American Planning for Taiwan, 1942–1945

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The Korean War caused a sudden reversal of American policy in 1950 with regard to Taiwan, making the island a strategically important factor in the United States defense line in East Asia. The new era of vital interest in Taiwan inaugurated by this dramatic decision, however, only revived an earlier but lesser-known interest fostered by American political military strategists in World War II. During that period the United States had formulated both a plan of conquest and a plan of occupation. Although neither program materialized, the military plan reveals the importance attached to the island by American strategists during World War II, while the occupation plan illustrates American official opinion concerning the Nationalist government at a time when that government’s prestige was waning. A study of the latter plan also reflects American views maintained by responsible officials in Washington regarding the prospects of future relations both with China in general and Taiwan in particular.

American concern for Taiwan was first stimulated by knowledge of China’s “sudden public interest” in the island shortly after Japan’s expansion of hostilities in the Pacific in December, 1941. China, until then, had no opportunity to regain control of Taiwan since cession of the island to Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, but the involvement of the United States and Great Britain in the war in East Asia promptly stirred Chinese ambitions to regain it. The United States Ambassador to China, C. E. Gauss, reasoned that public attention regarding future Korean independence from Japanese domina-

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tion gave direct impetus to China to initiate similar suggestions for Taiwan “independence.” ¹ This would be accomplished by fostering organizations advocating Taiwan’s return to China and publicly stressing “Chinese racial ties” with the island’s population.

Agitation in China to free Taiwan first came from exiled Taiwanese in 1941. Six Taiwanese organizations amalgamated into a “Taiwan revolutionary league” (Taiwan ko-ming t’ung-meng hui) which claimed to have had 140,000 members—a highly unrealistic figure to observers.² The efforts of the organization were directed toward creation of a Taiwan army, establishment of a Taiwan provincial government under the auspices of the Nationalist government, and assurance of China’s repossession of the island.³ While the league was known to resort to espionage and terror, it was understood to have enjoyed some support from the Kuomintang and the Chinese Nationalist government.

By the summer of 1942 the Chinese had made known their official interest in Taiwan and their expectations that it would revert to Chinese control. In conversation with an American diplomat, Dr. Yang Yun-chu, director of the Eastern Asiatic Affairs Department of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declared that the return of Taiwan was appropriate because its population was largely Chinese and maintained close relations with China.⁴ Before long, official sentiment considering Taiwan as Chinese “irredenta” was expressed pub-

¹ “Independence” meant freedom from Japanese domination. U.S. Department of State Records (hereafter cited as DS), C. E. Gauss to Secretary of State (Cordell Hull), Chungking, Desp. 342, March 31, 1942; Memorandum, J. E. Salisbury, Division of Far Eastern Affairs, April 29, 1942 (849A.01/16). Reference is made in the dispatch to a speech delivered on March 22, 1942, by Dr. Sun Fo, son of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and then president of the Judicial Yuan, stating that “after the war Formosa [Taiwan] will come back to China.”

² DS, George Atcheson, Jr., Chargé d’Affaires, i.e., to Secretary of State, Chungking, Desp. 1484, Aug. 18, 1943 (894A.01/19). George H. Kerr, Formosa Betrayed (Boston, 1965), 46–47, dates the formation of the league in 1943, but Atcheson’s dispatch cites a memorandum, prepared by an embassy officer based on “information furnished by local Formosans and Chinese,” which states that the league was formed in 1941. An embassy memo (DS, Encl. 3 to Desp. 342, March 31, 1942) cites a newspaper report in Chungking describing a league conference held there March 20–21, 1942.

³ Emphasis was placed upon the retrocession of Taiwan. It was reasoned that China could make legal claim to the island dating from Dec. 9, 1941, when she declared war on Japan and formally annulled the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895). See DS, Gauss to Sec. of State, Chungking, Desp. 342, March 31, 1942, Encl. 3, Central News Agency, Chungking, March 22, 1942, and Encl. 4, China Information Committee Daily Bulletin, (297), March 24, 1942.

⁴ Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, 1942: China (Washington, 1956), 792. Similar views can be noted on 174, 736 and ibid., 1943: China (Washington, 1957), 842–843, 845.
licly. In May, 1943, Chungking's leading newspaper, *Ta Kung Pao*, asserted that Taiwan "must be returned unconditionally to China after the war" and refuted a suggestion by John K. Jessup, an American journalist, that Taiwan be placed under an "international mandate." 5

As American representatives learned about the essentials of China's postwar planning, the return of Taiwan and other captured territories traditionally a part of China became an important assumption. Consequently, policy studies were soon being prepared in several American government agencies 6 concerning various aspects of the island. In a lengthy and knowledgeable report made in the State Department's division of far eastern affairs, consideration of the independence of Taiwan was rejected, and its return to China was strongly supported. 7 Taiwan in friendly hands could be commercially advantageous to the United States; but more important, Taiwan had great strategic value. 8 It was more than a year later, however, before the question of Taiwan's postwar disposition received the attention of the highest echelons of American and British policy-makers. Without lengthy discussion or dispute, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's suggestion in March, 1943, that Taiwan (and Manchuria) be returned to China was favorably received by Anthony Eden. 9 Later in the year this view was to be reaffirmed during the international conferences at Cairo and Teheran.

In addition to future political interests, Taiwan was an island possessing great strategic value for the wartime military plans of Japan and the allied powers. American Intelligence was fully cognizant that Taiwan served both as a base for military operations in southeast Asia and the southwest Pacific and as an important unit in

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6 In addition to USDS, government agencies preparing reports on Taiwan included: Division of Military Intelligence of the War Department (a study of economic, political, social, and strategic aspects); Board of Economic Warfare (a study of social and economic factors, but primarily bombing objectives); and Office of the Coordinator of Information. DS, Memorandum, J. E. Salisbury, Division of Far Eastern Affairs, Feb. 14, 1945 (894A.00).
7 DS, Division of Far Eastern Affairs, "Formosa," Part I and II, Feb. 17, 1942 (894A.014/2). Part I unequivocally declared that "there is every reason, economic, ethical and moral, that Formosa should once more belong to China."
8 Ibid., Part II.
9 DS, Memorandum of Conversation (Cordell Hull), March 27, 1943 (840.50/2088). Leading participants in the conversation included Roosevelt, Eden, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Hull, U.S. Secretary of State, Lord Halifax, British Ambassador, Harry Hopkins, et al. Roosevelt repeated this opinion to Hull in Oct. (Memoirs of Cordell Hull [New York, 1948], II, 1595–1596).
Japan's war economy. The island had long been a point from which Japan extended her economic and political interests southward. The "Taiwan Development Company," for example, was responsible for the economic activity in southeast Asia as well as Taiwan, and the government-general in Taihoku (Taipei) was responsible for the administration of the Pescadores, Hainan, the Spratley Islands, and other Pacific areas. Moreover, in the attack upon the Philippines that began the Pacific war, Taiwan was an essential base for Japanese operations. Later, it was bombed by American planes.

Having early concluded that an air offensive against Japan would be important in bringing about her defeat, American military planners gave prominent attention to Taiwan as a potential base of operations. In the full military program completed in April, 1943, China was selected as a base for the air offensive. In a trans-Pacific advance to the China coast, Taiwan was considered "the most important single objective." This opinion won acceptance by allied strategists in military discussions at the Cairo conference in December, 1943. At the same time, the political fate of Taiwan was decided. President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek formulated a plan to dismantle Japan's Pacific empire, and Taiwan and the Pescadores were specifically

10 U.S. Department of the Navy, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Naval History Division (hereafter cited Naval Records), Office of the Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Intelligence, "Formosa: Interim Report, February 1944."
11 Louis Morton, The Fall of the Philippines (Washington, 1953), 60, 80, 84, 92, 94–96, 98–100, 118, 123, 126, 138–139, 140, 261–262, and Strategy and Command: The First Two Years (Washington, 1962), 131 ff. Having authorization to retaliate against enemy assaults, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, on Dec. 8, 1941, ordered an attack against Taiwan for the following day. The attack, however, was not made due to a lack of tactical information about the island's defenses (Morton, Fall of the Philippines, 69, 80–84, 89, 94). After photo-reconnaissance by Gen. Claire L. Chennault's 14th Air Force, attacks against Taiwan began in fall, 1943, and continued for about a year until airfields in eastern China, where the bombers were based, fell into Japanese hands (Maj. Bernhardt L. Mortensen, "Cutting the Enemy's Lifeline," in Wesley F. Craven and James L. Cate, eds., The Pacific: Matterhorn to Nagasaki, June 1944 to August 1945 [Chicago, 1953], 471–489; Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, Stilwell's Command Problems [Washington, 1956], 19–20).
12 Work on the Pacific strategy had begun in Aug., 1942, by the "Joint U.S. Strategic Committee" and upon completion was submitted to the "Joint Staff Planners."
13 Morton, Strategy and Command, 447.
designated for return to China. Several days later, at Teheran, Marshall Joseph Stalin concurred in this decision.\textsuperscript{16}

While military strategy in the Pacific, ultimately to involve the seizure and occupation of Taiwan, was being refined in 1943, policy concerning political and administrative problems of occupation was also being formulated. In July and August, 1943, Country and Area committees (CAC) were established in the Department of State to prepare policy papers on postwar problems relative to the country or area concerned. In September, 1943, an area committee for the Far East\textsuperscript{17} was approved, the “country” review not being considered feasible. Prominent members of the committee were Dr. Stanley K. Hornbeck, then political adviser in the Department of State, and Professor George H. Blakeslee in the division of territorial studies. They were assisted by specialists from the office of far eastern affairs, the division of territorial studies, and other units concerned with the Far East.\textsuperscript{18}

Intense study of occupation problems concerning Taiwan took place in the spring of 1944. It was made by the Department of State in response to over twenty basic questions posed in February by the civil affairs division of the War Department and the occupied areas section of the Navy Department.\textsuperscript{19} Taiwan, of course, was only one aspect of the problem. The study made by the area committee on the Far East dealt with Japan proper and all areas occupied by Japan. While these country and area committees were in the process of formulation and busily engaged in preparing policy papers on occupation problems, a higher level unit was created to review and refine policy recommendations. This was the Postwar Programs Committee (PWC) which began early in 1944 and met periodically with the

\textsuperscript{16} The decision was reaffirmed once again at a subsequent meeting of the Pacific War Council (representatives of the allied nations fighting in the Pacific area) in Washington, D.C., Jan. 12, 1944 (\textit{ibid.}, 868; Herbert Feis, \textit{The China Tangle} [Princeton, 1953], 113).

\textsuperscript{17} This has been identified variously as “Committee on the Far East,” “Far East Area Committee,” and the “Interdivisional Area Committee on the Far East” (Harley A. Notter, \textit{Postwar Foreign Policy Preparation, 1939–1945} [Washington, 1949], 15, 177–178, 273, 591 fn. 50).

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Ibid.}, 176–179, 273. The country and area committees were informally organized at first but became more formal by the end of the year when nine country committees and four area committees had been established. The area committee on the Far East was the most active, having met 221 times by the end of the war. Professor Hugh Borton was also very active on the committee, normally acting as deputy to Blakeslee when he was chairman.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ibid.}, 273. Hugh Borton, “United States Occupation Policies in Japan since Surrender,” \textit{Political Science Quarterly}, LXII (1947), 250. The request was made to the Office of Special Political Affairs, USDS, Feb. 18, 1944.
secretary and undersecretary of state, assistant secretaries, various political advisers, and other high officials.20

When the policy papers of the CAC were reviewed by the PWC, minor changes and additions were sometimes made.21 Later in the year, the work of the PWC was superseded by various staff and coordination committees. The CAC continued to function and remained the major working units through which "policy recommendations for current and emerging decisions were developed" for consideration by high-level policy-makers.22

To co-ordinate government policies and the work of related agencies, a formal organization was established in December, 1944, called the State–War–Navy Co-ordinating Committee (SWNCC). Decisions of this body became government policy. In the following month, on January 5, 1945, this group formed a subcommittee on the Far East. Representing the Department of State were Professors Hugh Borton and Blakeslee, both senior members of the Far East section of the department's division of territorial studies and the area committee on the Far East. In its discussion of American postwar policy in the Far East, the subcommittee relied heavily on the papers prepared earlier by the CAC and modified by the PWC.23 Consequently, throughout the development of postwar policy concerning the Far East, the work undergone in the latter half of 1943 and the early half of 1944 by the area committee on the Far East represents the heart of American policy formulation for the postwar occupation.24

While policy plans were being devised, technical programs for civil administration in occupied areas were established, training schools for military personnel were instituted, and detailed manuals
concerning military government were prepared.\textsuperscript{25} Since military operations in the Pacific area would largely be naval, that branch of service decided as early as June, 1942, to establish a "Naval School of Military Government and Administration." The program soon affiliated with Columbia University, and a year later, on June 11, 1943, the first group of naval officers graduated.\textsuperscript{26}

Specific arrangements for training personnel for the anticipated occupation of Taiwan, however, were not made until summer, 1944. At that time the navy was given the responsibility to plan and administer the civil affairs of Taiwan during the occupation, but it was expected that the army would provide the largest number of trained personnel. Their training would be given jointly in a ninety-day school for military government at Princeton University scheduled to begin October 1, 1944.\textsuperscript{27}

Since strategic concerns ultimately discarded military plans for the conquest of Taiwan, the proposals of the CAC never required consideration by the state-war-navy co-ordinating committee, nor did implementation of a program for the occupation of Taiwan by trained civil affairs officers ever take place. Nevertheless, the policy proposals of the CAC reflect importantly upon the tenor of opinion and analysis in the Department of State by policy-makers concerned with China, and more specifically, Taiwan. In retrospect, some of the problems raised at that time have become the origins of long-standing postwar issues, still unsettled.

\textsuperscript{25} E.g., "United States Army and Navy Manual of Military Government and Civil Affairs" (Field Manual 27-5; OPMV 50E-3); "War Department Basic Field Manual, Rules of Land Warfare" (Field Manual 27-10).

\textsuperscript{26} The curriculum included language training, study of native and colonial institutions of the Pacific area, technical aspects of military government, courses on international law related to problems of occupation, and public administration. J. O. M. Broek, "The Navy Prepares for Military Government," \textit{Far Eastern Survey}, XII (June 30, 1943), 126-127; Russell J. Thackrey, "Military Government in the Pacific: Initial Phase," \textit{Political Science Quarterly}, LX (1945), 98. Attached to the school at Columbia was a research center created to prepare handbooks, maps, and other training materials for both the military and civil aspects of the operation; see Kerr, \textit{Formosa Betrayed}, 29-30, 30 (fn.).

\textsuperscript{27} All of the enlisted personnel and 80 per cent of the officers were to come from the army and 20 per cent of the officers from the navy. Naval personnel were to be utilized especially in functions requiring their technical naval background, such as in harbors. Naval Records, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas (CINCPAO) to Naval Units in the Pacific, "Military Government and Civil Affairs Directive—Japanese Mandated Islands" (Serial: 000559), July 20, 1944; CINCPAO to Commanding General, Tenth Army, "Overall Planning for Formosa" (Serial: 000837), Sept. 21, 1944; Memorandum, Vice Adm. Donald B. Duncan, Assistant Chief of Staff (Plans) to Adm. Ernest L. King, Chief of Naval Operations (Opns.-Misc., Cent. Pac., Opns.-Misc., Cent. Pac., 0-12), Aug. 23, 1944.
The various policy proposals formulated by the area committee on the Far East can be grouped into six major areas of interest: (1) responsibility for the occupation, (2) transference of sovereignty, (3) American bases, (4) administrative policy, (5) status of Japanese and Taiwanese, and (6) economic development. The first three concern the future of the island and American postwar interests; the latter three deal more precisely with fundamental problems of occupation. In some instances final solutions were postponed pending later coordination with the allies, particularly the Chinese, or military decisions. The fundamental problems considered were essentially those which the occupying civil affairs units expected to confront immediately after conquest.

In spring, 1944, information reached Washington concerning the activities of the “Taiwan Revolutionary League” and rumors to the effect that the Chinese Nationalists had formed a provisional government for Taiwan in Chungking and were prepared to administer the island as a separate province. While the Chinese government was not expected to establish a “substate” or any other form of government prior to the end of the American occupation, some concern arose, and the department’s policy-makers emphatically stressed the importance of American pre-eminence. In their estimation, China’s military weakness and lack of adequate naval forces made it “unlikely” that China could force the surrender of Japanese forces on Taiwan. Consequently, it was recommended that even if Japan should suddenly capitulate—thus obviating conquest by American military units—the United States should still effectuate the occupation and establish a military government. This adamant proposal to occupy Taiwan under any circumstances was based primarily upon military considerations rather than any future designs upon the island, for it was clearly understood by the policy-makers that sovereignty, in accord with decisions reached at the Cairo conference, would be returned to Taiwan.

Although the ultimate transfer of Taiwan’s sovereignty to China was not disputed, questions arose over the most appropriate method to facilitate the transfer and its duration and timing. Moreover, it

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*DS, documents of the Area Committee on the Far East (CAC) and Postwar Program Committee (PWC) (hereafter cited DS, CAC plus the appropriate number and date. Changes and additions made by the PWC were incorporated into drafts of the CAC, where the proposals originated. The most advanced version is the one cited, unless otherwise indicated), CAC-152, April 20, 1944.

*DS, CAC-292, Sept. 27, 1944; Kerr, Formosa Betrayed, 31.

**DS, CAC-186, May 8, 1944, CAC-161a, June 28, 1944.
became intricately involved in the character of the administration of the military government. In its review of the problem, CAC reasoned that it would be "politically advisable" to obtain the cooperation of the Chinese government in expediting the return of Taiwan to China and to coordinate American administrative policy with Chinese future plans for the island. Yet CAC recommended that "the sovereignty of Formosa will remain with Japan until such time as it is transferred to China by legal means." This statement soon became the subject of some controversy in the State Department. During a meeting of the PWC on June 13, 1944, to consider policy for Taiwan, the legal adviser, Green H. Hackworth, had declared that an allied proclamation was all that was necessary to effect a legal transfer of the island to China. Two days later, Blakeslee and Joseph W. Ballantine, of the Far East division, expressed their concern over the "serious consequences" that might result from such action. The navy had anticipated and strongly desired to exercise supreme authority throughout the occupation period. To share any authority with China was considered potentially detrimental to the American mission in Taiwan. Moreover, the navy regarded any circumstance that could transfer sovereignty wholly or partially into Chinese hands as contrary to decisions made earlier regarding exclusive American responsibility for the occupation.

With a clear intention to keep the issue of sovereignty vague, Blakeslee and Ballantine proposed that the statement in question be changed to read: "It is envisaged that our military administration of civil affairs in Taiwan will continue until such time as Chinese sovereignty in Taiwan is restored." In an immediate reply, Hackworth indicated that it was his intention "to avoid any statement that the sovereignty of Formosa should remain in Japan until transferred..."
to China." While accepting the proposed statement, Hackworth observed that the question might be raised "as to where sovereignty rests in the interim: in Japan, the United Nations, the United States, or whether it is in suspense." At the time, he thought that it was not important to decide. In later years, however, it was to become a vital issue, and this indecision resulted in a source of friction and disagreement between the United States and Nationalist China.

The proposed revision of the questionable statement on sovereignty, as suggested by Blakeslee and Ballantine, was adopted with very minor alterations in a new draft of the CAC document. Indecision on sovereignty, however, continued to be a source of disagreement in the CAC. In early September another policy paper, reflecting concern over a premature transfer of sovereignty to Taiwan, was drawn up. It declared that "Chinese sovereignty will not be restored to Formosa until the conclusion of military government by the United States." Almost three weeks later, however, this paper was revised completely, omitting any reference to the now controversial sovereignty question, and the vague reference as earlier phrased by Blakeslee and Ballantine stood as the department's position.

Related to the sovereignty question was the timing of the transfer of governmental functions to the Chinese. This was to be accomplished only after the full sovereignty of Taiwan was restored to China, and presumably this might be done en bloc. It was foreseen, however, that "civil disturbances" on the mainland might delay both transfers. Consequently, termination of the occupation would be decided at a later date by the State Department, but it was understood that the occupation would continue so long as the transfer of sovereignty or governmental functions remained in abeyance. Thus, the

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36 DS, Memorandum, Hackworth to Blakeslee and Ballantine, June 15, 1944 (894A.014/5).
37 DS, CAC-161a (Draft 3), June 28, 1944.
38 DS, CAC-292 (Prelim.), Sept. 7, 1944. The statement further declared that "the Chinese Government will have no authority over governmental functions in Formosa during the period of military government and all Chinese personnel employed by the occupying forces will be under their sole authority."
39 DS, CAC-292 (rev. draft), Sept. 27, 1944.
40 DS, CAC-177, May 15, 1944.
41 Ibid. An earlier draft, CAC-177 (Prelim. a), May 8, 1944, suggested that, in the event of a delay in the transfer of sovereignty, "a joint control commission or some other form of complete civil affairs administration" might be established. While this statement and its subsequent deletion occurred before the controversy over the sovereignty issue which arose at the PWC meeting in June, it indicates that some policy-makers were willing to give the Chinese Nationalist government a voice in the proposed occupation, but others, whose opinions predominated, were hesitant, obviously distrustful, and preferred to delay in making firm commitments to China.
weakened character of the Nationalist government created uncertainty about the duration of American occupation plans.

Another matter, closely related to long-range American interests, was the strategic value Taiwan would have for United States defensive measures in the western Pacific. The wisdom of establishing American bases there was discussed by Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins in mid-November, 1943, during preparatory talks for their meeting with Chiang Kai-shek at Cairo. Their discussion, however, was inconclusive; questions arose over Chiang's probable reception to the idea, and the President reasoned that he "would not agree to any permanent bases." In later discussions at Teheran with Anthony Eden, the British foreign secretary, and Vyacheslov Molotov, the Soviet commissar for foreign affairs, Hopkins made note of United States interest in bases on Taiwan, but admitted that "the size, character, and duties of occupying forces on such bases would have to be worked out." The question, however, apparently was not raised to the Generalissimo at this time.

In spring, 1944, when problems concerning Taiwan were reviewed by the area committee on the Far East, the question of bases was given delicate consideration. The focus of the problem centered upon whether Taiwan would be returned to China with the understanding that "a base or bases" would be given to the United States, and whether it would be for exclusive American use or to be operated jointly with China or collectively with other allied nations. The control of the bases was an aspect of the issue which could not be answered at that time, but it was clear to the committee that traditional American policy toward China must be maintained to avoid generating resentment. A request for preferential treatment regarding bases, the CAC reasoned, would not be in accord with the Open Door policy, the Nine-Power Pact, and the Cairo Declaration which in no way placed limitations on the transfer of Taiwan to China. Being sensitive to China's "growing nationalism," the committee warned against infringing upon her sovereignty. Consequently, it was recommended that the question of bases be kept entirely separate from the transfer of sovereignty and that any effort to seek rights for bases "for general international security purposes" be considered after

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43 Ibid., 570.
Taiwan was fully restored to Chinese sovereignty. Concern for Nationalist China's response toward Western policies and intentions in postwar Asia clearly over-ruled strategic considerations. Such views were a reflection of American plans to enhance China's status in the world, despite its increasingly chaotic political structure.

In addition to questions closely allied to American strategic interests in Taiwan, the CAC gave considerable attention to administrative policy and related issues. The most salient administrative problem concerned the extent to which the Chinese Nationalist government and Chinese personnel would be allowed to participate in the civil affairs of the proposed occupation. In a general sense, the committee regarded Chinese co-operation both "helpful for the effective functioning of the military administration of civil affairs" and "politically advisable," as well as useful in expediting the retrocession of Taiwan to China.

Since the island's administration in both government and industry was in the hands of the Japanese, and more than 90 per cent of the population was Chinese, it was expected that the Chinese segment of the population would rebel against co-operating with their former superiors. Furthermore, it was proposed that the United States co-ordinate its occupation plans, "so far as military considerations permit" and "give serious consideration" to those plans understood to be in preparation in Chungking and also to take heed of "the wishes of the Formosan Revolutionist League." While it was seen that seeking Chinese advice and participation was politically astute, policy-makers cautioned against overexuberance in this direction to "prevent unwelcome participation or interference by the Chinese" and declared that "strict insistence on the exclusive responsibility and authority of the American military authorities be maintained." Nevertheless, the drafters of this policy paper did not believe it would be impossible "to co-operate along moderately effective lines with the Chinese" in conducting a civil administra-

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44 DS, CAC-152, April 20, 1944. This was entirely in accord with publicized wishes of the Chinese (New York Times, May 16, 1943, 28:6).
45 DS, CAC-161a, June 28, 1944. Similar sentiments were also expressed in DS, CAC-177, May 15, 1944.
46 DS, Memorandum of Conversation between representatives of War, Navy, Treasury, and State departments (P. F. McGurk), July 26, 1944 (894A.00).
47 DS, CAC-161a, June 28, 1944. There was apparently some controversy over the strength of this proposal and consideration of the "Taiwan Revolutionary League" for consultation. In the second of three drafts, a strong sentence firmly urging co-ordination with both groups was omitted.
48 DS, CAC-177, May 15, 1944.
The State Department's main concern was that it did not wish to become obligated to accept Chinese advice which it might deem infeasible, and the department feared that an overzealous welcome to the Chinese to participate might lead them to expect that their views would automatically be accepted. Thus, it was recommended only that "Chinese advice be invited in determination of broad policy for planning."  

A specific problem of Chinese participation centered upon whether a Chinese military mission should be invited to consult with the civil affairs government, and if so, whether it was desirable for the mission to accompany American assault waves against the island. The policymakers promptly realized that such an invitation "might result in a Chinese inference that their participation had been formalized and that they were to enjoy partnership rather than to be restricted to offering advice which might or might not be taken." Consequently, it was unequivocally recommended that no invitation be given for a military mission.

Practical considerations impelled the State Department's policy-planners to advocate the utilization of Chinese personnel on the administrative staff of the military government. Principally on the assumption that Chinese forces would aid in the seizure of Taiwan, the CAC advocated that Chinese representation on the civil affairs staff have administrative and police functions. The committee was particularly desirous of recruiting Chinese personnel "skilled in financial and legal matters and in agriculture and industry who could assist American civil affairs officers with the formulation of plans for civil administration in Formosa." Chinese who were familiar with Taiwan dialects would also be especially valuable.

**Notes:**

49 Ibid. It was further stated that "official Chinese plans for permanent governmental reorganization should be given favorable consideration only to the extent that they meet the needs of the occupying authorities."

50 Ibid. Another aspect of the problem which perplexed the drafters of these policy proposals concerned the extent to which administrative acts would meet the needs of Taiwanese "interests" vis-a-vis the interests of the Chinese Nationalist government. It was finally recommended that "short-term administrative acts" should be made by the occupation authorities to meet the requirements of Taiwanese interests, while long-term operations, such as those concerned with the educational system, be coordinated with the Chinese. A strong stand in support of giving the interests of the Chinese Nationalists precedence over those of "local Formosan interests" in early drafts of the study was deleted in the final (fourth) draft.

51 Ibid.

52 DS, CAC-161a, June 28, 1944. It was further recommended that the administration "employ an increasingly larger number of Chinese personnel both in administrative and police functions and on the civil affairs staff" as the time approached for the transfer of the island to Chinese jurisdiction.

53 Ibid.
Recruitment of Chinese personnel for the occupation government would come from China, Taiwan, and from among Chinese nationals (students, officials, etc.) temporarily residing in the United States. All Chinese considered for employment, policy planners emphasized, would be hired only with the approval of the Chinese Nationalist government at Chungking. They would be utilized in positions requiring technical and professional skills, and "because of differences between military government and Kuomintang points of view," it was recommended that the occupation authorities "avoid overstaffing at the higher levels." In several places throughout the policy papers on Taiwan, the importance of retaining American predominance in all facets of the military government was stressed. Thus, while Chinese would participate in the occupation, their activities would be limited to technical, low-level affairs.

Despite the antipathy of the Chinese toward the Japanese, some consideration was given also to the utilization of Japanese nationals who had served in judicial and lesser administrative posts during Taiwan's Japanese era. While it was determined that they could not be relied upon to deal equitably with the Taiwanese, some exceptions would be made for "certain Japanese peculiarly qualified for some particular duty."

In an effort to utilize existing institutions and to prevent needless disruption of political life on Taiwan, it was proposed that local administrative organizations, including the established legal structure, be retained. Tax laws and the existing private law, for example, would continue and be administered by local courts; but military proclamations would take precedence over existing law. Certain discrepancies, such as tax laws favoring Japanese against Taiwanese, would be discontinued. Continuity and impartiality was to govern administrative policies.

The half-century occupation of Taiwan by Japan posed legal and practical problems concerning the status of the major ethnic groups on the island. While the committee suggested that no definitive

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DS, CAC-177, May 15, 1944.
Ibid. DS, CAC-153a, June 28, 1944.
According to international practice, a nation which is the recipient of territorial sovereignty customarily continues the existing revenue system and the established private law of that territory. It was anticipated that the Chinese Nationalist government would adhere to this practice and make appropriate changes only in private law. American concern for local institutions had precedence in Japan's occupation in 1895.
DS, CAC-133a, June 28, 1944. The taxes collected would be expended primarily for local needs of the civil government.
policy concerning the postwar disposition of Japanese could be formulated,\(^5\) it recommended that a mass segregation or removal of Japanese civilians would be inadvisable, except in clear cases where military security would be involved. The view maintained by the department’s policy-makers was to permit the Japanese themselves free choice in determining whether to remain in Taiwan or return to Japan.\(^5\)

The question concerning the status of the Japanese led to consideration of the status of other ethnic groups on Taiwan. The State Department regarded the Taiwanese (i.e., “Chinese Formosans”) and the mountain aborigines “quite apart” from the Japanese and anticipated that the Taiwanese, whether ethnically pure or of mixed origin, would ultimately regain Chinese citizenship after the war.\(^6\) Consequently, the CAC felt that they could hardly be considered “enemy nationals” but rather “liberated peoples.” This was deemed advisable for both political and practical reasons. It was envisioned that the distinction would hasten the “de-Japanization” of those who would once again become Chinese nationals and would encourage them to co-operate with the occupation.\(^6\)

The economy of Taiwan was recognized as a serious problem for the postwar era, both because of the questions it raised about the disposition of Japanese property and currency-related matters and the effect that the severance of Taiwan would have upon the economy of Japan proper. The latter concern was disposed of rather quickly. While Taiwan and other Japanese dependencies were relied on as sources of raw materials and food products and for their market and investment value, the department’s evaluation contended that they were of limited importance in terms of real wealth that had contributed materially to the economic development of Japan.\(^6\) Rice was a major Japanese import from Taiwan, but largely because of preference for the type of rice grown there; sugar was another plentiful Taiwan product, but Japan could have purchased it from Java for about half the price. The value of Taiwan to Japan was primarily strategic, rather than economic.

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\(^5\) DS, CAC-187, May 11, 1944. It was understood that policy concerning the disposition of Japanese would be determined by the Chinese government when sovereignty was restored to China. Moreover, repatriation of Japanese from all formerly occupied areas was considered a problem for international action after the war.

\(^6\) DS, CAC-175 (Prelim.), April 22, 1944.

\(^6\) DS, CAC-187, May 11, 1944.

\(^6\) DS, CAC-174, May 11, 1944. The aborigines were to be considered “wards of the military government.”

\(^6\) DS, CAC-194 (Prelim.), April 30, 1944.
Before the disposition of Japanese property could be determined, it was necessary to define the difference between private and public property and to decide the extent to which China would become involved in expropriation plans. To insure greater control over as large a share of Japanese property as possible, it was recommended that private property be "strictly defined" and public property "broadly defined." Thus, the concept of public property would include semi-official companies and private organizations which received large-scale government assistance, enabling the military government to confiscate property only semi-public in character if it contributed to the Japanese war effort. It was further established that the military government would act as "custodian" for Japanese property and investments in Taiwan and that it would abide by the Hague Convention Rules which disallow the confiscation of private property.

Despite the narrow interpretation given to private property, it constituted a large amount of diverse enterprises. Although private holdings in public utilities, railroads, mines, and other industries could be given "public" treatment on grounds that they contributed to the Japanese war effort, there were many less strategic enterprises (hotels, barber shops, retail stores, professional offices) which would be treated leniently. The property involved and the Japanese personnel owning and operating these businesses would be protected. Concern was expressed primarily about a rumored Chinese intention to seize and confiscate the bulk of Japanese private property in Taiwan and other occupied areas of China without adequate compensation. Chinese seizure of such property, it was believed, would be tantamount to forced liquidation, and the owners would undergo a loss no different than if the property were initially expropriated. The issue posed a dilemma for the policy-planners, because they realized that any effort to prevent China from expropriating Japanese private and public property "would almost certainly be strongly resented, and might be a source of serious trouble" with China.

The disposition of public property allowed greater freedom of decision and posed less of a perplexing diplomatic problem for the

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63 DS, CAC-197 (Prelim.), May 19, 1944.
64 DS, CAC-178, May 11, 1944.
65 DS, CAC-157, April 26, 1944; DS, CAC-156, May 11, 1944.
66 DS, CAC-156, May 11, 1944.
67 DS, CAC-197 (Prelim.), May 19, 1944. At the conclusion of the war, all Japanese assets in liberated areas and in other areas under the jurisdiction of the allied nations were immediately immobilized. DS, USDS to embassy, Chungking (Tel. no. 1350), Aug. 28, 1945 (800.515).
military government. There were considered to be three categories of public property: properties belonging to the Japanese Government-General of Taiwan, such as cash, securities, and railroad rolling stock, which could be confiscated for use by the occupation forces; quasi-official companies, such as the Taiwan Electric Power Company, the Taiwan Development Company, and the Bank of Taiwan; and the Imperial Household properties. Disposition of these enterprises would depend upon their character and wartime use which would determine whether or not confiscation would be appropriate.

The problem caused by the definition and disposition of property found solution in international practice, but the important financial question of currency was governed primarily by contemporary mainland conditions. Since Chinese currency was then greatly depreciated, and no economic, political, or military grounds required the adoption of Chinese currency, the area committee recommended that a stable medium be established, wholly independent of Chinese currency. The question of Taiwan's currency greatly concerned the Chinese. In the summer of 1945 they communicated with the American Embassy in Chungking, revealing extensive fiscal plans with respect to Taiwan and inquiring broadly about American invasion and occupation plans. The Americans, however, played the same game of attempting to learn about Chinese plans without revealing their own.

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68 DS, CAC-162, May 9, 1944. The Imperial Household properties posed a question because of their anomalous character. In Japan they consisted of many things, including estates, cash, securities, etc., but in Taiwan the Imperial Household held part share only in the Taiwan Sugar Co. and the Bank of Taiwan. Rather than single out these companies, the policy-planners merely enumerated reasons for which Imperial holdings might be considered private property or public property.

69 The Chinese informed the United States that they had prepared a bank commission, consisting of senior officers from the Ministry of Finance, the four government banks, the Postal Remittances and Savings Bank, and the Central Trust Co. “to take over monetary and banking affairs in Formosa.” Among fourteen groups of questions asked about banking and other matters pertaining to the impending invasion was this one: “When might be the prospective time of invasion to Formosa? Of course, you can only conjecture on it, but your guess might be a good hint…” (DS, Hoo Leng Lin, Bank of Communications, Chungking, to Walter S. Robertson, U.S. Minister, Chungking, June 27, 1945 [800]. Unexplained is the date on which the communication was received at the embassy: Aug. 11, 1945. As would be expected, the embassy gave the letter a cool reception and promptly replied: “You have raised many interesting questions, which we are not in a position to answer…” (DS, U.S. Treasury Attaché, Chungking, to Hoo Leng Lin, Aug. 11, 1945 [800]).

70 In Sept., 1945, USDS wired the U.S. Embassy in Chungking requesting information about Chinese financial plans for Taiwan but cautioned “you should not (repeat not) discuss this with Chinese authorities at this time” (DS, USDS to U.S. Embassy, Chungking, Sept. 4, 1945 [Tel. 1390, 899,515]).
In anticipation of private trade between Taiwan and the mainland during the occupation, a foreign exchange value was to be determined and controlled so that emphasis would be given to maintaining the stability of the island's economy. Despite this restraint, Taiwan's integration with the mainland was foreseen. The island's surplus rice crop, it was anticipated, would be welcomed in Kwangtung and adjacent provinces as part of a war-relief effort in East Asia which military administrations would initially conduct.

One economic problem which was recognized as potentially playing "an important role in the future economic development of the Far East" but which was postponed for Taiwan was that of land reform. The State Department foresaw the need for such a program, but it was then reasoned that a foreign power, engaged in a temporary occupation, was not entitled under international law "to institute a program of land reform involving forced transfers of ownership or tenancy rights." In addition to the provisional nature of the military government, sensitivity to Chinese Nationalist preferences may have been more of a restraining factor than international practice.

After the area committee for the Far East had completed its study of occupation plans for Taiwan and other eastern and southeast Asian areas under Japanese jurisdiction, the Chinese Nationalist government, knowing that such plans were being formulated, became very inquisitive about their character. The State Department had been informed in late summer, 1944, that Chiang Kai-shek desired a three-power conference (with the United States and Great Britain) to discuss administrative plans for liberated areas, but the department was firmly opposed to releasing this information for reasons of military security and advised the Chinese only about "broad over-all policy for civil affairs administration." The Chinese were reassured, however, that American military administration in Japanese occupied areas would only be "temporary and entirely without prejudice to the future status of the area" and that civil affairs ad-

71 DS, CAC-166 (Prelim. a), April 26, 1944.
72 While sugar was an important Taiwan crop, it was not significant in the Chinese diet. Tea was neither essential nor underproduced; bananas and canned fruits had some limited use in China.
73 DS, CAC-159, April 15, 1944.
74 DS, CAC-173, May 5, 1944 (may not be final draft).
75 Later it was revealed that Chiang had not called for a three-power conference but had instructed his foreign minister to seek a "written understanding" with the United States and Great Britain concerning civil administration in the liberated areas. The American ambassador in Chungking had reasoned that Chiang wished to make clear in such an agreement that the civil administration be transferred to national authori-
administration would be transferred to Chinese government authority "as soon as the military situation permits." 76

In October, 1944, the department was informed that specific interest was developing in China about the future disposition of Taiwan. An investigatory body was organized in China called the "Formosa Problems Investigation Committee," under the aegis of the Central Planning Board.77 It was made up of eleven members and included Ch'en Yi, committee chairman (and first postwar governor of Taiwan) and other men prominent in government circles.78 The American Ambassador in Chungking, C. E. Gauss, speculated that the rapid advance of American forces in the Pacific and the belief in Chungking that the American occupation of Taiwan was imminent were primarily responsible for stirring formal and official interest at this time.79

Reports circulating in Chungking indicated that the Taiwanese were anxious to end Japanese rule and would welcome an American occupation. There were also reports, however, that the population was reluctant to accept Chinese governmental control from the mainland and that "a large section of the Formosan populace" was "de-

76 This sentiment was inspired by the joint chiefs of staff which would not have objected to a civil affairs agreement so long as it made no reference to specific areas, was limited to military affairs, and prepared on a military level. DS, USDS to U.S. Embassy, Chungking, Sept. 2, 1944 (Tel. 1166, 800.0146), idem. to idem., Sept. 16, 1944 (Tel. 1219, 800.0146).

77 This board came under the control of the Supreme National Defense Council (a directive organ of the Kuomintang) and formulated and reviewed political and economic plans. The committee for Taiwan was one of two (the other concerning Manchuria) established to develop plans for governing the island. It is of curious interest that news about the creation of this committee, which was transmitted by Ambassador Gauss in Oct., 1944, was reported in the New York Times in April and obtained from a radio broadcast from Chungking "beamed to North America" in English (New York Times, April 23, 1944, 28:2). The Chinese obviously wanted policy-planners in Washington to know about their intentions concerning Taiwan; yet Gauss apparently did not take them seriously at the time.

78 The four principal members were Ch'en Yi, dean of the Central Training Corps and former chairman of the Fukien provincial government, who was made chairman of the committee (not to be confused with the former military commander of the same name who became minister of foreign affairs at Peking in 1958); General Wang Peng-sheng, advisor to Chiang Kai-shek on Japanese affairs; Hsieh Nan-kuang, then closely associated with General Wang and a section chief in the Chinese Military Affairs Commission; and Huang Chao-chin, a member of the Department of Intelligence and Publicity of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The remaining seven members were Li Yu-pang, Yu Erh-chien, Chiu Nien-tai, Chou Yi-tsao, Chien Tsung-chi, Shen Chung-chiu, and Hsia Tao-sheng.

79 DS, Gauss, Chungking, to Sec. of State, Desp. 3029, Oct. 1, 1944 (800).
sirous of establishing an independent state or at the very least of preserving local autonomy." 80 This sentiment, reported one year before Taiwan was liberated, was to have telling repercussions during the early phase of Chinese Nationalist administration. 81 Information about political leanings among the Taiwanese was gathered in Chungking by Hsieh Nan-kuang, a member of the "Formosa Problems Investigation Committee" and considered an "expert" on Taiwan, though having last been there in 1931. Hsieh elaborated on the reports of anti-Japanese sentiment and discussed the nature of underground political parties. 82 Such information was of value to the proposed American military government for Taiwan, and that which was received from the Chinese Nationalist government in Chungking was apparently the only insight into the island's political make-up at the time.

Shortly after the American occupation program for Taiwan was completed in late spring, 1944, military plans for the defeat of Japan underwent more intensive re-examination. Military strategists focused upon the most rapid and economical way to subdue Japan. 83 Defeat of the enemy, it was envisioned, might be accomplished by naval blockade and air bombardment. Advanced air bases, established on Taiwan and the China coast, were regarded as essential to accomplish this strategy and would also be required if invasion of the Japanese home islands proved necessary. Military planners regarded a triangular area established by the China coast, Taiwan, and the northern-most Philippine island of Luzon as the prime target. 84 A prolonged dispute developed between a largely naval preference, first upheld by military planners, for a central Pacific thrust toward Taiwan and General Douglas MacArthur's

80 Ibid.
81 In 1947 the Taiwan populace openly rebelled against the government, but was suppressed by military force.
82 DS. Gauss, Chungking, to Secretary of State, Desp. 3042, Oct. 9, 1944 (894A.00). Kerr (Formosa Betrayed, 14, 46–47) regards Hsieh Nan-kuang as an opportunist whose reports on growing Taiwanese discontent were highly exaggerated. If this is true, Intelligence officers at the U.S. Embassy in Chungking seemed to be unaware of it.
83 The military aspects of the Pacific war and the controversy over Taiwan have been discussed in numerous accounts. For detailed and authoritative studies, see Maurice Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943–1944 (Washington, D.C., 1959), 479–487, 550–581; and Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 6–17.
84 Naval Records, CINCPAC-CINCPAO, Joint Staff Study: Formosa-Amoy (Prelim.) (Serial: 00078), June 21, 1944, CAUSEWAY (code name for the Taiwan operation). Naval planners, however, soon voiced their opinion that the air force in "the southern PHILIPPINES will support the capture of FORMOSA by neutralizing Japanese forces in the northern PHILIPPINES to an extent which makes the capture of LUZON prior to the move on FORMOSA unnecessary."
urging of an approach from the Southwest Pacific that would place stress upon conquest of the Philippines. Control of the triangle was to be accomplished by the spring of 1945.85

While public discussion of this controversial strategy never became commonplace,86 it received considerable attention by military strategists, both in Washington and the Pacific area, during the latter half of 1944. In March of that year, MacArthur had been directed to prepare for an invasion of the southern Philippines with February, 1945, as a target date for Luzon. Taiwan was to be invaded at the same time. In mid-June the joint chiefs of staff questioned the feasibility of the Luzon attack. MacArthur, however, firmly upheld the plan as an essential one before military forces could move against Japan. His reasoning was both moral and strategic. American prestige was dependent upon his promised return, and Taiwan's heavy fortifications and its distance from adequate logistical support made an assault upon the island particularly hazardous.87 Luzon, he thought, would more effectively sever Japan's communication to the south and would provide a better position from which to strike farther north.88

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85 For further details succinctly expressed, see Morton, Strategy and Command, 593–594, 596–597, 599; E. B. Potter and Chester W. Nimitz, Sea Power—A Naval History (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1980), 711; Samuel E. Morison, American Contributions to the Strategy of World War II (London, 1958), 52–53. Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 526, contends that “the difficulties stemmed more from the inability of the two services to agree upon an over-all commander for the Pacific than from a lack of agreement on the proper route to Japan.”

86 An interesting article discussed the implications of the problem as early as mid-1943: Joseph Rosenfarb, “Strategy in the Pacific War,” Antioch Review, III (1943), 283–287, contended that MacArthur's stress on the Philippines was based upon sound strategy, and that the Philippines could serve with Taiwan as a base from which “to soften up Japan for an invasion” (283–284). A year later, when the issue was discussed in military circles, support for Luzon was given public acclaim because it was considered a better base for heavy bombers; see Adm. William V. Pratt, U.S.N. Ret., “Keys to the China Sea,” Newsweek, Sept. 25, 1944, p. 35.

87 National Archives, World War II Records Division (hereafter cited as, NA, Army), Message, MacArthur to C/Staff, CM-IN 15058, June 18, 1944.

While the Taiwan plan was primarily a naval operation, differences of opinion did not necessarily form along service lines but rather between Washington strategists and Pacific commanders. The joint chiefs of staff largely favored the Taiwan plan, and those commanders in the Pacific area who would be responsible for implementing it were inclined toward Luzon.\textsuperscript{89}

Behind the question of Taiwan versus Luzon stood a more pervasive issue—the objective of Japan's defeat. For about a month beginning in mid-June, 1944, MacArthur entered into a dialogue with the joint chiefs of staff over strategy and staunchly defended the Philippine operation. His positive and articulate defense of his views prompted General Marshall to caution him to constrain his personal feelings about the Philippines and noted that "by-passing" was in no way synonymous with "abandonment" and that the sooner Japan could be defeated the quicker the Philippines would be liberated.\textsuperscript{90} This objective dominated strategic planning in Washington, but a problem developed over which course to take—a certain but slower and more costly route through the Philippines, Taiwan, and the Ryukyus, or a faster but more hazardous route via the Bonin Islands. A final decision would depend upon the early defeat of the Japanese and German navies.\textsuperscript{91}

Meanwhile, in early July, MacArthur began to clash directly with Admiral Nimitz who defended the Taiwan operation, but with somewhat less tenacity than MacArthur defended the Luzon plan. While Nimitz conceded the importance of land-based air support, such as Luzon would provide for an assault against Taiwan, he maintained the navy view that "neutralization" of the Japanese air force there from the southern Philippines, along with naval supremacy in the


\textsuperscript{90} NA, Army, Message, Marshall to MacArthur, CM-OUT 55718, June 24, 1944.

\textsuperscript{91} Discussed in Matloff, \textit{Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1943–1944}, 480–481.
area, might effectuate the seizure of Taiwan. On the question of
whether Taiwan or Luzon should be captured first, Nimitz wavered,
believing that future developments would determine which would
be more desirable.92

Later in the month (July 27–28) the two men personally presented
their views to President Roosevelt at Pearl Harbor. No minutes of
the discussions were made, resulting in conflicting reports. It appears,
however, that strategy decisions were not formulated at the confer-
ence, as the debate over whether to seize Taiwan or Luzon con-
tinued in Washington for more than another two months.93 The firm
position taken in favor of the Taiwan-first proposal by Admiral
Ernest J. King apparently influenced Nimitz, with whom he had
spoken just prior to the conference. General Marshall, along with the
joint chiefs of staff, were still inclined toward this view, at least until
mid-September.94

In discussions that ensued at MacArthur's Southwest Pacific head-
quarters in August, grave doubt was raised about the feasibility of
an early Taiwan seizure because of the logistical problems and
troop shortages.95 As talks progressed, Nimitz gave greater attention

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92 NA, Army: Message, Nimitz to King, CM-IN 2926, July 4, 1944; Memo TTH
(Maj. Gen. Thomas T. Handy) for C/Staff, July 19, 1944. Naval Records: CINCPAC,
Granite II, Campaign Plan, Serial XYZ (prelim. draft), May 6, 1944 (second draft),
June 3, 1944; and CINCPAC-CINCPOA, Joint Staff Study: Formosa-Amoy (Prelim.)
(Serial: 00078), June 21, 1944, CAUSEWAY.

93 For official accounts of the conference, see NA, Army: Message, MacArthur to
Marshall, CM-IN 496, Aug. 1, 1944: Ltr., Richardson to Marshall, Aug. 1, 1944;
For brief but reasoned presentations, see Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition War-
fare, 482, and Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 7–8. Other accounts include Eichel-
berger and Mackaye, Our Jungle Road to Tokyo, 165–166, John Gunther, The Riddle
of MacArthur (New York, 1951), 9–10, Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins,
An Intimate History (New York, 1950) 809, Clark Lee and Richard Henschel, Douglas
MacArthur (New York, 1952), 170–171; contrary to the official histories, they give the
impression that a basic decision not to by-pass the Philippines was reached at the
Pearl Harbor conference and that MacArthur persuaded Roosevelt who leaned toward
the Nimitz view. Adm. William D. Leahy, I Was There (New York, 1950), 250–251,
contends that MacArthur and Nimitz reconciled their views entirely at the conference.
Also see MacArthur, Reminiscences (New York, 1964), 196–198.

94 Ernest J. King and Walter M. Whitehill, Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record
(New York, 1952), 566–568; Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 9, 13. King regarded
possession of Taiwan as essential before proceeding to more important operations
against Japan and the China coast and maintained that Taiwan would assist in a
thrust against Luzon. If Taiwan should be by-passed, he saw Japan as a more desirable
objective than Luzon—an opinion to which Marshall acceded.

95 NA, Army: "Notes on Conference with SWPA Planners," Aug. 7, 1944; "Notes on
Conference at Hq., COMGENPOA," Aug. 13, 1944. Naval planners flatly declared:
"In CAUSEWAY, we may expect one of the most difficult logistic support problems
of the war." See Naval Records: Message, Comm. 5th Amphibious Force. U.S. Pacific
to the naval plan for the seizure of only the southern tip of Taiwan and a simultaneous assault against the Chinese coastal port of Amoy. This contained the risk, however, of incessant Japanese attack from the remainder of enemy units on the island, necessitating an ultimate effort to conquer all of it. MacArthur regarded this as a perilous course. By mid-September the apparent cost in men and matériel, the scarcity of required service groups, and the persuasiveness of MacArthur weighed heavily in turning the joint chiefs of staff away from the Nimitz-King emphasis on Taiwan. A decision whether to attack Taiwan or Luzon first depended upon reinforcements that might be received as a result of the cessation of hostilities in Europe—relief that did not appear immediately forthcoming in September, 1944.

The strategic importance of Amoy was to channel supplies to allied bases in eastern China from which bombing missions could be sent against Japan, but a successful Japanese offensive against these bases in September negated the need for the port. Consequently, Taiwan became less urgent. The island itself had little to offer in the way of logistical naval bases, and it could no longer play the role of a step toward the mainland. As evidenced mounted against the feasibility of assaulting Taiwan, navy planners, including Admiral Nimitz himself, proposed by-passing it and proceeding northward—bringing the navy more in accord with MacArthur’s sentiments.


Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 485; Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 11. The naval plan to include Amoy and limit the seizure of the southwestern part of Taiwan was added in early June; see Naval Records: CINCPAC, Granite II, Campaign Plan (Serial XYZ) (Prelim. draft), May 6, 1944; (Second draft), June 3, 1944.

Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 486; Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 11.

While the time schedule for the invasion of either of these islands depended partly upon logistics from Europe, progress in the Pacific War was equally important. With success of the latter, MacArthur proposed to advance the assault dates in the Philippines and Taiwan (i.e., Leyte, Oct. 20, 1944; Luzon, Dec. 20, 1944; Taiwan, possibly Feb. 20, 1945) and again emphasized the importance and logical progression of invading Luzon before Taiwan (Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 10).

At this point the navy began to re-examine its objectives in the CAUSEWAY operation and considered the substitution of Iwo Jima and Okinawa for Amoy. Naval Records: Ltr., CINCPAC to Comm., 5th Fleet, Comm. Gen., 10th Army, Amphibious Forces, Pac. Fleet (Serial: 000115), Sept. 16, 1944 (CINCPAC File: A16/CS).

Nimitz, who was also concerned about recent reports of enemy troop increases in Taiwan, believed that it was “now impossible” to effectuate the plan and thought...
It was military consideration which finally persuaded the joint chiefs of staff, including Admiral King, to retreat from the Taiwan plan, and on October 3, 1944, orders were issued to MacArthur to proceed to Luzon after the Leyte campaign on or about December 20. Nimitz was then instructed to prepare for operations against Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The military plan for the conquest of Taiwan was never formally cancelled, but simply left to fall by the wayside due to exigencies of the war.

Upon Japan’s acceptance of the Potsdam surrender terms in mid-August, 1945, the allies arranged to share the task of disarming Japanese soldiers throughout the disheveled empire. Among the areas assigned to the Chinese Nationalist government was Taiwan. Since the island had not been occupied by American troops and the United States was committed to restore it to China, the Chinese forces appeared to be the logical recipient of the Japanese surrender there.

Before the end of the month, the Chinese had announced their intention to occupy Taiwan. Nevertheless, a rumor persisted that American forces would accomplish the initial phase of occupation. The entire operation, however—accepting the Japanese surrender and establishing a new government—was Chinese. Only a small military mission was sent “to advise the Chinese commander during the period of taking over.”

Okinawa would be a more feasible objective. Even with the support of an air base on Luzon, Nimitz regarded the Taiwan operation as too costly. Naval Records: Memo, Nimitz to Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet, Opns-future, 0–1, Sept. 26, 1944. Some, however, held out to the bitter end for Taiwan; see Memo, M. M. Dupre, Jr. to Duncan, Opns-future, 0–1, Sept. 23, 1944.


Smith, Triumph in the Philippines, 13–17; Matloff, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 530–531. Adm. R. A. Spruance had proposed the capture of Okinawa after the seizure of Saipan (Potter and Nimitz, Sea Power, 828).


In addition to Taiwan, they prepared to occupy Hong Kong (to the chagrin of the British, who apparently did not approve), northern Indo-China, and a portion of Thailand. Details of the deployment of Chinese occupation forces were submitted in a memorandum to the Japanese by the Chinese field commander, Gen. Ho Yin-chin. New York Times, Aug. 23, 1945, 1:7.

New York Times, Sept. 9, 1945, 3:2–3. There had earlier been a rumor that the Soviet Union was pressing for the privilege of occupying Taiwan (New York Times, May 11, 1945, 4:5).

DS, Memo, Sept. 22, 1945, “Agricultural, Food & Other Information on Formosa”
In early October, an advance group of eighty Chinese officials arrived in Taiwan to establish Chinese administration that would be led by Governor Ch'en Yi, who had earlier headed the Taiwan committee to plan a postwar program for the island. On October 25, 1945, a ceremony took place restoring Chinese rule in Taiwan and ending a full half century of Japanese colonization.

Despite the decisive end to American plans for an occupation of Taiwan, the new Chinese administration was observed with grave misgivings. Before the end of 1945 reports of growing resentment by the population toward the Chinese administration were made to Washington. Less than two years later Major General Albert C. Wedemeyer clearly confirmed the rumored corruption of Taiwan's governor, Ch'en Yi.

The significance of this episode in American policy planning with regard to China is twofold: in its narrow scope, the origins of some major postwar problems concerning Taiwan are clearly revealed; in its broad context, official State Department views toward the Chinese Nationalist government and its anticipated association with it can be discerned.

Three problems considered by the State Department in spring, 1944, became prominent postwar issues: (1) The question of Taiwan's legal status, after some controversy, was held in abeyance due to the department's reluctance to transfer sovereignty to the Nationalist government while the United States administered its occupation. Though intended to be brief, delay of the transference of sovereignty to China has persisted to this day, but for other reasons. The United States holds that the Nationalist government occupies Taiwan in condominium for the wartime allies. Not to maintain this position would reopen the question of which Chinese government has a rightful claim to Taiwan and would raise the dormant issues of the pro-

(Owen L. Dawson); Kerr, Formosa Betrayed, 45. Ballantine (Formosa, 57) indicates that the U.S. gave Chinese troops an amphibious lift to the island.


108 DS, Memo for the Chargé d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy, Chungking, Dec. 12, 1945. One American observer believed that Ch'en Yi was an "able and sincere official" but had a poor staff. The report, however, noted Ch'en's reputation as heading a corrupt administration in Fukien.

109 Wedemeyer declared that "Ch'en Yi and his henchmen ruthlessly, corruptly and avariciously imposed their regime upon a happy and amenable population. The Army conducted themselves as conquerors. Secret police operated freely to intimidate and to facilitate exploitation by Central Government officials....," United States Relations With China; With Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949, USDS Pub. 3573, Far Eastern Series 30 (Washington, 1949), 309. U.S. Senate, Military Situation in the Far East (Washington, 1951), 2426-2427.
longed occupation of the Ryukyu Islands by the United States and the Kurile Islands by the Soviet Union. (2) The strategic value of Taiwan for American bases in the western Pacific was recognized before the Cairo conference but was considered a separate issue to be negotiated after the island was reverted to Chinese control. Full-scale American military interest in Taiwan came to fruition in December, 1954, when a Communist-initiated crisis in the Taiwan Strait led to a military pact between the United States and Nationalist China. (3) The policy-makers recognized the need for land reform, but, in view of the temporary character of the planned occupation and in deference to Nationalist views, no plan was devised. Later, in 1953, the United States became very much involved in a successful land reform program in Taiwan. Recognition of these problems is reflective of American political, military, and economic interest in the island during World War II; despite the demise of the occupation program, these matters continued to receive primary attention in the China policy of the United States.

While the image of China among Americans during World War II remained one of a viable and trusted ally, confidential and public reports portraying "Chiang Kai-shek's regime as poor, selfish and failing" made their imprint on Washington officials concerned with Chinese affairs. The most searching and provocative reports about the weakening character of the Nationalist government came, not from the embassy in Chungking, but mainly from Foreign Service officers acting as advisers to General Joseph W. Stilwell, then commanding general of United States forces in the China-Burma-India theater. The effect of reports showing declining confidence in the Chinese government is difficult to measure, but the approach to problems made by the policy-planners reflects their attitudes and reveals the nature and degree of their regard for that government.

The sense of urgency about the Chinese Nationalists transmitted by Foreign Service officers in China appears to have been somewhat diluted in Washington. Policies made there, as reflected in the

110 Feis, China Tangle, 274.
111 Ibid., 256-258. Reports submitted by John P. Davies, John S. Service, and others were widely circulated in Washington, and some occasionally went to the White House. For documentary material concerning the decline of Nationalist viability, see the reports in U.S. Foreign Relations, China for 1942 and 1943; United States Relations With China, 564-576.
112 Herbert Feis wrote in 1953, "I know of no way of judging how much influence the reports and advice of this group had on American policy" (China Tangle, 259).
Taiwan occupation planning, were determinedly cautious, showing a measured distrust of the Chinese Nationalists, but always regarding them with the respect due to a sovereign nation. The importance placed upon American pre-eminence in the occupation was clearly due to the belief that Nationalist leadership was not capable of handling such a complex operation. Consequently, administrative, financial, and personnel aspects of the occupation were specifically designed to insure American control. To a limited degree, however, Nationalist participation was given recognition. Chinese personnel were to be recruited for low-level administrative and technical posts and would be hired only upon the approval of the Nationalist government. Moreover, when the question of military bases was under review, conscious allusion was made to the traditional Open Door policy with respect to China, and it was decided not to pressure China for bases when the island would be returned to Chinese jurisdiction or to request "permanent" bases. Last, it should be noted that at no time was consideration given to an American seizure of the island or to a long or indefinite period of occupation. The discreet balance between special interests and American strategic requirements, on the one hand, and respect for the recognized, legitimate claim by the Chinese Nationalist government to Taiwan, on the other, was always maintained.