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DEF 12-1 CHINAT

AIRGRAM

MAIN/ACTION		
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M/R	REP	AF
1	EUR	FE
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4	COM	FRB
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A-1037

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TO : Department of State

Info : CINCPAC, CINCPAC/POLAD,
BONN, HONG KONG, TEL AVIV, TOKYO

FROM : Amembassy TAIPEI

SUBJECT : Indications GRC Continues to Pursue Atomic Weaponry

REF : Embassy's A-013 April 8, 1966

RECEIVED
DEPT OF STATE

DATE JUN 24 1966

Action assigned to

Date of Action

Action DATE: June 20, 1966

notes

This document consists of 3 pages,
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Summary

At the direction of President CHIANG, the GRC Defense Ministry continues to try to develop an atomic weapon and delivery system, according to a source close to the effort. The President has overridden the advice of Lt. General T'ANG Chun-po, Vice Minister of Defense who also heads up the defense scientific program; T'ang believes the attempt impractical and beyond ROC resources. Thus far the GRC has been frustrated in its efforts to procure the necessary nuclear materials and has been similarly unsuccessful in its attempts to hire scientists from abroad to work on the project.

1. At the direction of President Chiang the Chungshan Science Institute, which superintends science research and development for the Ministry of National Defense, is continuing to push ahead with its program of developing an atomic weapon, according to Dr. HSU Cho-yun, Chairman of the History Department of National Taiwan University and protege of Dr. WANG Shih-chieh, a member of the Chungshan Institute's Council.

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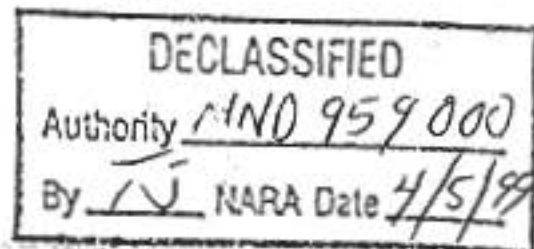
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2. Lt. General T'ang Chun-po, Cambridge-trained mathematician and Vice Minister of Defense in charge of defense science development, believes the whole idea of the GRC's developing a weapon impractical and beyond the GRC's resources, but President Chiang has insisted that the effort continue, Hsu told the reporting officer. (Hsu added that the President's insistence could be frustrated by foot-dragging in the Ministry.)

3. Hsu noted some difficulties the GRC is encountering. First, the Government has not found a source from which to buy the nuclear materials needed for the research. After the U. S. refused to sell such to the GRC, the latter tried Israel, but discussions were broken off after a change of government there and after the question became entangled in Israel-Arab relations. West Germany was approached and discussions proceeded until the GRC terminated these after West Germany approved the steep plant sale to Peiping. Japan was sounded out but reacted negatively, as it does to any effort to involve it in the development of nuclear weapons. Second, the Chungshan Institute has run into difficulties in developing a missile capability. The tracking radar supplied by the U. S. is adequate only tracking aircraft. The Institute consequently is attempting to develop its own missile tracking radar. Thirdly, the Institute has been frustrated in its efforts to attract scientists from abroad back to work on these projects. Although it has offered US\$1,200 a month, it has received almost no response. Hsu attributed this failure to Chinese scientists' fear that once attached to the project they will not be permitted to leave Taiwan and to their awareness that they will be "dead" as scientists if they do not publish for five years running (the GRC refuses to allow them this privilege while working on such sensitive projects).

4. Hsu, whose comments proceeded from the reporting officer's asking him about Wang Shih-chieh and CHIANG Ching-kuo's involvement in the reorganization of the National Science Council, said that part of the Council's funds for this and the next fiscal year have been diverted to the Chungshan Institute.

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5. Comment. Hsu, an alert, young, University of Chicago trained social historian, frequently privately critical of GRC policies, has previously voiced his strong reservations about any GRC attempt to develop an atomic weapons capability and expressed his belief that the U. S. would never allow the GRC to acquire the laboratories and other production facilities necessary to turn out a nuclear weapon.



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