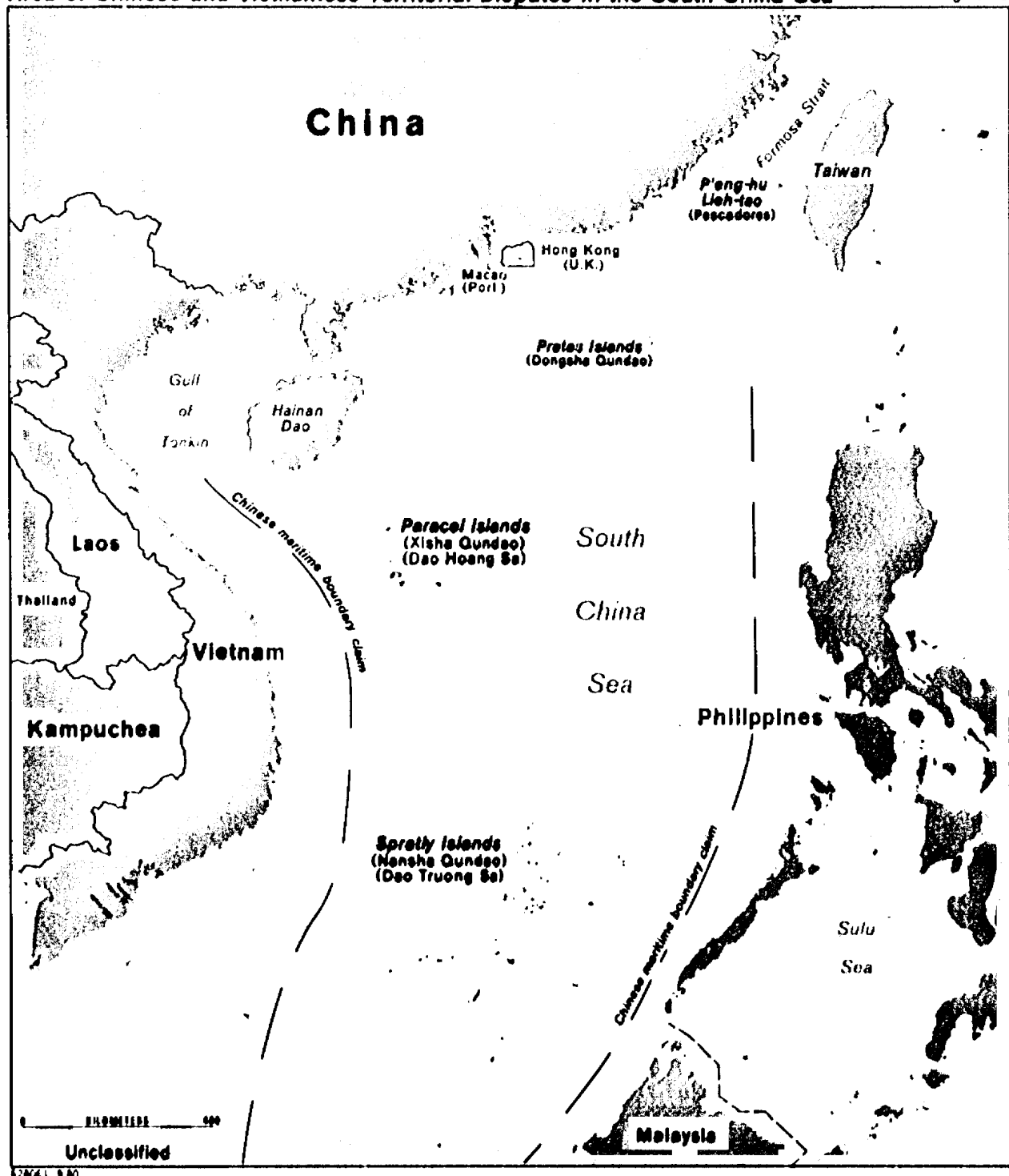
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Area of Chinese and Vietnamese Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea

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Korea again, they could apply sufficient strength to overwhelm the forces now in South Korea. Today, however, China's military requirements along the Sino-Soviet frontier and the wide range of possible US reactions to Chinese military intervention in Korea severely limit Beijing's freedom of action, and the Chinese would probably discourage a North Korean attack. If the North should launch a major offensive, China probably would provide no more than token military support. It might provide substantial support if the course of a conflict threatened the survival of the North Korean regime.

86. *Central Asia.* PLA capabilities in Central Asia (including India) and Tibet (Xizang) are extremely limited. Mountainous terrain, the great distances involved, and the relatively small size of PLA forces in the west would prevent China from conducting more than punitive expeditions against border incursions. Chinese logistic shortcomings in the Himalayas are being alleviated by the construction of roads, a POL pipeline, and a rail line into the area, but such improvements cannot overcome the problems inherent in maintaining forces in difficult, remote terrain, and severe weather. The PLA would probably seek to keep open its highway to Pakistan and block the movement of hostile troops into Urumqi from Afghanistan.

Outlook

87. China will continue to try to improve its national security by countering Soviet influence, improving its ability to influence events in Asia, and generally expanding its role in international affairs. Achieving these goals will depend heavily on three variables:

- The ability of the present leadership to maintain internal political stability and continue the commitment to the Four Modernizations.
- The successful implementation of current economic policies, which depends in some measure on the continuing availability of foreign technology.
- The avoidance of major hostilities with the USSR or Vietnam that could divert limited resources away from modernization.

88. We believe that the prospects for political stability in China are better than at any time in the last two decades. Younger leaders being elevated to key positions will gradually consolidate their power, and debilitating power struggles appear unlikely. In the last three years leadership elements not committed

to the current line or to modernization have been quietly removed, and the Politburo and other top echelons are now relatively unified. However, social and political problems related to economic modernization will create strains that could divide the leadership and factional infighting could increase. Debate over modernization policy is inevitable and at least some elements of that policy—but not the drive itself—could be altered significantly.

89. The major domestic concern of today's leadership is the economy. While only modest gains are now being made, the Chinese economy eventually will be able to produce at higher levels and will be better able to absorb foreign technologies. Improved management, foreign advice and equipment, and priority funding can be expected to produce gains in agriculture and industry by 1985. The leadership hopes that deemphasis of heavy industry in favor of light industry will improve China's ability to earn foreign exchange, create more new jobs, and gain technical expertise. Sustained agricultural growth will eventually cause a decline in import costs for food and fibers and should allow for increased imports of complete plants, equipment, and technology. Continued industrial expansion will diminish the need to import finished and semifinished industrial goods for defense and other industries. However, major setbacks in such key areas as population control, food supply, and energy production would trigger short-term policy adjustments at the national level. The probability of major reverses appears remote at this time.

90. Defense modernization currently has the lowest priority of the Four Modernizations. The Chinese perceive the Soviet Union as a long-term threat and appear to believe that their present deployment of forces and warming diplomatic relations with the United States and Europe offer enough of a deterrent to keep the USSR at bay for the foreseeable future. In the face of a heightened Soviet threat, the Chinese obviously would reconsider the priority of defense. The dilemma they face, however, is that they lack sufficient resources to improve their overall defense posture in the short term, and even a major diversion of resources would in any case be accomplished too late to affect the situation. China's military weaknesses are rooted in deficiencies in training and technology that will require years to overcome. Ironically, the massive size of China's forces complicates the modernization drive since those resources committed to defense modernization can benefit only small parts of the military establishment at any one time.

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91. Thus, the Chinese will continue to approach military modernization gradually and will supply new weapons to the PLA as the defense industries benefit from increased investment and from both Western and indigenous technology. Only a small number of new weapons are likely to be introduced into the forces by 1985, but in the later 1980s increasing numbers of new weapons probably will become available. Perhaps most important, China's research and development will gain sophistication, enabling China to gradually resolve weaknesses in key technical areas such as metallurgy and electronics. The introduction of new industrial management techniques and the creation of a pool of trained technicians and engineers will enable defense modernization to gain momentum by the close of the 1980s.

92. The most dramatic achievement in the modernization of China's military forces will be the deployment of a small force of full-range ICBMs and the appearance of a submarine-launched ballistic missile system by the late 1980s. The numbers and types of weapons will not appreciably add to China's capability to fight a nuclear war, but will improve the survivability and deterrent value of the force.

93. The defense gaps most likely to receive early attention from the leadership—and which will be remedied by early introduction of new equipment—are those that reflect serious Chinese vulnerabilities.

- Chief among these are weak antitank and low-altitude air defense capabilities. There have been some attempts to correct these deficiencies, such as the reported development of Chinese variants of the Sagger antitank guided missile (ATGM) and Grail shoulder-launched surface-to-air missile (SAM). A low-altitude SAM for both land-based and shipborne air defense is under development. More and better antitank and air defense weaponry can be expected in the near term.
- Mobility and tactical communications also pose problems. Chinese interest in a variety of foreign trucks, tracked vehicles, tactical radios, and secure communications devices will be reflected in new equipment within three to five years. Better radars for ground and air use may also appear.
- Another critical problem has been China's inability to build modern engines for aircraft. The

Spey engine purchase from the United Kingdom and extensive study of US and European engines should help resolve this problem. Gas turbine technology will also be acquired from the West for naval application.

94. New tactics and doctrine will have to be developed to make effective use of new weapons introduced in the PLA. Chinese forces will be required to conduct frequent exercises to gain operational familiarity with the new weapons, and the services will develop increasingly sophisticated training programs for their personnel, including specialized technical training and joint service exercises. The Chinese probably will modify PLA organization to take better advantage of such weapons—for example, creating special, highly mobile units armed with antitank guided missiles. Also, the requirement for more sophisticated maintenance and the increased flow of specialized parts through supply channels will undoubtedly result in development of a more complex military logistic organization.

95. China's military doctrine—which dictates how forces are organized and strategies developed—is likely to change only slightly in the next 10 years. "People's War Under Modern Conditions" is for China a realistic and practical military doctrine. China's massive population, limited economic and technical capabilities, and vast territory suggest the obvious—use of terrain and immense manpower to overwhelm enemy advantages in technology. Defense in depth will remain the primary strategy by which the Soviet threat will be countered.

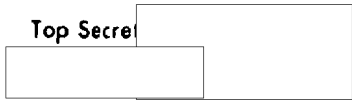
96. In sum, Chinese defense policy will change little in the coming decade. Nevertheless, aging military commanders will be replaced and Chinese forces will become more professional and better trained, but the emphasis will remain on defense. Introduction of new equipment will be selective and will focus on key vulnerabilities. Modernization of the economy—particularly the industrial and scientific sectors—eventually will create the necessary technical base to support a more modern military establishment. Introduction of new weapons and equipment in the late 1980s may produce changes in the forces but will probably not cause China to develop forces based upon technology rather than manpower. Manpower, geography, and a small strategic nuclear force will remain China's primary assets for deterring aggression, and defense in depth a necessary strategy for dealing with invasion.

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Section II

CHINA'S MILITARY FORCES



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II. CHINA'S MILITARY FORCES

1. China has developed the full range of military forces befitting a major military power: strategic nuclear forces, a coastal defense navy moving toward the open ocean, and large ground and air forces. Nevertheless, all of these forces are at the mercy of China's antiquated technological and industrial establishment, which can produce only weapon systems at least a generation behind those of modern Western and Soviet bloc forces. Just to achieve today's state of the art 10 to 20 years hence, China must leap decades of technology.

2. China's forces—collectively known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA)—also reflect a generation of Chinese isolation from the modern world and 50 years of the supremacy of Maoist ideology. The military doctrine and tactics, training, and organization that have evolved are consistent with the size and quality of China's armed forces and are well adapted to China's geographic and strategic situation, but are not suitable to modern, high-intensity conflicts.

3. This section of the Estimate addresses the current state of China's forces, their missions and capabilities, and the prospects for their future through the 1980s.

A. STRATEGIC ATTACK

Current Forces

4. China has deployed a small, 1960s-vintage force of ballistic missiles (see figure II-1) and bombers for strategic offense. Although it could threaten US forces and allies in Asia, its operational delivery vehicles cannot reach the continental United States. The force is far too small to threaten the USSR with a disarming first strike, but its growing retaliatory capability is already a deterrent to Soviet nuclear attack.

- There has been an apparent decrease in activity associated with the CSS-1, China's first medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM).
- We believe China's first ballistic missile, the Soviet SS-2 short-range missile system (SRBM), has been dropped from the operational inventory.

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[redacted] We believe that, in the event of a Soviet nuclear attack on China, sufficient Chinese launchers would survive to deliver a small but destructive retaliatory strike, principally against urban and industrial targets in the eastern USSR.

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5. Since [redacted] 1974, Beijing slowly has increased the size and capability of its missile force and has increased the emphasis on survivability.

Beijing still has not deployed a full-range ICBM system or an SSBN/SLBM system.

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6. For its bomber force Beijing has continued its slow but steady production of TU-16 bombers that could conduct strikes along China's periphery.

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7. [redacted] the Chinese have made progress recently in some developmental programs that long have been under way. The sub-

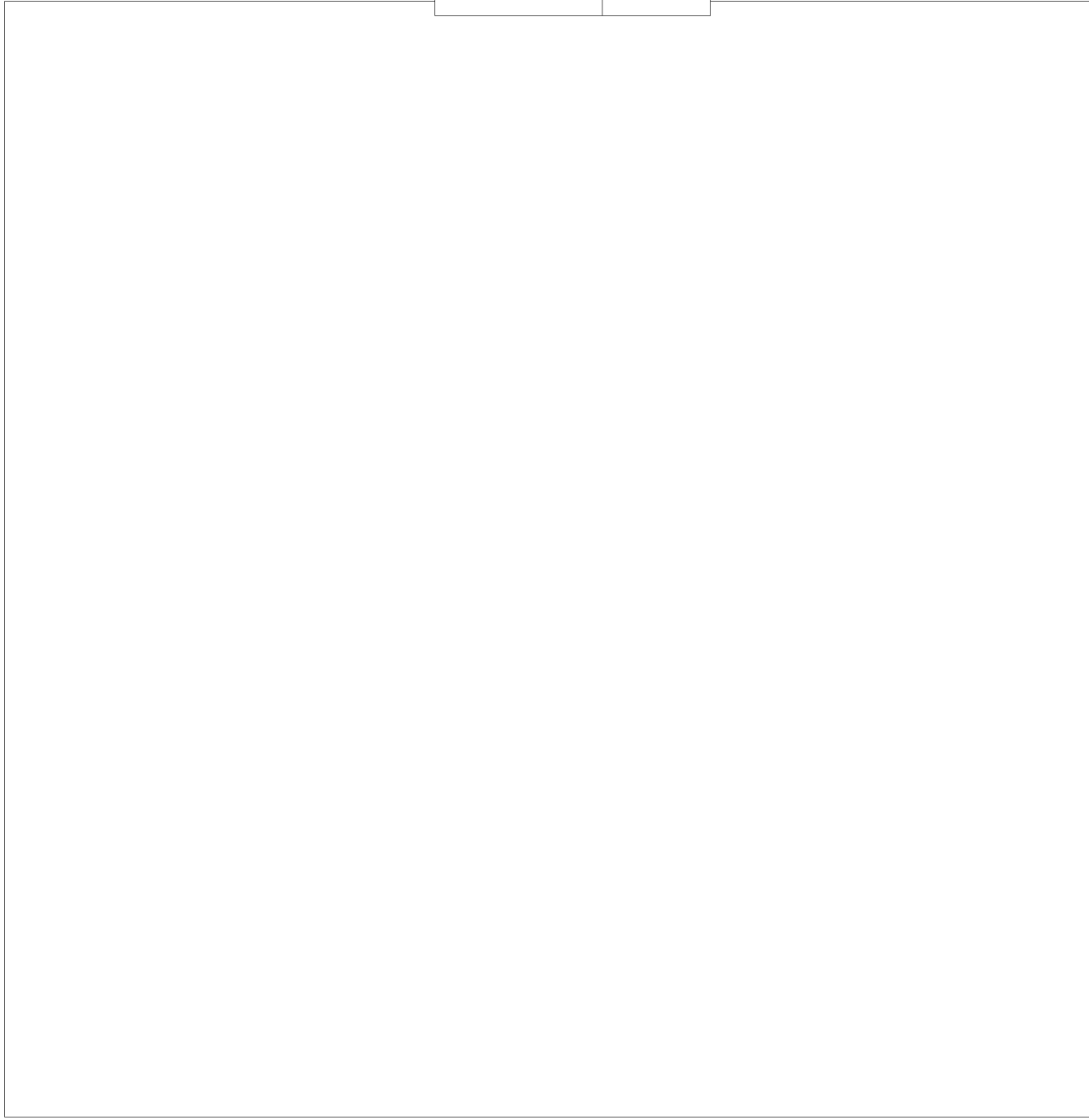
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- The CSS-2 intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) now constitutes the bulk of the force.

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marine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) program continues at a slow pace, firings of the 13,000-km-range CSS-X-4 ICBM continue, and space programs have been publicly accorded high priority in China's long-range program for modernizing science and technology. We believe that, unless these programs falter, the Chinese will have a few full-range ICBMs and perhaps a ballistic missile submarine in the next five years. They also are likely to have operational satellites

for collecting electronic and photographic intelligence information and for communications by 1986.

Land-Based Ballistic Missiles



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Bombers

28 Organization, Composition, and Disposition.

The organization of the Chinese bomber force indicates that its primary mission is conventional bombing within China's borders or along its periphery, in a tactical, counterinvasion role. Seven bomber divisions and one independent regiment are assigned to the Air Force, and three divisions and one independent regiment to the Naval Air Force. There is no organization, however, that unites bomber units under one command separate from other air forces. Bombers operate, like other air units, under the control of the appropriate service headquarters, exercised through the commanders of the military regions or fleet areas in which they are based.

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29 Still, although China does not have a dedicated strategic bomber force in the US or Soviet sense, it has used bombers to drop nuclear devices in a majority of its nuclear tests and probably has contingency plans to use some of its 100 intermediate-range TU-16 Badgers and possibly a small portion of its 400 medium-range IL-28 Beagles in a nuclear role. The TU-16s, all of which are nuclear capable, would be the most suitable of China's bombers for such operations. They have a combat radius of 1,550 nautical miles with a 4,500-kg bomb load, which would enable them to strike all the areas covered by the MRBM and IRBM force with nuclear weapons.

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30 However, there would be formidable limitations on using the TU-16s for strikes against well-defended targets such as those in the USSR. Unlike US and Soviet bombers, none of China's Badgers are equipped with electronic countermeasures against air defense, and they are extremely vulnerable at medium and high altitudes to enemy aircraft and surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). The Chinese have only occasionally conducted the low-altitude bomber training that would be necessary to improve their penetration capability.

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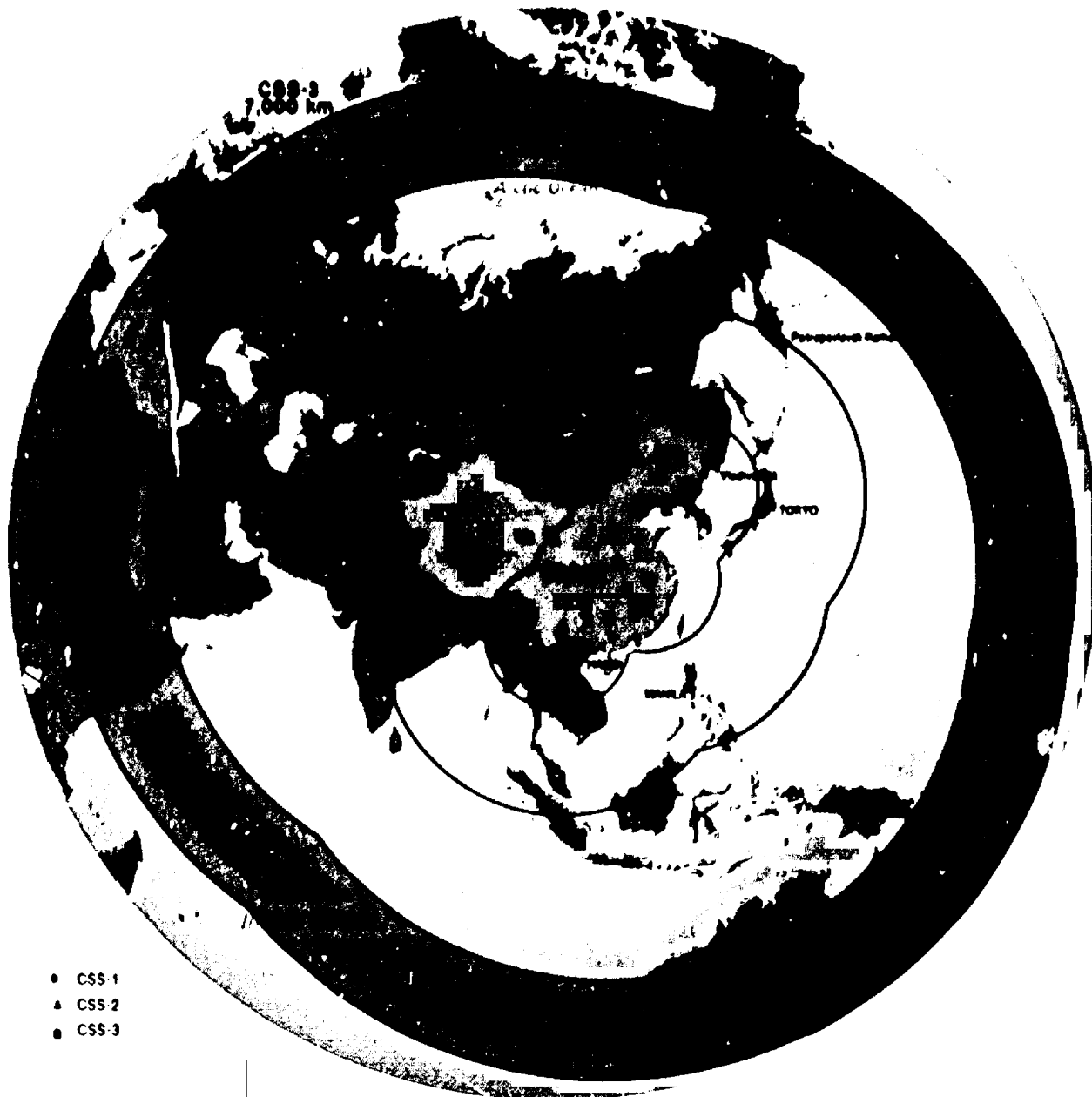
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Ranges of Chinese Operational Strategic Missiles

Figure II-5



- CSS-1
- ▲ CSS-2
- CSS-3

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31. The II-28, too, could be used for nuclear strike, despite its relatively short combat radius. There are about 100 airfields in China from which II-28s can operate, and staging from those airfields closest to the border would permit operations against a substantial portion of the built-up area of the central and eastern USSR. The II-28s could also reach targets in Korea

and Taiwan and, if staged from points close to the border, northern Luzon in the Philippines and a large part of Vietnam. China used the Beagle in two nuclear tests to drop devices

Nevertheless, while a few of China's Beagles may have a secondary nuclear attack role, their vulnerability to modern air defenses, the

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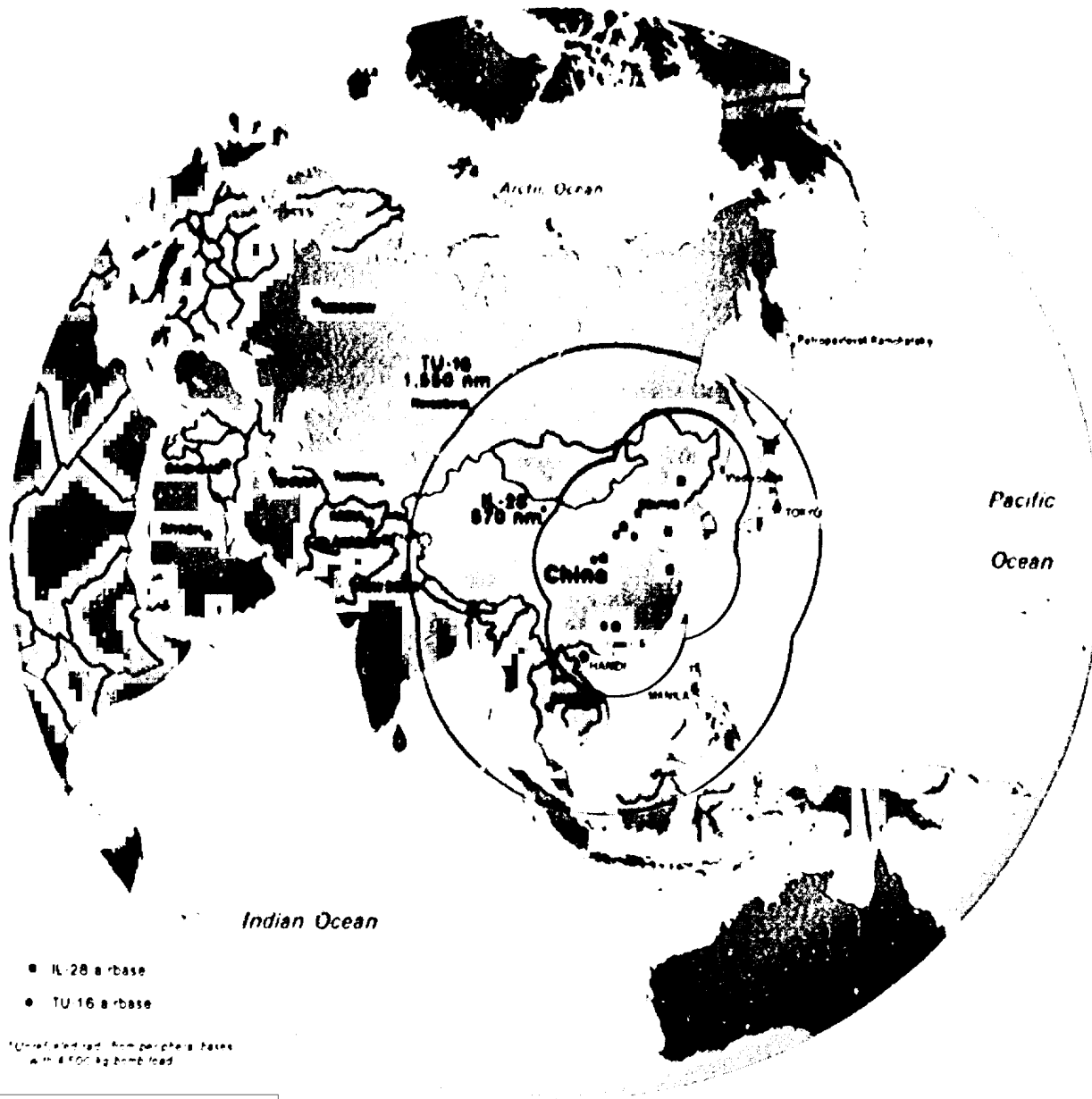
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Approximate Coverage of Chinese Bombers

Figure II 6



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manner in which IL-28 units train, and the use for which the aircraft was designed argue that they will be used primarily for conventional or--conceivably--theater nuclear bombing of targets within China or on its immediate periphery.

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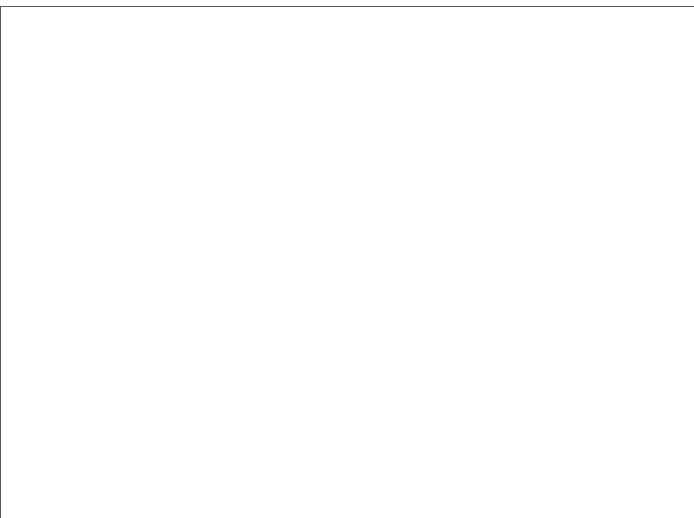
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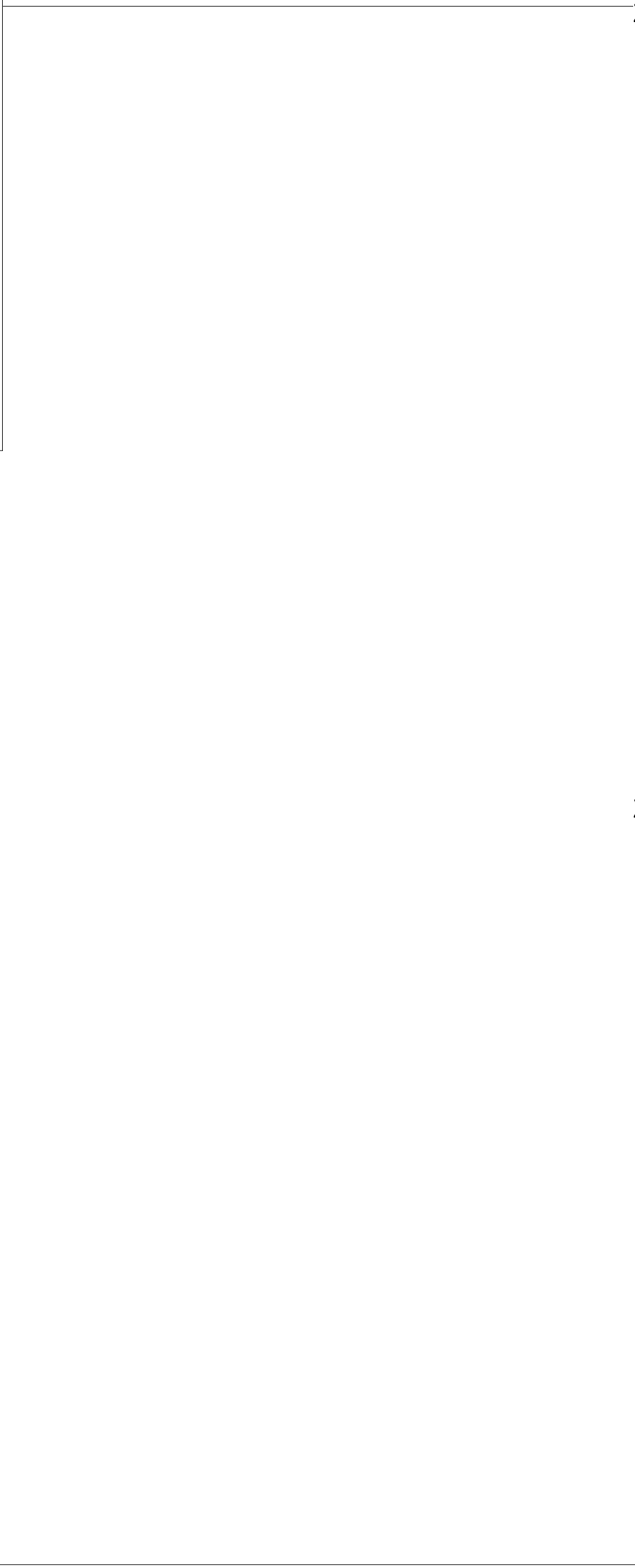
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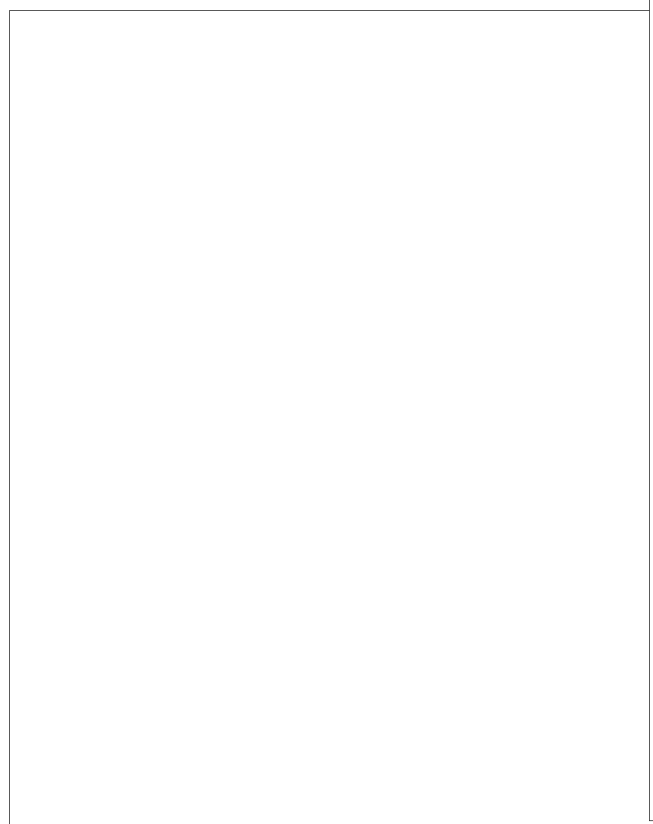


Programs

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31 **Command and Control.** If China were to use its bombers for nuclear missions, operational control probably would be directed by Air Force Headquarters in Beijing, which has a communications network that can bypass regional Air Force commands and communicate directly with individual air combat units. Bomber units chosen to perform nuclear attack missions probably would be assigned targets in Beijing, which would also exercise the authority to release nuclear weapons.



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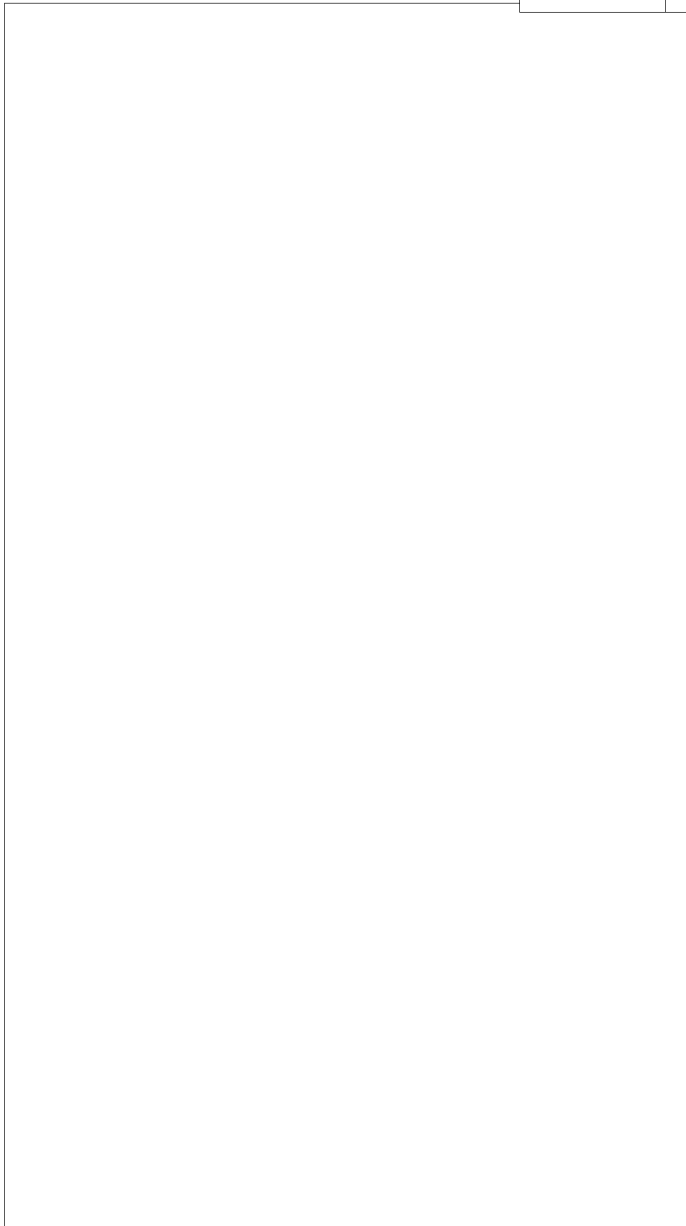
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orbit) Collection activity by the satellites and the performance of the spacecraft indicated that work on both systems was at an early stage

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51. *Communications Satellites.* China has been interested in a domestic communications satellite since at least 1966. By 1972 the antennas at more than 30 satellite ground sites were externally complete. The Chinese filed with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) notice of their intent to launch two experimental geostationary communication satellites during the period 1979-80, but we are uncertain whether they will meet even the revised 1981-82 schedule. To achieve the lift needed to place a satellite in geostationary orbit, they are developing a high-energy third-stage motor to use with the CSL-2. However, they have had technical difficulties in developing the third stage. The communications satellite and the ground station network will be capable of servicing all of China.

Space Systems

48. Beijing's space program remains developmental, but it is showing significant progress. The Chinese are upgrading old facilities, building new launch and support facilities, and seeking space technology from the West. A decade ago they orbited two small engineering test satellites with the CSL-1, a space booster version of the CSS-3 ICBM. Between July 1975 and January 1978, the Chinese used the larger CSL-2 launch vehicle to orbit six ELINT and photographic reconnaissance satellites [redacted]

[redacted] (The CSL-2 has an estimated capability to put a 2,000-kg payload into a low Earth

52. The Chinese plan to buy an advanced communications satellite from the United States, and they have used the Franco-German satellite, *Symphonic A*, already in geostationary orbit, for testing. Experience gained in the *Symphonic A* tests will allow the Chinese to operate a system using their own satellite when it becomes available.

53. *Meteorological Satellite.* The Chinese reportedly have developed the prototype of a meteorological satellite, which will have a visible and near-infrared two-channel scanning radiometer as the principal sensor. The Chinese announced that the initial launch of

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a Sun-synchronous satellite is scheduled in 1982, but problems with the third stage of the CSL-2 launch vehicle will likely delay the launch. A geostationary meteorological satellite is planned for launch in 1985.

54. Significant advances in China's space capabilities are likely in the coming decade. We expect the Chinese to develop a modified CSL-2 space booster with a high-energy third stage capable of placing payloads of over 5,000 kg into low Earth orbits and of launching satellites into geostationary and highly elliptical orbits. This system will probably become operational in the early-to-middle 1980s, and will enable China to carry out a variety of space missions for military support including meteorological, advanced photoreconnaissance, and communications missions. Also, continuing access to Western space technology will likely enable China to overcome problems with spacecraft guidance, attitude control, power supply sensors, and electronic systems and to make smaller and lighter spacecraft components.

Prospects

55. We foresee only a modest increase in the capabilities of China's strategic nuclear attack forces during the next five years. Several factors influence this estimate:

- The Chinese almost certainly perceive that their nuclear forces already provide a credible deterrent against an attack by the USSR, and that massive growth of the force would be required to obtain a significant increase in the force's war-fighting capability against the Soviets.
- Technological and economic constraints will inhibit rapid growth of the Chinese strategic strike capability. Only minimal Western technology is likely to be available for strategic weapons, and we expect the Chinese to subordinate expenditures for obsolescent strategic weapons to spending for the development of more capable future systems.
- We have detected no recent new starts on missile bases, which in the past have taken at least five years to build.

56. We project gradual increases in deployment of the CSS-2 and CSS-3 systems. Deployment of the limited-range CSS-3 at roll-out launch sites probably will occur in small numbers, enhancing China's minimal capability to cover targets in the western USSR.

We expect the addition of some 10 to 20 IRBM launchers over the next few years, but no increase and perhaps a decline in the deployment of the CSS-1 MRBM. Production of the TU-16 bomber probably will continue at a rate of about three to five per year, but we see no indications of appreciable change in the primary mission of these aircraft, or of the IL-28 medium-range bomber.

57. We estimate that those delivery systems now under development that will become operational in the 1980s will be deployed only in modest numbers. The two CSS-X-4 silos will soon be externally complete, and we think that these sites will be operational within a year. We expect the Chinese eventually to deploy additional CSS-X-4s

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China's first ballistic missile submarine probably will become operational around the mid-to-late 1980s. A second unit may also become operational late in the decade.

58. We believe that those missile and space systems that become operational in the next five years will provide the basis for additional systems that could reach operational status during the second half of the decade. They probably will include:

- A modified CSS-X-4 with improved guidance and reentry vehicle systems.
- A new space launch vehicle or an upgraded CSL-2 launch vehicle to support expanding activities in space.
- A land-based, solid-propellant missile

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59. The Chinese continue to expand their capacity to design, produce, and test solid- and liquid-propellant systems, and they are improving their weapon design technology and adding to their capacity to produce fissile material.

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In addition, the Chinese will have to overcome many chronic problems in education, research, industrial management, and technology that will continue to restrain progress in weapon system development throughout the decade. We do, however, expect an increasing emphasis on solid-propellant R&D during the 1980s.

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60 We have no evidence of follow-on programs for either the TU-16 or IL-28 bomber, and even if a prototype bomber appeared this year, it could not be available to the force until after 1955.

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nology and other assistance that will have some impact on a number of military and military-related programs. For example, technology acquired for communications and scientific satellite systems is likely to have some modest impact on military space programs and perhaps indirectly on weapons programs.

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61 The impact of such foreign technology on China's strategic systems over the period of this estimate will depend on what Beijing actually intends to acquire, whether it will be able to obtain what it wants, or how long it will take to assimilate whatever it gets. During their many "shopping tours" over the past two years, Chinese delegations have expressed an interest in a host of technologies that could have applications in China's programs--for example, computers, other electronics, and solid propellants. But most countries that have a capability to provide advanced technology would, for a variety of reasons, prohibit or at least inhibit transfer of equipment or technology directly applicable to strategic weapons. Nevertheless, we believe that China will be able to acquire tech

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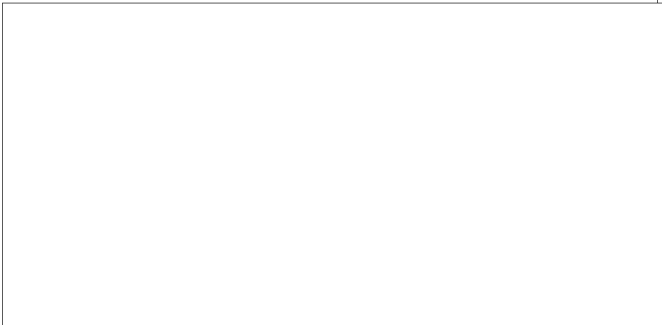
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Implications

Capabilities Against the USSR

64. If the present trends in missile development and deployment proceed as we project, the capability of China's nuclear force to retaliate against targets in the USSR will be enhanced somewhat. The deployment of a small force of CSS-3s [redacted] and of CSS-X-4s [redacted] would add significantly to China's currently minimal capability to strike the more heavily populated and industrialized areas in the western USSR. In addition, the slow growth in the number of TU-16 bombers that could strike along China's periphery and the first operational SSBN will further increase Beijing's capability to target important areas in the eastern USSR.

66. Even if China were to accelerate development and deployment of ICBM forces and follow-on regional systems, the force would not significantly increase before mid-1985. In any event, China's regional strike capability would not be much larger than we have projected.

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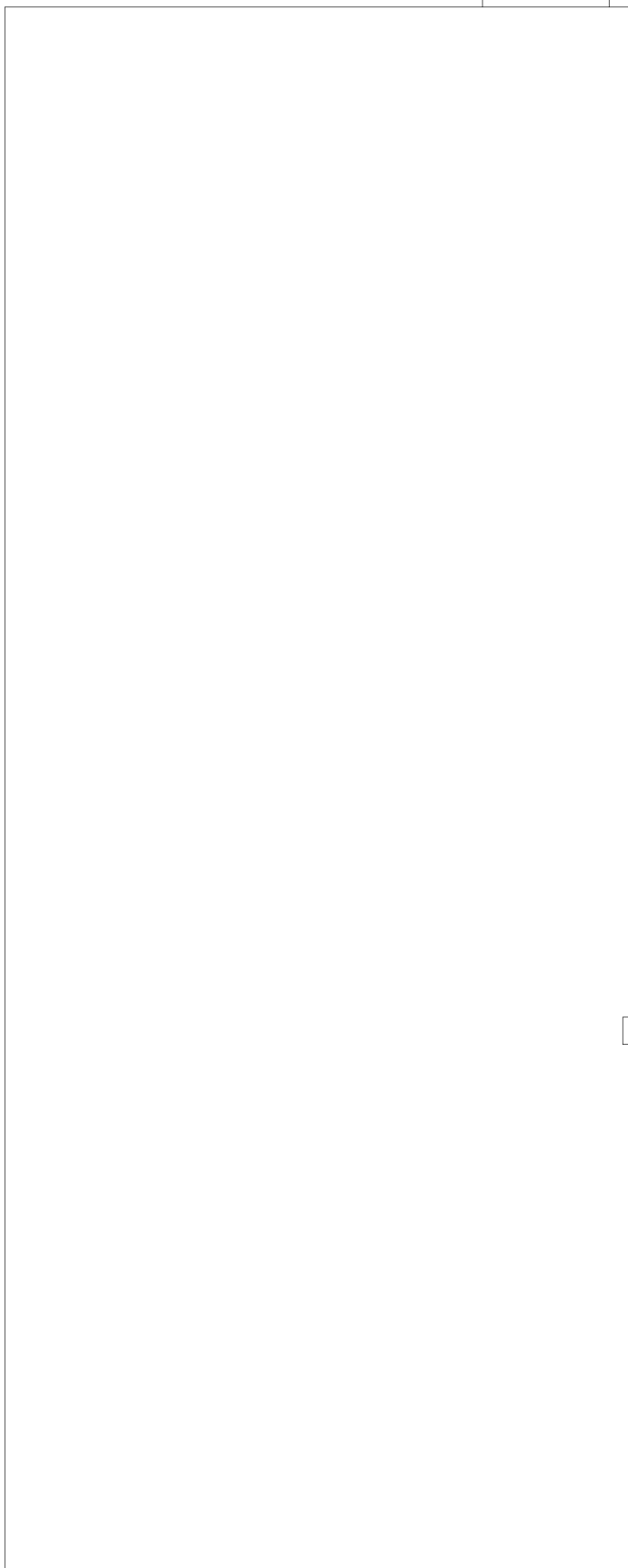
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Trends and Developments

97. We believe that deployment of a new twin-jet fighter, the F-8 (Xian A), will improve China's strategic air defense over the next five years. We estimate that this Chinese-designed aircraft will enter the operational inventory in the coming year. The F-8 will feature improved performance at medium-to-high altitudes and might be equipped with improved avionics and armament.

98. The Chinese also are working on a new combat aircraft to be powered by the British-designed Spey engine, but we do not expect it to be introduced into the forces until the mid-to-late 1980s. We believe it will be capable of both ground attack and intercept. Such an aircraft probably will be more reliable, carry larger payloads, and have better performance than any now in the Chinese inventory. The Spey will help provide the base of technology necessary to produce other types of aircraft engines.

99. The Chinese have deployed an indigenously designed and produced air-to-air missile with infrared guidance—the PL-2—

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They have studied the Soviet Atoll, the American Sidewinder, and the French Matra, but we do not know which system has most influenced their new missile. Thus far, deployment has been to their F-7/MIG-21 units and to selected F-6/MIG-19 units, primarily those that are radar equipped. However, the bulk of their interceptors are still only cannon equipped.

100. We expect the PL-3, a larger version of the PL-2, with longer range and improved fuzing, to be deployed within the next two years. China claims that the PL-4, its first AAM to have both infrared and semiactive-radar seekers, is scheduled for deployment in 1984. A wide deployment of the PL-4 missile, if complemented by improved air intercept radars, would constitute the most promising (and economical) avenue to significantly improving China's air defense capability.

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101. The other improvement programs we have detected would not add substantially to Chinese air defense capabilities before the mid-to-late 1980s. China probably has been working on improved models of airborne-intercept radars to permit all-weather operations, provide greater search and track range, and allow interceptors to engage targets at longer range. The Chinese probably also are developing improved ground-based early warning radars. They are developing a second smaller SAM—the CSA-X-2—which we believe is intended for low-altitude air defense of ground forces and naval ships, but could be used in a strategic air defense role. There is no evidence that they are developing a follow-on to the CSA-1.

[Redacted]

102. Despite China's expressed interest in several air defense systems produced in the West, there is no firm evidence that it actually intends to purchase any of them. We believe that large-scale purchases are unlikely because of the high cost, China's traditional reluctance to become dependent on foreign suppliers, and the reluctance or unwillingness of some foreign sources to supply the systems. China may attempt to negotiate agreements that include production rights and technical assistance while restricting the purchase of end items to those required for training or as prototypes. The transfer of technology would take several years to absorb, however, and would not improve China's air defense capabilities significantly before the mid-1980s.

- The Chinese probably will begin full-scale production of the F-8, but we estimate that no more than 160 are likely to be operational by mid-1985.
- Production of F-6 and F-7 aircraft probably will continue through 1983, after which the upgrading with improved engines, avionics, and AAMs for the aircraft may occur.
- Deployment of the CSA-1 is likely to continue at a rate of about five battalions (30 launchers) per year, along with steady production of existing models of antiaircraft guns.
- We do not believe that the Chinese will have an adequate capability for the automated handling and processing of air surveillance data during the next five years.

Prospects

103. We estimate that China's strategic defenses will improve gradually over the next five years.

104. On the basis of these considerations, we project a force mix (see table II-3) which assumes that:
- A new SAM for strategic defense will not be deployed in quantity.
 - The number of aircraft in the force will be maintained at about the current level.
 - The F-8 will first enter the force in 1981.

Table II-3

**Estimated Chinese Strategic Defense Forces
1980-85 (Midyear)**

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Surface-to-Air Missile Sites (Battalions), All CSA-1	95	100	105	110	115	115
Interceptor Aircraft						
F-5/MIG-17 Fresco and MIG-15/Fagot	1,700	1,650	1,600	1,550	1,500	1,400
F-6/MIG-19 Farmer	2,700	2,750	2,750	2,750	2,750	2,700
F-7/MIG-21 Fishbed	100	130	160	190	200	200
F-8 (Xian A)	0	20	50	90	140	200
Total Aircraft	4,500	4,550	4,560	4,580	4,590	4,500

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C. GENERAL PURPOSE FORCES

112. China's general purpose ground, air, and naval forces consist of over 4 million men. The very size of these forces attests to Beijing's reliance on numbers for military strength, and reflects the recognition of the leadership that, over the coming decade, resource and technical limitations will preclude the fielding of general purpose forces equipped with a wide array of modern weapons. China's forces are, however, well

structured and deployed to defend China's territory, and even have some capability for limited intervention in peripheral areas.

113. The ground forces--the bulk of the PLA--remain the basis of Chinese military strength. Still a predominantly infantry force, ground units have been strengthened in the 1970s with substantial armor and artillery. Large, heavily armed, static defense units

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were also formed during the 1970s to garrison critical areas along the invasion routes into China from the north. These garrison units now supplement the formidable array of coastal defenses established in the 1960s. The ground forces still lack adequate tactical and strategic mobility, flexible command and control, and modern firepower and armor, and they rely on largely outmoded weaponry. Prospects for significant improvement in the 1980s are not promising.

114. The air forces also reflect a reliance on numbers, with about 4,500 air defense aircraft (see section II B) and about 1,200 ground attack aircraft. The equipment is largely a generation out of date, its armament is meager, and the proficiency of its personnel inferior by Western or Soviet standards. Some progress is likely in the 1980s, but additional air-to-air missiles and better fighters will not substantially alter air force capabilities.

115. The Navy, while numerically one of the largest in the world, remains a coastal defense force, with large inventories of small patrol boats and diesel attack submarines. While the Navy has little capability for open-ocean operations at present, in the 1980s we foresee—building on developments of the late 1970s—a growing effort to develop such capability. The fleet lacks effective antisubmarine warfare (ASW) and air defense capability, and does not have the firepower or logistics for significant amphibious operations. Nevertheless, China has made some progress toward building a more modern fleet: two nuclear attack submarines have been launched; a ballistic missile submarine is under construction; several large oceangoing auxiliaries have been built; development of a surface-to-air missile is under way; and development of larger surface combatants is likely during the 1980s.

116. China's regular ground forces are backed up by more than 100 million paramilitary personnel. Most are assigned to the militia, about 7 million of whom are armed and periodically trained, and constitute a de facto manpower reserve and logistic support base. In wartime, the militia would support regular forces logistically, serve as fillers for depleted units, and fight as guerrillas in enemy-occupied areas.

117. The PLA, despite its obvious deficiencies, is generally a professional, if highly politicized, force and is capably led and well structured to defend China against conventional attack. It could effectively defend China against any potential enemy, except perhaps the USSR, and could mount operations with limited objectives into peripheral Asian countries.

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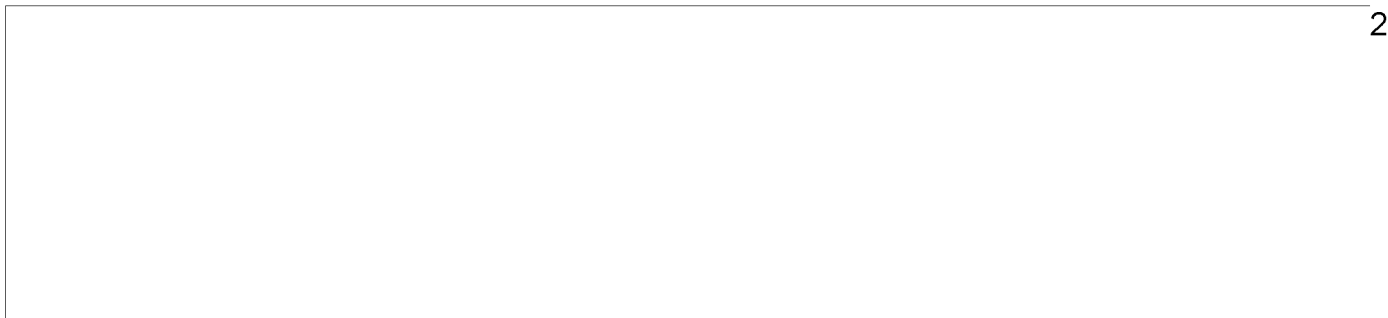
Chinese Military Regions and Fleet Areas

Figure II-9



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tion, units would be forced to rely on existing stockpiles to accomplish assigned tasks, at least initially. Maintenance, inspection, and repair practices would be too rigid to deal with the problems encountered in sustained combat operations.

Support and Logistics

124. Stockpiles of general supplies, ammunition, and POL are pre-positioned throughout China in a system of central, regional, local, and unit supply, which in some measure would ease the burden on the road and rail networks in wartime. Nevertheless, support is hindered by an austere logistic organization within units and an overall shortage of motor transport. Movement and distribution of supplies, therefore, depend heavily on the efforts of militia and ordinary civilians organized into a local logistic support system.

125. Unit and regional stocks appear sufficient to sustain high-intensity combat for short periods without replenishment. Major items of equipment—such as armor and artillery—probably would be depleted rapidly:

[redacted] PLA main force units—particularly in a nuclear environment—probably would experience severe shortages of critical items such as POL, which would degrade their ability to engage the enemy in regular, large-scale battles. Guerrilla and small-unit operations would be less affected by any disruption of supplies.

126. Outside China's borders, the system would be hard pressed to maintain a sufficient flow of supplies over long lines of communication. During the 1979 Vietnam incursion, maintenance organizations reportedly could not handle the volume of repair required. A high rate of motor transport breakdown would therefore impact heavily on the overall supply system. If the Chinese had penetrated deeply into Vietnam in February 1979—involving heavy fighting with Vietnamese main force divisions around Hanoi and intensive use of the Air Force—the logistic system probably would have been overtaxed.

127. Military air logistic requirements are consolidated in the General Rear Services Department, which has primary procurement and distribution responsibility for aviation material. Given sufficient leadtime, the aviation supply system probably would perform well, but, in the event of a surprise military confronta-

128. The Chinese Navy operates [redacted] major naval bases, each having sufficient maintenance, ordnance, and logistic support to cover all routine ships' requirements and most short-run emergencies. Similar but less extensive support is available from [redacted] smaller bases, well dispersed along the coastline. Logistic support for operations outside Chinese territorial waters is marginal. This deficiency is being offset in part by the integration into the fleet of new auxiliaries, including three large underway replenishment oilers (AORs) and three large submarine rescue ships (ASRs).

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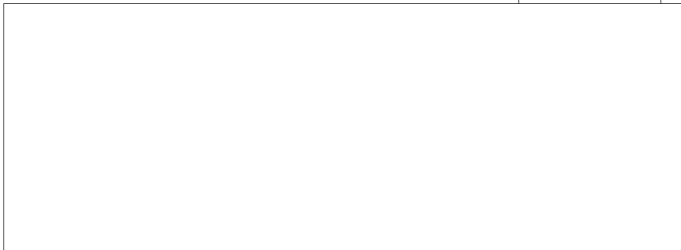
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135. Regional forces—garrison, border defense, and internal security units—defend relatively compact geographic areas with or without the assistance of main forces. They are less likely to be employed out of their assigned area of responsibility than are main force units.

Ground Forces

Organization, Composition, and Disposition

133. China's ground forces are the largest standing army in the world—3.6 million troops in some 270 divisions and about 300 independent regiments (see table II-4). Although predominantly infantry, there are armored, artillery, airborne, and railway engineer divisions as well. Chinese units are divided into main and regional forces with separate and distinct roles.

134. Main force units consist of tactical maneuver elements (armies, independent combat divisions, and independent regiments) and combat support and service support units, and are available for combat in any part of China or outside its borders. During peacetime, the highest combat formation is an army usually composed of three infantry divisions.

— **Garrison units** are assigned to defend territory of particular importance to the overall defense of China. They normally occupy well-prepared positions, often in rugged terrain, along main approaches to key areas of China. They are well equipped with field and antiaircraft artillery, antitank weapons, and heavy infantry weapons.

— **Border defense units** are primarily reconnaissance forces that provide early warning of an enemy attack and intelligence about the size and axis of an attack. They are trained and equipped to fight as light infantry.

— **Internal defense units**—formed in large measure to contend with Cultural Revolution chaos—serve essentially as heavily armed police.

136. There are about 185 main force and 87 regional force divisions. More than half the force—about

Table II-4

**Chinese Ground Force Order of Battle
Mid-1980**

	Sino-Soviet Border	Sino-Vietnamese Border	Remainder of Country	Total
Main Force Divisions				
Infantry	55	20	43	121
Armored	8	0	3*	11*
Airborne	0	0	3	3
Artillery	12	2	6	20
AAA	7	3	7	17
Railway engineer	12	0	1	13
				<u>185</u>
Regional Force Divisions				
Garrison	22	2	23	47
Border defense	1	5	0	6
Internal defense	13	5	16	34
				<u>87</u>
Regular Forces Personnel (1,000)	1,720	585	1,330	<u>3,635</u>
Militia Personnel (1,000)	2,600	1,500	2,500	<u>6,600</u>

* An additional division may be forming



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1.7 million men—is deployed in the four northern military regions opposite the USSR. In general, they represent China's best equipped and most prepared forces. Another 1.3 million troops are deployed along the coast and opposite Vietnam. The central reserve (the Wuhan MR and portions of surrounding regions) has most of the remaining main forces, including three armored divisions and China's only airborne forces, and is available for reinforcement of threatened areas.

number of armored vehicles has grown gradually during the past decade. In general, Chinese weapons are inferior to those in Soviet hands, and critical gaps or numerical deficiencies account for major weaknesses of the current force: poor tactical mobility, limited organic air defense, limited antiarmor capabilities, and acute logistic problems. Present production levels are sufficient to continue furnishing gradually increasing quantities of combat materiel to selected units. The introduction of more sophisticated weaponry is expected in the near future. (See table II-5 for current major items of equipment.)

137. Although new units were created in the wake of the 1969 Sino-Soviet border conflicts, China has stressed qualitative rather than quantitative improvement since that time. Between 1973 and 1978 the number of ground force units increased little, suggesting that Beijing believed its forces were large enough to meet any crisis in the near future. Since late 1978, however, China has created or added units along its frontiers with Vietnam and Laos, and in the northwest.

Capabilities and Limitations

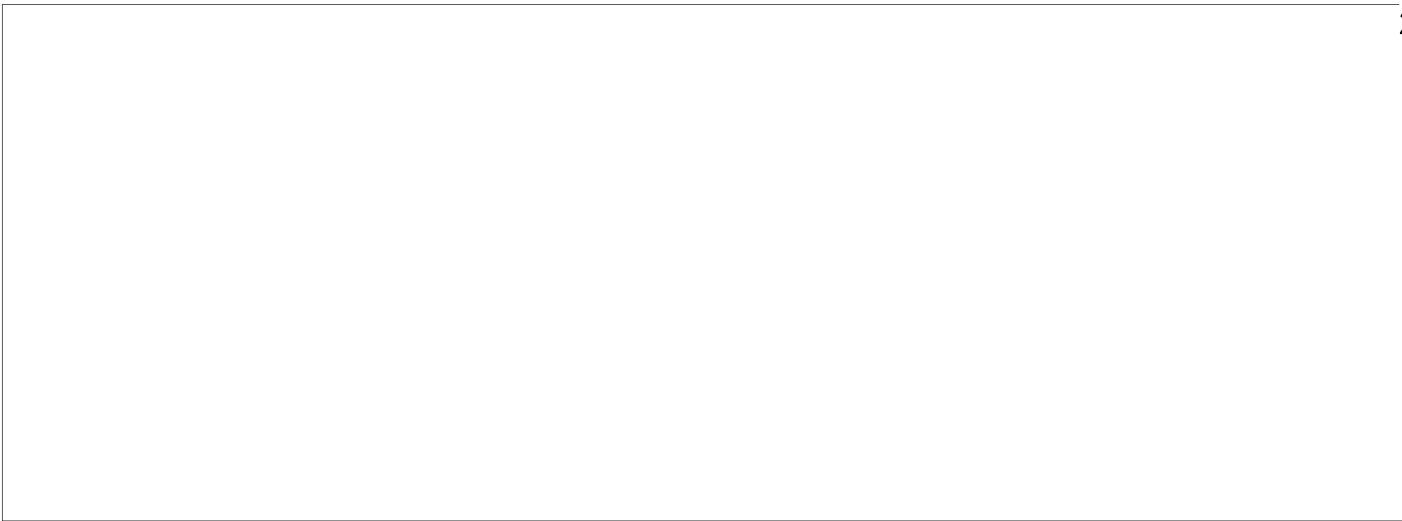
140. *Infantry and Airborne Forces.* Infantry units are the backbone of the PLA and would bear the brunt of fighting in any conventional conflict. Main force infantry divisions have 12,000 to 14,000 men in three maneuver regiments and various supporting units. About half of the divisions have tank regiments and armored reconnaissance companies. There are few armored personnel carriers (APCs) organic to Chinese infantry divisions.

138. The People's Militia is a part-time paramilitary organization found throughout China. Over 100 million strong, it would provide substantial wartime manpower and logistic support to the PLA. About 7 million militia members are armed and receive periodic training.

141. Though China produces an APC, extensive mechanization of forces does not appear imminent. China's APC, the M-1967, is similar to the US M-113 and has been used primarily as a reconnaissance and tactical command vehicle in armored units. Since series production began in 1967, between 1,300 and 1,800 have entered the force—nearly two-thirds deployed in the military regions opposite the Soviet Union, but only two mechanized regiments—probably experimental—have been formed.

Military Equipment

139. Chinese ground force equipment is largely based on Soviet designs and production technology of the 1950s, with significant modifications evident in only a few instances. A large output of infantry weapons and artillery pieces over the years has provided large numbers of these systems in the force, and the



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142. The concept of infantry mechanization has been under study by the PLA since the early 1970s. However, the Chinese apparently concluded that their limited resources would be better spent upgrading armored and artillery units, particularly in the Sino-Soviet border area. Recently, however, the leadership has expressed concern over China's limited tactical mobility on the modern battlefield, and this concern has been reflected in several recent training exercises. During the next decade we expect further test and evaluation of mechanization and the selective incorporation of mechanized infantry into armored divisions. This may lead to gradual conversion of selected infantry divisions in the north and northeast into mechanized units.

143. China's airborne army, consisting of three airborne divisions, is part of the central reserve. It is supported by dedicated airlift—the Air Force's 13th Air Transport Division—and is capable of relatively rapid reaction to peripheral areas of China. The divisions have light artillery and antitank weapons that can be dropped with the airborne troops. The 13th Air Division has a maximum single-lift capability of about two regiments (5,300 troops).

144. **Armored Forces.** China has eight armored divisions in the Beijing, Shenyang, and Lanzhou Military Regions in the north, and three in the central reserve. Nearly all are located at or near rail terminals, from which they could deploy to reinforce other areas as required. Most armored divisions and independent regiments have no organic infantry or artillery.

145. The PLA has devoted special attention to its armored forces since 1969. Older tanks and assault guns for the most part have been replaced by the Type 59 main battle tank, basically a copy of the Soviet T-54A mounting a 100-mm gun. It lacks many features and capabilities considered standard in modern tanks, but will remain a credible main battle tank until the Soviets deploy substantial numbers of the T-61/T-72 family of tanks to the Far East. The Type 62 light tank, a scaled-down model of the Type 59, is widely deployed as well. The Chinese are developing a new main battle tank, but it is unlikely to enter the inventory in large numbers until the late 1980s and beyond.

146. The amount of armor in the inventory is steadily increasing, and China probably will continue to add tank regiments to main force infantry divisions. There probably will be only minimal growth in the

number of armored divisions and separate armored regiments.

147. **Antiarmor Forces.** Chinese infantry and garrison divisions—main force and regional force—have antitank companies in each regiment. Three independent antitank divisions are located in the Jinan and Shenyang Military Regions, probably as reserves.

148. China has no widely deployed antitank guided missile (ATGM), a serious deficiency. Infantry and artillery units have large inventories of short-range antitank weapons, including RPG-2 and RPG-7 grenade launchers, recoilless rifles, and increasing numbers of 85-mm and 100-mm antitank guns. The forces currently have little effective antiarmor capability at ranges beyond 1,500 meters, however. The Chinese recently claimed to produce a copy of the Soviet AT-3 Sagger ATGM and deployment of this man-portable weapon is anticipated,

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Beijing may conclude an agreement for acquisition from foreign sources of a vehicle-mounted system of greater range than the Sagger. If this should occur, China probably would purchase the smallest number possible and try to acquire the technology and licenses to co-produce such weapons.

149. The PLA recently displayed a truck-mounted multiple rocket launcher that scatters antitank mines, and unveiled a hand-held very short range antitank rocket,

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150. **Artillery.** The PLA is well equipped with a wide range of field artillery. Half is organic to the main force infantry divisions. The remainder is organic to China's field artillery divisions, garrison divisions, and headquarters elements of the 36 armies. The majority is deployed in the four military regions opposite the USSR. Artillery divisions will probably reinforce the infantry divisions and the garrison strongpoints. More recently, multiple rocket launcher (MRL) regiments have been formed and assigned to several independent artillery divisions.

151. The Army has an estimated 18,000 field artillery pieces, most of which are modeled after Soviet towed guns. Artillery at army and divisional levels normally includes 85-, 100-, 122-, and 130-mm field guns, 122-mm howitzers, 152-mm gun-howitzers, and a 130-mm multiple rocket launcher similar to the Soviet BM-14/17. In the mid-1970s, a self-propelled ver-

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sion of the 122-mm howitzer was introduced and one regiment equipped with it. More recently an MRI mounted on an armored, tracked chassis was reportedly undergoing test and evaluation. Limited deployment of additional self-propelled artillery will enhance fire support for mobile operations in north and north-east China.

152. **Air Defense Forces.** Chinese ground forces have 17 antiaircraft artillery divisions, some independent AAA regiments, and over 100 AAA battalions organic to the main force infantry divisions. Chinese AAA is based on Soviet models of the late 1950s. Most regiments have a battalion each of the 57-mm, 37-mm, and ZPU AAA pieces. Altogether, up to 10,000 pieces are available for the defense of ground forces. This force would be augmented by Air Force SAM/AAA battalions assigned a strategic defensive role if the garrison and main force units had to defend a major city such as Shenyang. Divisions of antiaircraft artillery would probably reinforce main force infantry divisions or garrison divisions as required.

153. The Chinese are developing a new, low-to-medium-altitude surface-to-air missile—the CSA-X-2—presumably for both ground force and naval applications. Limited deployment of such mobile SAMs with the ground forces probably will occur by 1985 and will enhance defense against ground attack aircraft at medium and low altitude. In addition, a man-portable SAM similar to the SA-7 Grail for use against low-flying aircraft is probably entering production.

154. **Training.** Field training is conducted on an annual cycle that begins with individual and small-unit exercises and progresses to divisional and, on occasion, joint-service maneuvers. Since the ground forces returned to a more professional training program following the Cultural Revolution, exercises progressively have grown in complexity and included more participating units.

155. Training scenarios routinely emphasize combined arms and flexibility of operations, and appear to include realistic combat conditions and attention to details. Armor units have practiced closer coordination with supporting artillery, support to infantry units in positional defense, withdrawal under fire, and road marches and positional assaults. Training and operational messages have reflected the inclusion of engineer and other supporting elements and the realistic reporting of ammunition consumption and casualties.

Trends and Prospects

157. Gradual, systematic efforts at force improvement will be aimed at ensuring that Chinese ground forces, at a minimum, retain their current level of defensive capability against all potential threats. Although the number of infantry and field artillery units will increase little, their operational proficiency will improve with more intensive training and better equipment.

158. Although China has been increasing the number of border defense units along the Vietnamese frontier since late 1978, the overall number of regional forces is unlikely to increase markedly during the 1980s. Some new border defense and garrison units will probably be created—particularly along the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Vietnamese borders.

159. By the end of the decade, armored units, anti-tank capability, and infantry mobility probably will have been improved by introducing greater numbers of tanks and APCs, antitank guided missiles (perhaps including helicopter-mounted models), modest amounts of self-propelled artillery, and more transport and bridging equipment. The selective incorporation of mechanized infantry units into the force also will enhance ground force capabilities.

160. Barring a significant improvement of Soviet forces facing China, the ability of PLA ground forces to counter a major Soviet conventional invasion will improve by the late 1980s. Enhanced mobility and firepower will enable Chinese forces to maneuver more effectively against breakthroughs, reinforce threatened areas, launch counterattacks, and conduct organized retrograde operations. Furthermore, these strengthened capabilities, supplemented by gains in supporting airpower in the latter half of the decade, will enable the PLA better to contest a limited or general ground invasion. But the Chinese will still have little hope of preventing a determined Soviet attack from penetrating into China on any one of several axes.

161. Though Chinese ground forces in the later 1980s will continue to surpass those of other Asian powers, Beijing will not develop a force capable of

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powers, Beijing will not develop a force capable of posing a serious offensive threat to the USSR. The Chinese will remain capable of moving major forces for limited objectives into other contiguous countries. The PLA's ability to conduct large-scale out-of-country operations, however, will continue to be severely restricted by insufficient strategic mobility and by logistic limitations.

Tactical Air Forces

162. The PLA has some 2,000 bomber, fighter-bomber, reconnaissance, electronic countermeasure (ECM), and military transport aircraft (see table II-6). (See section II B for discussion of interceptors.) These aircraft are organized into 17 air divisions and nine independent regiments.

Organization, Composition, and Disposition

163. *Ground Attack Forces.* China's tactical combat aircraft—bombers, fighters, and fighter-bombers—are assigned to both the Air Force and the Naval Air Force, but there is no organization comparable to the US Tactical Air Command or Soviet Frontal Aviation. Air Force tactical units are controlled routinely by the Air Force commanders of the military regions in which they are based. There are seven Air Force bomber divisions and six fighter-bomber divisions.

164. Naval aircraft are controlled by Naval Air Force Headquarters in Beijing, which probably dele-

gates peacetime control of the aircraft to the fleets to which they are assigned. The Navy has three bomber divisions and one regiment of fighter-bombers. Naval Air Force tactical aircraft support naval forces through maritime reconnaissance, surface attack, and minelaying operations.

165. Tactical aircraft are assigned to support ground forces by interdiction and ground attack; they also train to support the Navy for coastal defense. Naval pilots are trained for surface attack and minelaying operations. Both Air Force and Naval Air Force units would be assigned ground attack missions for defense against or support of amphibious operations.

166. Most of the ground attack force is in northeast and east China, reflecting Beijing's priority for defense in these areas (see figure II-10); ground attack requirements in southeast, south, and central China would be met by the relocation of aircraft. Ground attack forces have deployed to peripheral bases to support out-of-country operations—for example, before the Sino-Vietnamese war.

167. *Transports and Helicopters.* China has more than 550 transports and 430 helicopters assigned to the Air Force and Naval Air Force. Most are home-based in central China, but some transports support the Navy along the coast. Most of the force is for support of the national and regional headquarters, and for transport of military cargo and personnel and for support of airborne operations.

Table II-6

Chinese Tactical Air Force Order of Battle mid-1980

	Sino-Soviet Border	Sino-Vietnamese Border	Remainder of Country	Total
Bombers (TU-16, IL-28, TU-2)	305	115	250	670
Fighter-bombers (A-5/MIG-15)	350	—	205	555
Reconnaissance (IL-28R, MIG-15/17/19, BE-6)	55	10	145	210
Transports (short and medium range)	95	10	210	315
Helicopters (light, medium, heavy)	90	10	130	230
Total	895	145	910	1,950

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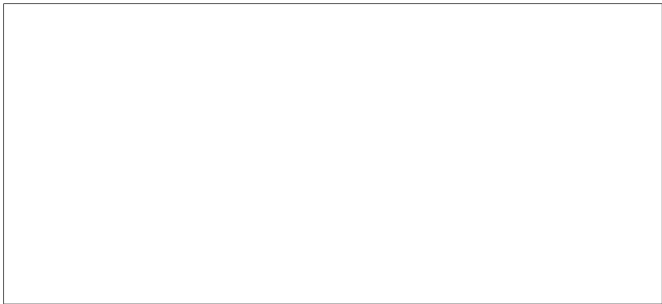
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Equipment and Armament

169. The ground attack element of China's tactical air forces has some 130 IL-28s, and some 550 A-5s¹ and obsolescent MIG-15 fighter-bombers. These aircraft currently are armed with guns, rockets, and bombs. To increase the flexibility and effectiveness of

¹ A-5 is the Chinese designation for the aircraft formerly known as the F-9 Fantan.

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its tactical aircraft, the PLA is attempting to develop tactical air-to-surface missiles (TASMs), improved air-to-air missiles, guns, rockets, and a diversified bomb inventory. The pace of such development will depend on resource priorities and the availability of foreign systems and technology.

170. The military air transport force is a mixture of foreign and domestically produced aircraft. The Chinese have imported aircraft such as the Trident from Britain and the AN-12 and AN-26 from the USSR and are dependent on these foreign suppliers for most spare parts and overhaul services.

171. There are about 960 major transports (gross weight of 9,000 kilograms or greater) currently assigned to civil aviation, including a variety of Soviet-made aircraft, some US Boeing 707s and 747s, and British Tridents and Viscounts. In addition, negotiations are under way with Western companies to coproduce a variety of aircraft such as the DC-9-50, Jetstar II, and US and French helicopters. The civil fleet is available to augment the military fleet in an emergency, and these civil assets would double China's airlift capacity in wartime. These civil aircraft, however, are not well suited for military cargoes and would have difficulty operating from unimproved landing strips.

172. About 90 percent of the PLA's helicopters are Soviet-designed, Chinese-built MI-4 Hounds. The Chinese also have purchased MI-6s and MI-8s from the Soviet Union and Super Frelons and Alouettes from France. Four BO-105 light helicopters have been purchased from Germany and at least eight Bell-212 medium helicopters from the United States for use in civil aviation. So far, China has not begun to produce a helicopter of native design.

Capabilities and Limitations

173. The ability of China's aircraft to conduct ground-attack and maritime strike operations is limited by deficiencies in range, choice of weapons, payload, avionics, and electronic countermeasures gear. Moreover, these deficiencies would require the Chinese to fly more sorties than either Western or Soviet air forces to achieve an equivalent level of target damage. The Chinese, however, probably cannot sustain high sortie rates for long periods. During the Sino-Vietnamese war severe aircraft maintenance problems were encountered, even though Chinese aircraft were not involved in combat. On the basis of training patterns, it is likely the Chinese would fly mostly

preplanned sorties. China has not developed a close-air-support capability in the Western sense, and would suffer heavy losses attempting to conduct ground attack operations against targets defended by modern ground-based air defense systems and aircraft.

174. Bomber crews are probably proficient only in daylight bombing in clear weather. Although Badger and Beagle aircraft are equipped with radar, a lack of realistic training restricts their ability to conduct nighttime or all-weather operations. Likely targets for these bombers would be supply depots, concentrations of troops, and lines of communication. The Beagle bombers assigned to the Naval Air Force are designated for maritime strikes, but may also have secondary ground attack missions.

175. Chinese Air Force fighter-bombers would be used for strikes near the battle area and interdiction against enemy supply lines. Naval A-5 fighter-bombers provide an additional ground attack as well as maritime strike capability. A-5 fighter-bomber effectiveness would be limited by deficiencies in ordnance capacity, narrow choices of ordnance, poor delivery accuracy, lack of ECM, and limited range. MIG-15s and MIG-17s share similar limitations, and are even further restricted in range and payload. The size and sophistication of enemy forces, the location of the battle area, and the logistic support available would determine the extent of Chinese losses.

176. China's present military air transport capability is restricted to airlift within the country and to peripheral areas. The major limitation is the lack of adequate medium- and long-range transports; less than half of the force has a radius of operation greater than 500 nautical miles. Out-of-country airborne or aerial supply operations would require deployment to forward staging bases before initiating operations, and such operations would be hampered by the small cargo and troop capacities of most of the aircraft. A major airlift effort would require large numbers of aircraft and high sortie rates, neither of which China is capable of handling at this time. For example, the Chinese could airlift about 2,000 metric tons of cargo, or 25,000 troops, or 17,000 paratroops to a radius of 500 nm from their staging bases. Only 740 metric tons of cargo, or 9,000 troops, or 1,600 paratroops could be transported to a radius of 1,000 nm. China could sustain such airlifts only for about three days. After that

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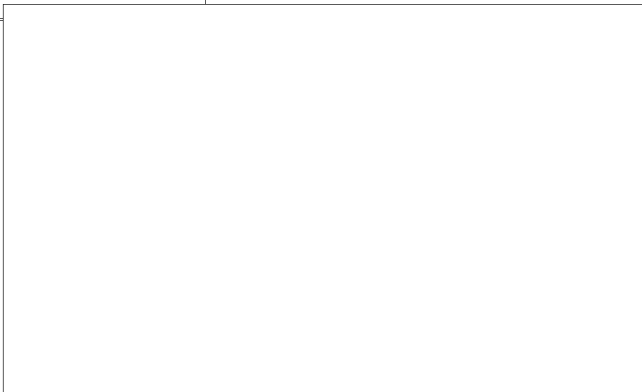
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the total capacity would be reduced by about 30 percent

177 China's capability to conduct tactical air reconnaissance would be only marginal if enemy air defenses were good. The camera systems are obsolescent, film processing and evaluation methods are time consuming, and the airborne platforms have a low probability of survival in a high threat environment.



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If given a high priority, a TASSI probably could be operational by the mid-1980s, and would most likely be used in an antishipping role or for defense suppression as an antiradar weapon. China probably has the technological capability to design and produce improved aircraft cannon, large unguided air-to-surface rockets based on the Soviet S-21 design, and a wide variety of bombs (incendiary, nuclear, cluster, chemical/biological). Improved tactical weapons should enter the inventory over the next 10 years.

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Trends and Prospects

179 We believe the Chinese will place greater priority than in the past on improvement of their ground attack capability. In the next decade we expect to see upgraded ground attack training, procurement of an improved fighter-bomber, a gradual expansion of the force, and programs emphasizing improved coordination between air defense and ground attack aircraft.

183 In the early 1970s the policy was to acquire foreign military transport aircraft. In the 1980s China will continue to purchase aircraft it cannot build—like the 747—but will actively seek joint ventures with Western companies to acquire modern transport technology and production expertise. Improvements in the aircraft industry should occur as a result of this new Chinese-Western cooperation, and China's airlift capacity and capability should improve steadily.

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184 The Chinese apparently are well aware of their deficiencies in aerial reconnaissance and have embarked on several programs to improve their capability. Reportedly they are attempting to develop a photoreconnaissance variant of the MIG-21, an aircraft that should offer increased performance over the current MIG-15s and MIG-19s. A photoreconnaissance mission may also be planned for the F-8, but we believe that such use of the F-8 would be secondary to its deployment as an interceptor.

185 The Chinese have tested three types of remotely piloted vehicles (RPVs), and it is likely that at least one will be deployed as a reconnaissance drone for missions in heavily defended areas. On the basis of test-flight activity, however, it will be at least five years before widespread deployment of such a system could take place.

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Naval Forces

Organization, Composition, and Disposition

187. China's Navy has one of the largest inventories in the world (see table II-7). Its surface ships, though impressive in numbers, are mainly small units suitable primarily for coastal patrol. Nevertheless, a transition into an open-ocean naval force has begun. Progress has been slow because of deficiencies in resources, inadequate technology, and the scope of the improvements required.

188. The Chinese Navy is a separate service arm of the PLA. Naval Headquarters in Beijing is subordinate to the General Staff Department. A separate Naval Air Force exists to assist the forces afloat in carrying out their varied missions.¹ The Navy also has a small number of land-based cruise missile sites dispersed along the coast.

189. Three fleets—north, east, and south—serve as peacetime operational commands for the Navy. (Fleet areas are shown in figure II-9, on page II-28.) Ships in each fleet are organized by type for administration and, in some cases, for operational control. Commands include those for submarines, main surface combatants, missile and torpedo attack boats, auxiliaries, and naval coastal defense forces.

¹ The Naval Air Force is discussed in the Air Force section.

190. The backbone of the fleet remains the large number of submarines and missile attack boats, although in recent years there has been growing emphasis on major surface combatants. The overall composition of the force continues to reflect concern for the Navy's primary mission, coastal defense. However, since the mid-1970s the Navy's mission has expanded and now includes countering the Soviet presence in the Far East and establishing a greater Chinese political presence there.

Equipment and Armament

191. A majority of China's principal combat ships are less than 10 years old, but the designs of most date from the 1950s or earlier. Nonetheless, the Navy is well trained and reasonably well equipped for its coastal defense mission, with its present inventory of some 100 diesel attack submarines and almost 240 missile boats. The Navy has more than 35 principal combatants; these add little to overall firepower—because of the limited number of antiship missiles per ship—but have considerable importance because of their ability to operate at greater ranges and in more severe sea conditions than the smaller missile boats.

192. The main weapon of the surface forces is the surface-to-surface cruise missile. Besides producing the 25-nm-range CSS-N-1, a copy of the Soviet Styx cruise missile, the Chinese have developed and produced a lengthened version, the 45-nm CSS-N-2, perhaps with an infrared capability. These missiles, though based on Soviet technology of the 1950s, play a central role

Table II-7

Chinese Naval Order of Battle
Mid-1990

	North Sea Fleet	East Sea Fleet	South Sea Fleet	Total
Submarines	43	40	20	103
Principal surface combatants (destroyers and frigates)	9	17	11	37
Minor combatants				
Missile boats	92	95	46	233
Torpedo boats	78	100	77	255
Submarine chasers	28	20	28	76
Coastal patrol boats (small, high-speed gunboats)	120	190	150	460
Amphibious warfare ships (LST, LSM)	14	15	19	48
Mine warfare ships	12	15	17	44

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in China's naval defensive capabilities and will continue to do so throughout the 1950s

193. The Chinese have encountered problems developing a shipborne surface-to-air missile system, and their surface forces remain extremely vulnerable to high-speed air attack, limiting naval operations to the combat radius of land-based fighter aircraft. China has had a low-to-medium-altitude SAM under development since the mid-1960s. Unlike the copy of the Styx cruise missile, this SAM probably is based on a Chinese design. One of two Jiangdong frigates has been outfitted with SAM launchers as part of this program, and the missile has recently undergone test launches from the frigate. We expect the system to become operational in the early 1950s.

194. Conventional Chinese naval gun systems are for the most part Soviet, Japanese, British, and US weapons of World War II vintage that cannot compete against today's modern systems. While some R&D is in progress, advancement has been slow. China has produced only three naval gun systems during the past two decades—a twin 130-mm, a twin 100-mm, and a twin water-cooled 57-mm, all derived from earlier Soviet systems. Production of some gun systems has not met the demand—ships occasionally have operated without guns or with guns other than those for which they apparently were designed. There is evidence that the Chinese are attempting to develop radar-directed gunfire control systems (current systems are largely optical), but progress in this area is also slow.

Capabilities and Limitations

195. The Navy's capability to carry out its primary mission—defense of the Chinese mainland against conventional surface attack—is substantial. Land-based and seaborne naval assets are designed to complement one another effectively, producing a fully integrated coastal defense system. Chinese forces, with their sheer numbers, are employed in a defense-in-depth strategy with three overlapping perimeters, and could repulse or make exceedingly costly any seaborne attack (see figure II-11). China's coastal geography constrains the movement of attacking naval forces and enhances defense.

196. Some 100 diesel submarines provide the outer perimeter of China's forward naval defense and will remain a prominent feature in the Chinese naval inventory for many years. These boats are well suited for operations in the shallow waters of China's broad

continental shelf. Submarines currently provide China with its only effective naval defense against enemy task forces with standoff strike capabilities, such as aircraft carriers.

197. Behind this zone some 35 destroyers and frigates, all but seven armed with cruise missiles, are available for operations. The ability of these units to operate at greater ranges and in more adverse weather provides added versatility and depth to China's coastal defenses. With cruise missiles as their primary offensive systems, these ships have a potentially high antisurface capability, a capability they would otherwise lack given the general obsolescence of their other offensive weapons systems. These larger combatants can also serve as command ships for controlling coordinated defense operations involving minor combatants.

198. Near shore, about 240 missile boats, with some 700 Styx missile launchers, provide an excellent anti-surface-ship capability. Employed along the entire coastline in small squadrons, these units constitute the thickest concentration of China's naval defenses. Their missiles, with a 25-nm range and terminal homing, would be very effective against surface ships; about 250 fast torpedo boats provide backup at shorter ranges. A small number of strategically located land-based cruise missile sites and numerous batteries of shore guns serve as an additional backup should China's at-sea defenses be breached.

199. Air Force and Naval Air Force aircraft, which provide air defense for the fleet close to the coast, would also supplement the Navy's surface attack capability and supply some aircraft for maritime surveillance.

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The Chinese maintain their ships in excellent condition, and most units are probably ready to put to sea on short notice.

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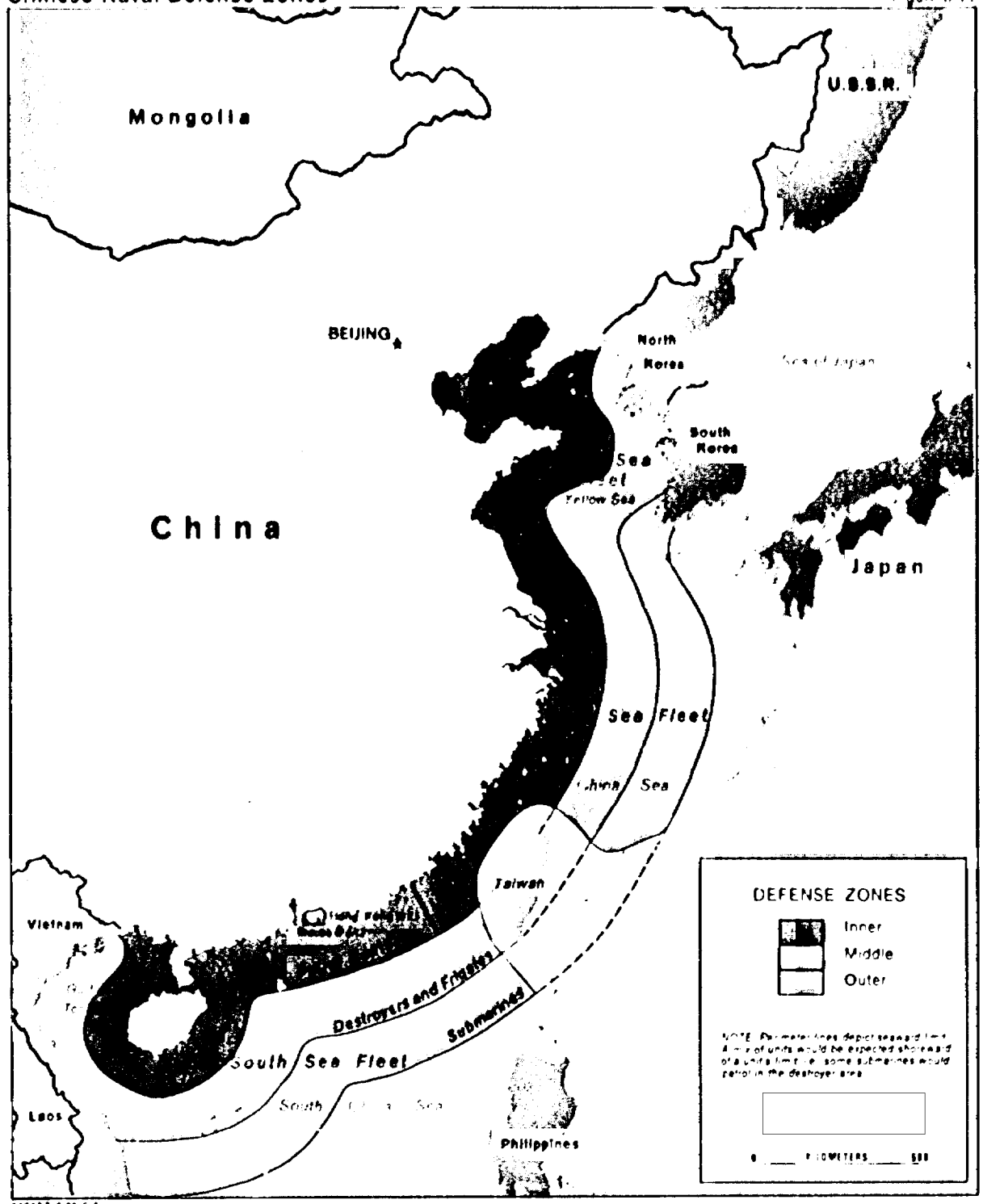
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201. The lack of modern ASW and shipborne air defense systems currently present the most serious limitations to Chinese naval wartime capabilities, particularly as operating distance from shore increases.

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Chinese Naval Defense Zones Figure II 11



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The Soviets in the late 1950s supplied China with submarine detection equipment that had limited range, depth penetration, and technological reliability. The Chinese probably improved the equipment in the last 20 years. Moreover, the Navy has only basic depth charges and nonguided rockets in its ASW weapons inventory.

202. The Chinese Navy is highly vulnerable to enemy air attack. To counter aircraft carrying air-to-surface weapons, Chinese ships have only World War II antiaircraft guns, most of which are optically sighted and manually aimed. Some radar fire control systems are evident but there is considerable doubt about their effectiveness. This vulnerability restricts the safe operational radius of Chinese ships to about 250 kilometers, the maximum effective range of land-based GCI systems.

203. China's small amphibious lift capability is increasing, but falls far short of the requirements for operations against a major objective such as Taiwan. Since 1977 the Chinese have shown greater interest in improving and expanding this capability through amphibious-related training exercises and building new ships. In 1978 they announced a ship construction program that to date has doubled the size of China's LSM fleet (14 to 31) and is adding three LSTs. Although there has not been a major change in the Navy's amphibious lift capability, it is significant that these LSMs and LSTs are the first landing ships built in China in 25 years, and that building programs are currently under way.

204. The Chinese Navy has some capability for mine warfare, but there is insufficient evidence to gauge the extent of that capability.

Trends and Prospects

205. Chinese leaders clearly understand that improving the war-fighting capabilities of their naval forces is a long-term effort and one that faces strong competing requirements, some of greater urgency, from ground, air, and missile forces. They are also aware that many of the improvements in the Navy cannot be achieved without foreign assistance. Although the Chinese have expressed varying degrees of interest in a wide range of foreign naval equipment, we believe that, as with other services of the PLA, actual purchases will focus on the acquisition and absorption of technology. Because of the economic constraints that will continue to face Chinese military

and civilian leaders, any outright purchases of naval weapon systems that might occur will be kept small and are likely to include attempts to acquire production rights.

206. Perhaps the most significant naval development has been the production of two Han-class nuclear-powered attack submarines. The second Han is currently ready for sea trials, and preparations may be under way for the launch of a third nuclear unit, probably the long-awaited prototype of a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN). The first Han units have served a major role in the development of a suitable propulsion system for the SSBN. However, we believe the Chinese will initiate series production of such units. The Chinese probably require additional nuclear attack submarines to patrol the deeper waters off China's continental shelf.

207. The Chinese Navy has gone through a long period of development marked by impressive growth of the submarine and missile boat inventories. The North and East Sea Fleets, which have enjoyed higher priority than the South, are very close to what appears to be their planned strength in diesel submarines and missile boats. The production of such units has declined and is now dedicated largely to equipping the South Sea Fleet. This buildup of southern units, under way since the late 1970s, will continue slowly for the next few years.

208. The growth of the South Sea Fleet has been accomplished by adding newly built ships and transferring ships from other fleets. China's heightened concern over protecting its island claims against the Vietnamese and ever-growing Soviet naval activity in the area will likely result in additional deployments to this area.

209. The Chinese are taking other steps to improve their defense capabilities. For example, they recently launched a third Ming-class unit, which represents a modification to the R-class. By mid-decade we expect either a further modification of, or a succeeding class to, the R-class.

210. The principal combatants, however, are the ships that will realize the greatest change in the next decade. Since the mid-1970s priority naval ship construction in China has turned away from the R-class submarine and small missile boat programs and toward the production of the larger ships. We expect the Jianghu frigate to continue in production, although there have been no new starts in over a year. Luda

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destroyers will also likely remain in production for a few more years. Both classes enhance China's naval defenses by extending existing defense capabilities seaward.

211. Following the successful deployment of the CSA-X-2 missile aboard the second Jiangdong frigate, the Chinese probably will concentrate on a new class of ship equipped with both surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missiles as well as improved ASW capabilities. Such a ship would succeed the present Luda destroyer as China's largest surface combatant. Its development, likely in the mid-1990s, will bolster existing naval defenses and represent a significant step toward providing the integral fleet defense necessary for more distant naval operations.

212. The Jianghu program will likely be succeeded later in the decade by a new class incorporating improved weapons and design features. Beijing has expressed interest in buying gas turbine engines for combatants smaller than destroyer size. Such ships, an outgrowth of both the Jianghu and Jiangdong programs, could readily serve as escorts for larger combatants and as support units for eventual task force operations.

213. During the past few years the Chinese have shown interest in helicopter carriers, exploring the possibilities of purchasing or constructing one.

[redacted] There is no firm evidence that China plans to move ahead with these purchases in the near future. Indeed, recent reports indicate that there has been a serious curtailment of such major contract purchases during a period of economic retrenchment. Any plans

for eventual acquisition of a light aircraft carrier for helicopters or Harrier-type aircraft undoubtedly remain in the early planning or feasibility study stage. Nevertheless, we would not discount the possible appearance of some form of carrier by the end of the decade. One carrier, however, possibly for experimentation with ASW or other missions, would have little impact on near-term Chinese naval capabilities.

214. Chinese preparations for future naval operations are evident in the construction of new types of auxiliary ships, in the continued search for more modern equipment and technology, in the modernization of shipyards, and in the more professional naval operations and training being conducted. Throughout the 1990s, the Chinese will introduce more modern weapons into the fleet, gradually upgrading its combat capabilities (see table II-8).

215. The primary mission of the Navy in the 1990s will remain coastal defense, with emphasis on realistic training exercises, development of professional skills, and extending operations farther from the coast. The submarine force appears to be moving toward patrols of about 30 days. Some submarines probably are extending their operations into the Philippine Sea while the majority will continue to operate within their fleet areas.

216. During the next decade, the Navy probably will more actively monitor the Soviet presence in the China Seas and peripheral open-ocean areas. It will probably develop dedicated intelligence collection ships (AGIs) to monitor the Soviet presence in the Tsushima Straits and South China Sea, and may venture into the Pacific and Indian Oceans to observe Soviet operations.

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ANNEX

SINO-SOVIET MILITARY SITUATION

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SINO-SOVIET MILITARY SITUATION

Mutual Threat Perception and Force Buildup

1. The Sino-Soviet dispute basically is a reflection of the clash of Chinese and Soviet national interests. The bonds that tied China to the USSR began to unravel seriously in the late 1950s. Soviet apprehension over China's long-term reliability led to the refusal to provide China nuclear weapons, the withholding of military support during the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1958, and the withdrawal of Soviet advisers in 1960. Tensions increased over a series of national and ideological issues—including a border dispute—in the early 1960s. China exploded its first nuclear device in October 1964 and Sino-Soviet border talks broke down in August 1965. The USSR then began to strengthen its forces in the border area,¹ reflecting Moscow's concern and uncertainty about Chinese intentions. The buildup was not a reaction to an increased Chinese conventional military threat, because there had been no discernible change in the strength of the Chinese forces in the border area, nor had there been serious military border incidents.

2. From 1965 to 1969, Soviet forces in the border area grew from 15 to 27 ground combat divisions, from 1,000 to 1,400 fixed-wing combat aircraft (tactical and air defense), and from 875 to 1,000 strategic surface-to-air missile (SAM) launchers. Moreover, in 1966, the Soviets signed a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with Mongolia, formalizing the Soviet military presence there and ensuring access to the frontier only 600 kilometers from Beijing.

3. The Chinese initially were slow to respond to the Soviet buildup, which coincided roughly with the initiation of the Cultural Revolution, and during the period 1965-68 some Chinese units were moved out of northeast China for domestic security and political reasons. China also was concerned at that time with the potential US threat in Indochina. The Soviet mili-

tary buildup, Moscow's invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the enunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine in 1968 increased China's uneasiness, however. Border clashes along the Ussuri River in 1969 clearly alarmed the Chinese and focused their attention on the serious vulnerabilities of China's defenses. Chinese forces then began to shift from a defense oriented primarily against attack from the sea to a defense against a Soviet thrust from the north. China also launched an extensive effort to improve the capabilities of its People's Liberation Army (PLA) and enhance its survivability in the event of a Soviet attack.

Trends in the Military Balance

4. Both Soviet and Chinese force levels in the border area have grown slowly but continuously since the early 1970s (see figure A-1), although the majority of the ground forces and of the Soviet air forces now in place were there by 1972.

5. *Soviet Developments.* Since 1972 improvements in the USSR's military posture opposite China have been essentially qualitative, although there has been some numerical increase, and far outstrip Chinese improvements during the same period. Obsolete aircraft have been systematically replaced with more sophisticated models. On the ground, the Soviets have introduced new equipment, and improved the rear services. They also have expanded permanent fortifications in static defense areas at potentially vulnerable points.

6. The general pattern of qualitative improvement was altered beginning in 1976 with the addition of a tank division in Mongolia and three, possibly four, new motorized rifle divisions in the Far East Military District. While the overall deployment of Soviet forces in the Far East MD is defensive, the new divisions there are situated on likely invasion routes into China.

7. In 1979 the Soviets established an operational theater-level command—a Theater of Military Operations including at least the Far East, Transbaikalian, and Siberian Military Districts—in the Soviet Far East and

¹ Unless otherwise specified, the border area is defined as the four Chinese military regions opposite the Soviet Union, Mongolia, and the four Soviet military districts opposite China.

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assigned the former deputy commander of the ground forces as its commander. Such a command is frequently observed in Soviet exercises, but is normally established and staffed only in wartime.

8. There has also been an unusually high level of Soviet exercises in the Sino-Soviet border area since the beginning of 1979. By midyear, 12 exercises at the military district level and two theater-level exercises had occurred. In March 1979, one of the largest command post and field training exercises of recent years was conducted in Mongolia, it involved elements of at least three armies, one airborne division, and over 300 military transport flights from the European USSR. An airlift of this scope to the Far East over such a short time was unprecedented. Furthermore, two Transbaikai MD divisions that deployed to Mongolia for the exercise did not return to their home garrisons but remained in Mongolia.

9. We have not noted any Soviet force development in the border area that could be judged a direct consequence of the Sino-Vietnamese conflict. We believe the large-scale exercise last year was programed prior to the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. Failure to advance its timing for the purpose of deterring Chinese military action against Vietnam suggests the exercise had longer term implications.

10. *Chinese Developments.* On the Chinese side of the border, qualitative improvements have lagged, largely because of resource constraints and the relatively backward state of Chinese military technology. The Chinese generally have sought to achieve the most effective use of existing weaponry and defensive dispositions, to improve training, and to develop camouflage and protective devices to enhance survivability. Substantial artillery and armor have been added, and an important aspect of the Chinese effort has been the development of complex defensive areas along potential avenues of approach from the USSR and where terrain most favors the defense. The Chinese also stepped up an already extensive program to provide underground storage facilities at airfields throughout China. We estimate that more than half of China's fighter aircraft inventory could now be afforded some degree of protection by these facilities.

11. An important development since 1976 has been the effort to upgrade military capabilities in the Lanzhou and Urumqi Military Regions, where, over the previous 10 years, the priority for improving combat potential was lower than elsewhere along the border. Such improvements indicate that the Chinese

would offer a more determined resistance in western China.

Current Forces

12. *Soviet Forces.* Currently, about one-fourth of Soviet ground forces—at least 42 combat divisions and 460,000 men—are deployed opposite China, along with about 1,900 fixed-wing combat aircraft (1,200 tactical aircraft or 25 percent of the force, and 700 air defense aircraft or 20 percent of the force). In addition, there are some 300 aircraft subordinate to the Soviet Pacific Fleet, over 500 assault and transport helicopters, and about 1,200 strategic and 1,000 mobile tactical SAMs in the area.

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14. Supplementing the Soviet ballistic missiles are over 200 strategic bombers—about 150 of which are Badger intermediate-range bombers. They can strike any target in China with air-to-surface missiles or bombs. Moreover, all modern Soviet tactical aircraft are probably nuclear capable.

15. Within the ground forces dedicated to the border region, the FROG-7 has been widely deployed at division level and a 12-launcher Scud brigade has been allocated to most armies. One Scaleboard brigade has been deployed to each of the four military districts.

16. There are also several ground force divisional mobilization bases in the region. Most are colocated with an active division, and each contains the critical combat equipment for a motorized rifle division. The equipment is intended to permit rapid activation of additional divisions in wartime. Most of the standing divisions and support units in the Far East are manned below wartime strength; upon mobilization, the manning level would expand to over 1 million men.

17. The modernization and increased operations of the Soviet Navy in the Far East further exacerbates Sino-Soviet tension. The Soviet Pacific Ocean Fleet is primarily oriented against the United States. However, when the Chinese invaded Vietnam the Soviets temporarily dispatched task forces to the East China Sea and the Hainan Island vicinity. The Soviet Navy now

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continuously operates in the South China Sea, makes combatant visits to Vietnamese ports, and stages reconnaissance and ASW aircraft from Vietnamese airfields.

18. **Chinese Forces.** The Chinese currently have about 100 ground combat divisions and some 2,145 combat aircraft (430 ground attack and 1,715 air defense) in regions opposite the USSR and Mongolia. The Navy has some combat aircraft that could augment the air effort.

19. The Chinese ballistic missile force consists of [redacted] limited-range ICBMs and [redacted] IRBMs and MRBMs. There also are some 100 intermediate-range TU-16 Badger bombers, and over 400 medium-range bombers, primarily IL-28 Beagles, in the tactical air force. Most Soviet targets in the Far East are within range of the TU-16, although the capability of this aircraft to penetrate Soviet air defenses is marginal. IL-28s can conduct offensive operations against Soviet targets in the immediate border area. The Chinese Navy does not have a strategic strike capability.

20. We believe the Chinese, unlike the Soviets, maintain their fighting units in the border area near full personnel strength, although the amount and quality of unit equipment vary. The 1.7-million-man ground force opposite the Soviet Union and Mongolia would be augmented in wartime by mobilized civilian support organizations and paramilitary forces.

21. **Disposition.** The majority of opposing Chinese and Soviet forces are not close to each other. The Soviets have deployed major ground force units near the border in position to conduct major defensive or offensive operations on short notice. Much of this deployment is dictated by the need to protect the Trans-Siberian Railroad and other main lines of communication and nearby Soviet population centers which, particularly in the Far East Military District and portions of the Transbaikalian Military District, are near the border. The Chinese, on the other hand, have located their major ground force units in a series of defensive areas well back (150 to 300 km) from the border in the first terrain suitable for defense, but well forward of Beijing and industrial centers in southern Shenyang MR. China's major maneuver forces are located behind the defensive areas in position to react to enemy incursions.

The Balance

22. **Soviet Union.** The balance along the border continues to favor the USSR. Although deployed Chi-

nese forces outnumber the Soviets by about four to one, the Soviet forces are superior in weaponry and mobility. The Soviets' ground force equipment is more modern, they have more tanks and antitank systems, superior artillery firepower and mobility, and a monopoly of tactical SAMs and tactical nuclear weapons. Soviet forces are mechanized, whereas Chinese units are largely truck or foot mobile. Both offensively and defensively, Soviet aircraft are far superior to China's.

23. The Soviets have no significant military weaknesses that would impact on their short-term ability to cope with any Chinese military threat. In the case of a protracted war, however, they would have extended and exposed lines of communication into the Far East. The double-tracked Trans-Siberian Railroad, the main line of communication from European Russia, generally parallels the border in the northeast and at some points is only a few kilometers from China. The USSR is constructing a northern branch, the "Baikal-Amur-Magistral" or "BAM" route, as part of a long-range program to develop the economic potential of the Soviet Far East, and its completion in the mid-to-late 1980s will reduce the vulnerability of Soviet rail links to the border region.

24. We believe currently deployed Soviet forces have the following capabilities:

- The Soviets could stop any Chinese offensive, and are capable of incursions into China with a good chance of initial success. Substantial reinforcements would be required, however, to permit overrunning northern China.
- In the air, Soviet fighters should be able to exploit China's air defenses and gain local air superiority. The Soviet Air Force could, in conjunction with SAM defenses, beat back Chinese air attacks against Soviet or Mongolian installations and, using secure Soviet airbases, tactical fighter-bombers could strike targets in China up to 1,100 km beyond the border. Over time, in a conventional war, losses of Soviet attack aircraft could be sizable.
- The Soviet Pacific Fleet, with its numerical superiority, is essentially an oceangoing force targeted primarily against the United States. It has limited amphibious assault capability. The Soviet Navy would predominate at sea and could preclude any significant Chinese naval actions.

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- Using strategic air and missile forces, the Soviets could conduct nuclear strikes against any target in China

attempt limited, perhaps unconventional, operations against the Trans-Siberian Railroad to disrupt Soviet resupply.

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- China's strategic nuclear forces, though relatively small, present a credible deterrent to nuclear attack. The Soviets could not be sure of destroying all of China's missile force without suffering retaliatory attacks against Soviet urban/industrial and military complexes, possibly even Moscow.

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25. *China.* Chinese military advantages lie in the vast expanse of northern China, much of the terrain favoring the defender; a large standing ground force which is deployed, ready, and equipped to fight a conventional defense in depth, and a large supportive population. In addition to regular forces, there are in the border region about 2.5 million lightly armed, loosely organized paramilitary troops. These military and paramilitary forces are bound together by a war-fighting concept that stresses the creation of flexible forces capable of conventional military operations augmented by guerrilla warfare.

Current Military Options

26. Perhaps China's greatest asset is an ability to absorb punishment and make the duration and cost of a large-scale invasion prohibitive for the Soviets. China's rail, installations and lines of communication are well back from the border, allowing the Chinese to choose and prepare the battlefields that most effectively use the defender's advantage of interior lines of communication. Most of China's tactical airfields are more than 300 km from the Soviet and Mongolian borders, and would get some early warning of attack. Furthermore, China's large inventory of aircraft and hardened storage facilities would help the Air Force survive for an extended period, even faced with sustained conventional attacks. Despite significant deficiencies in China's air defenses, cumulative attrition of Soviet aircraft could be costly in the event of a protracted conventional campaign.

28. In the event that the Soviet leadership decided that the protection of national interests required military action against China, a number of options would be available, ranging from limited conventional raids and demonstrations to nuclear strikes and full-scale invasion. Most options, however, would provoke a Chinese military response and risk a prolonged conflict, including the use of nuclear weapons.

27. We believe Chinese forces have the following capabilities:

- The Chinese have perhaps an even chance of stalemating a major Soviet conventional offensive (which would probably require approximately 80 divisions) aimed at seizing Beijing and advancing into the North China Plain. Even so, large portions of the Beijing and Shenyang MRs could be overrun and held by Soviet forces, but at great cost. Chinese forces could also thwart a Soviet amphibious attack.
- The Chinese have only limited offensive capabilities, but could conduct local counteroffensive operations within China. They also could

29. Soviet options involving just conventional forces range from a contrived incident or series of incidents on the border to full-scale offensives aimed at gaining and holding Chinese territory. Small-scale forays in response to Chinese incursions, or for the purpose of demonstrating Soviet displeasure and resolve, would entail only limited military risk. Even a limited strike, however, would substantially raise the level of tension. A critical factor in Soviet decisionmaking would be the extent of the USSR's ability to control the level of military confrontation. For example, a limited Soviet conventional attack aimed at major objectives in the Shenyang MR could be launched by forces currently in place, with some chance of success. It would risk a Chinese escalating response and prolongation of the conflict.

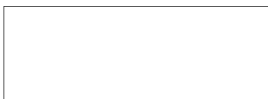
30. A large Soviet conventional attack, aimed at seizing Beijing and northeastern China, would require sending substantial Soviet reinforcements to the Far East. The combination of Chinese manpower, prepared defenses, favorable terrain, and seasonal weather conditions, as well as the extension of the already limited Soviet lines of communication in the Far East into China proper, probably would lead to a stalemated conflict—although the Soviets could make major territorial gains.

31. The Soviets almost certainly do not view a demonstrative nuclear strike as a viable option, because of the real risk of Chinese retaliation. Similarly,

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a Soviet nuclear strike aimed at destroying China's entire nuclear retaliatory force probably would not succeed

weapons. A Soviet strategic attack would leave China few options beyond retaliatory strikes on enemy urban areas and soft military targets. The Chinese probably hope that their extensive dispersal and other passive defense measures will help them ride out a strategic nuclear attack, preserving enough force to deter or eventually defeat a follow-on invasion.

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32. A Soviet nuclear attack against Chinese strategic forces, followed by a ground invasion supported by tactical nuclear weapons with the purpose of penetrating deep into China or occupying large areas, would require a massive commitment of Soviet general purpose forces, and would risk nuclear retaliation. In the event of a protracted war or heavy losses, the Soviets might be in the position of having to shift forces from the western USSR.

Outlook

36. In view of growing Sino-US Japanese relationships, and the possibility of renewed conflict between China and Vietnam, the Soviets have increased their concern for improving military capabilities in the Far East. From the Soviet viewpoint, the potential for having to fight a simultaneous two-front war—with China to the East and with NATO in the West—has probably increased. Therefore, we expect to see a continued military buildup and qualitative improvement in forces opposite China. These developments will provide Moscow with improved defensive capabilities against not only Chinese forces but also US forces in Asia in the event of large-scale conflict with the West. Additionally, it will provide the USSR with increased capability for offensive military operations against China.

33. The Chinese seek to avoid a direct military confrontation with the Soviet Union and have attempted to deter a Soviet attack on China by making it appear too costly. In the event of a Soviet attack, Beijing's aim would be to confine the conflict to the conventional level, where the Chinese feel they can make maximum use of advantages in manpower, terrain, interior lines of communication, and defensive complexes to prolong the conflict to Soviet disadvantage.

34. The PLA is not equipped, structured, or adequately supported to conduct major offensive operations across the Soviet border. Any limited Chinese offensive efforts in the border area, such as a Chinese-concocted border raid, limited punitive attack, or attempt to interdict Soviet lines of communication, would draw immediate and overpowering Soviet reaction.

35. Chinese forces cannot conduct effective operations against a modern force in a nuclear war, and the Chinese are unlikely to initiate the use of nuclear

37. The Chinese are well aware of their military shortcomings and have, particularly since 1976, expressed increasing concern over the need to upgrade the PLA. Beijing has assessed the Soviet Union as a long-term threat to China, and recent Soviet force improvements probably have increased Beijing's concern. For these reasons, we expect the forces arrayed against the Soviet threat to continue receiving a high priority in the allocation of improvements. In the near term, however, it is unlikely that China, because of its resource constraints, can significantly affect the balance between Chinese and Soviet forces.

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