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THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

20 FEB 1974

Folder "China (NARS) 720 2, 1974, Box 7, 78-0010

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Withdrawal of USAF F-4 Squadrons from Taiwan

(S) This memorandum transmits a response to your request of 28 January 1974 for an examination of the alternatives for redeployment of USAF F-4 squadrons from Taiwan to include options for withdrawal of one squadron by 30 June 1974 and the second squadron by 31 December 1974.

(S) Under the provisions of the ENHANCE PLUS agreement, the first USAF squadron can be withdrawn after 20 F-5As are returned to the ROC. The second squadron can be withdrawn after 28 F-5Es are provided to the ROC. It is our current plan to provide the 28 F-5Es through a co-production program with the ROC. This would allow withdrawal of the second F-4 squadron after February 1976.

(S) Return of 20 F-5As to the ROC and withdrawal of the first F-4 squadron can be accomplished by 30 June 1974 if a decision is made that the 20 VNAF F-5As now being rehabilitated on Taiwan will not be returned to Vietnam irrespective of the tactical situation which develops in that country. Meeting the 30 June deadline (Alternative A) would require shipment of 2 or 3 F-5As from CONUS since repair work on all 20 will not have been completed until July. If withdrawal of the F-4 squadron can be delayed until 31 July (Alternative B), this temporary diversion of aircraft from CONUS will not be required.

(S) Withdrawal of the second F-4 squadron by 31 December 1974 requires either renegotiation of the ENHANCE PLUS agreement with the ROC or diversion of 28 F-5Es from production for Saudi Arabia, Iran, Korea, and/or Vietnam. Six options are presented in the attached paper, the first two of which would require renegotiation of the agreement. Diversion of Saudi and/or Iranian aircraft is not considered to be feasible.

1. Option A would return an additional 28 F-5As to the ROC by 31 December. These would be replaced later with F-5Es from the co-production program. Option B would divert to the ROC the first 28 F-5Es produced for Korea. Delivery to the ROC could not be completed until the end of May 1975 but the USAF F-4 squadron would be withdrawn by 31 December 1974. Option C is like

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Chief, RDU, LSI, WHS
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Option B except that the USAF F-4 squadron would remain on Taiwan until the end of May 1975. Option D diverts some mix of F-5Es produced for Korea and Vietnam in order to deliver 28 aircraft to Taiwan by 31 December when the F-4 squadron is withdrawn. Option E is like Option D except that all 28 F-5Es are diverted from production for Vietnam. Option F would divert all 28 F-5Es from Korea, but would withdraw the second F-4 squadron after ROC training is completed, about November 1975.

2. Option A would not degrade ROC air defense but would along with Option B produce a political reaction from the GRC because it requires re-negotiation of the ENHANCE PLUS agreement. In addition, Option A would impact adversely on USAF force structure by extending the bailment of the 18 F-4D aircraft to ROK. Options B through E, which provide F-5E aircraft to the ROC in the near term, create some degradation in ROC air defense because enough ROC pilots and maintenance personnel cannot be trained to operate all the aircraft by the time they are delivered to the ROC. Option C minimizes this gap as much as possible while Option F would eliminate the gap and have the least political impact on all countries concerned. However, Option F would represent a ten month extension of the 31 December deadline. Of those remaining options which do meet the 31 December deadline, Option D (Mix 1) has the least adverse political and military impact.

~~SECRET~~ Recommendations:

1. Unless there are overriding political considerations, the deadline for the withdrawal of the first F-4 squadron should be slipped slightly from 30 June 1974 to 31 July 1974 to permit completion of the Taiwan-based rehabilitation for 20 F-5As (Alternative B).

2. With regard to the withdrawal of the second F-4 squadron:

a. If the deadline can be slipped a few months, then Option C should be selected since, both militarily and politically, it would come very close to fulfilling the spirit and the letter of our agreement with the ROC.

b. If the 31 December deadline is mandatory, Option D (Mix 1, diversion of 17 ROK and 11 RVN F-5Es) would have the least damaging military and political impact.

(U) The Deputy Secretary of State concurs with the recommendations above.

A. P. Clement

Attachment

Copy to:
Deputy Secretary of State

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AUG 17 2018