

## Appendix 10 -- Review of U.S. Policy in Relation to China (1950)

Source: "Replies by the U.S. Department of State to a Series of Questions Contained in House Resolution 452, 81st Cong., 2d sess.; Report of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, February 9, 1950." American Foreign Policy, 1950-1955, Basic Documents, Vol. 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 2456-58.

February 9, 1950

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, to whom was referred the resolution (H. Res. 452) requesting the State Department to furnish full and complete answers to certain questions relating to the foreign policy of the United States in the Far East, having considered the same, report adversely thereon and recommend that the resolution ... not pass.

The recommendation of the committee is based on the fact that answers to the questions contained in the resolution have been furnished the committee by the Department of State. With the exception of portions of two answers, the publication of which portions is felt by the Department of State would be incompatible with the public interest, the answers are included in this report for the information of the Members of the House, and are as follows:

### Question 1

With respect to the President's statement of January 5, 1950, on policy regarding Formosa Question 1 (d)

Have the following been considered by the Executive as alternatives to the policy enunciated in said statement?

(1) Insistence on the execution of the terms of the Cairo Declaration, which provided for the return of Formosa to the Republic of China.

Comment.-This cannot properly be considered an alternative to the policy enunciated by the President. The President's statement of January 5, 1950, contained a re-affirmation of the Cairo Declaration on the part of the United States in respect to the disposition of Formosa. Formosa has been administered since 1945 by China, the surrender of Japanese forces on Formosa having been made to the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

(2) Consideration of Formosa as a possession of Japan to be administered by the victor powers until eventual disposition under a peace settlement with Japan.

(3) A plebiscite in Formosa, under the auspices of the Far Eastern Commission or a special commission of the UN, to determine whether the inhabitants desire

(a) to continue as a province of and the seat of government of the Republic of China;

(b) to be placed under a United Nations trusteeship; or

(c) to become an independent nation.

Comment.-These alternatives were considered. As has been noted under (1) above, Formosa has been administered by China since 1945, when Japanese forces on the island surrendered to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. It was incorporated into China as a province. It is now the seat of the Chinese Government. The Allied Powers associated in the war against Japan have not questioned these steps. The United States Government has not questioned these steps because they were clearly in line with its commitments made at Cairo and reaffirmed at

Potsdam. In other words, the Allied Powers including the United States have for the past 4 years treated Formosa as a part of China.

For the United States Government, at this date, to seek to establish a non Chinese administration on Formosa, either through SCAP or a United Nations or FEC-sponsored plebiscite, would be almost universally interpreted in mainland China and widely interpreted throughout Asia as an attempt by this Government to separate Formosa from China in violation of its pledges and contrary to its long-standing policy of respecting the territorial integrity of China. The important point from the standpoint of our interests in Asia, including mainland China, is not the technical justifications which we might urge for taking such steps but rather the way such action on our part would be viewed by the people of Asia. In this connection we do not wish to create a Formosa irredenta issue about which the Chinese Communists could rally support within China and with which they could divert attention from Soviet actions in the North. We must not place ourselves in the unenviable position of the U.S.S.R. with regard to the integrity of China and must remain free to take the position that anyone who violates the integrity of China is the enemy of China and is acting contrary to our own interests.

These are compelling reasons for rejecting alternatives stated above. There are, of course, additional practical difficulties. The seat of the Chinese Government is now on Formosa and that island, with Hainan, is the only remaining substantial territory now under its control. There is no evidence that the Chinese Government would willingly accomplish its own demise by acquiescing in either of the proposed alternatives. There is likewise the question of military force to carry out the course of action proposed if the Chinese Government refuses its consent, and to defend the island if either proposal were effected. The United Nations, of course, has no forces and it seems clear that any defense of the island would finally rest upon the United States.

In any case the conduct of a plebiscite for the purpose of determining the wishes of the inhabitants on the future disposition of Formosa is beyond the competence of the Far Eastern Commission. The Far Eastern Commission by its terms of reference is "to formulate the policies, principles, and standards in conformity with which the fulfillment by Japan of its obligations under the terms of surrender may be accomplished." The terms of reference also provide that "the Commission shall not make recommendations with regard to the conduct of military operations nor with regard to territorial adjustments."