TO: GINSEI TOKYO JAPAN

RE: 02560

26 AUG 50

From SECRETARY Johnson PERSONAL FOR MacArthur

The President of the United States directs that you withdraw your message for National Repatriation of Veterans of Foreign Wars, because various features with respect to Formosa are in conflict with the policy of the United States and its position in the United Nations.
HERE IS THE TEXT OF GEN. MAC ARTHUR’S MESSAGE TO THE 51ST
NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS: CLIDE A.
LEWIS, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE
UNITED STATES

YOUR INSPIRING MESSAGE OF THE 17TH HAS MOVED ME DEEPLY
AND I TRUST THAT YOU WILL CONVEY TO ALL OF MY COMMANDS-IN-
ARMS OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS ASSEMBLED ON THE
OCASSION OF OUR 51ST ANNUAL NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT MY ASSURANCE
THAT THEIR CONFIDENCE AND SUPPORT WILL GIVE THIS COMMAND
MUCH ADDED STRENGTH TO MEET THE TESTS OF BATTLE WHICH ARE
IMMEDIATELY AHEAD. TELL THEM THAT I AM HAPPY TO REPORT
THAT THEIR SUCCESSORS IN ARMS NOW ENGAGING THE ENEMY ALONG
OUR BATTLE LINES IN SOUTH KOREA ARE EXEMPLIFYING THAT SAME
HIGH STANDARD OF DEVOTION, FORTITUDE AND VALOR WHICH
CHARACTERIZED THEIR OWN MARCH TO VICTORY WHEN THEY THEM-
SELVES ENGAGED IN COMBAT IN THE FIELD. FROM SENIOR
COMMANDERS THROUGH ALL RANKS, THEIR TACTICAL SKILL, THEIR
INVINCIBLE DETERMINATION, AND THEIR FIGHTING QUALITIES
AGAINST A FANATICAL FOE, WELL TRAINED, EXPERTLY DIREC-
TED AND HEAVILY ARMED, HAVE UPHOLD OUR COUNTRY’S FINEST
TRADITIONS. TOWARD VICTORY, HOWEVER DIFFICULT THE ROAD,
THEY ARE GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THEMSELVES WHICH SHOULD MAKE
EVERY AMERICAN HEART BEAT WITH PRIDE AND INFINITE SATIS-
FACTION.

IN VIEW OF MISCONCEPTIONS CURRENTLY BEING VOICED CON-
CERNING THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORMOSA TO OUR STRATEGIC
POWERS IN
POTENTIAL IN THE PACIFIC, I BELIEVE IT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST TO AVAIL MYSELF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO STATE MY VIEWS THEREON TO YOU, ALL OF WHOM HAVING FUGHT OVERSEAS UNDERSTAND BROAD STRATEGIC CONCEPTS. TO BEGIN WITH, ANY APPRAISAL OF THAT STRATEGIC POTENTIAL REQUIRES AN APPRECIATION OF THE CHANGES BROUGHT IN THE COURSE OF THE PAST WAR. PRIOR THERETO THE WESTERN STRATEGIC FRONTIER OF THE UNITED STATES LAY ON THE LITTORAL LINE OF THE AMERICAS WITH AN EXPOSED ISLAND SALIENT EXTENDING OUT THROUGH HAWAII, MIDWAY AND GUAM TO THE PHILIPPINES. THAT SALIENT WAS NOT AN OUTPOST OF STRENGTH BUT AN AGENCY OF WEAKNESS ALONG WHICH THE ENEMY COULD AND DID ATTACK US. THE PACIFIC WAS A POTENTIAL AREA OF ADVANCEMENT FOR ANY PREDATORY FORCE INTENT UPON STRIKING AT THE BORDERING LAND AREAS.

ALL OF THIS WAS CHANGED BY OUR PACIFIC VICTORY. OUR STRATEGIC FRONTIER THEN SHIFTED TO EMBRACE THE ENTIRE PACIFIC OCEAN WHICH HAS BECOME A VAST MINE TO PROTECT US AS LONG AS WE HOLD IT. INDEED, IT ACTS AS A PROTECTIVE SHIELD TO ALL OF THE AMERICAS AND ALL FISHERIES OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN. WE CONTROL TO THE SHORES OF ASIA BY A CHAIN OF ISLANDS EXTENDING IN AN ARC FROM THE ALLEGANS TO THE MARANAS HELD BY US AND OUR FRENCH ALLIES. FROM THIS ISLAND CHAIN WE CAN DOMINATE WITH AIR POWER EVERY ASIATIC PORT FROM VLADIVOSTOCK TO SINGAPORE AND PREVENT ANY HOSTILE MOVEMENT INTO THE PACIFIC. ANY PREDATORY ATTACK FROM ASIA MUST BE AN AMBITIOUS EFFORT. NO AMPHIBIOUS FORCE CAN BE SUCCESSFUL WITH OUR CONTROL OF THE
CONTROL OF THE SEA LAKES AND THE AIR OVER THESE LAKES IN ITS 
AVERS OF ADVANCE. WITH NAVAL AND AIR SUPREMACY AND MODERN 
GROUND ELEMENTS TO DEFEND BASES, ANY MAJOR ATTACK FROM CON-
TINENTAL ASIA TOWARD US OR OUR FRIENDS OF THE PACIFIC WOULD 
COME TO FAILURE. UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS THE PACIFIC NO 
LONGER REPRESENT S PEARLING AVENUES OF APPROACH

FOR A PROSPECTIVE INVAIDER — IT ASSUMES INSTEAD THE 
FRIENDLY ASPECT OF A PEACEFUL LAKE. OUR LINE OF DEFENSE IS 
A NATURAL ONE AND CAN BE MAINTAINED WITH A MINIMUM OF 
MILITARY EFFORT AND EXPENSE. IT INVOLVES NO ATTACK 
AGAINST ANTOINE NOR DOES IT PROVIDE THE BASTIONS ESSENTIAL 
FOR OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS, BUT PROPERLY MAINTAINED WOULD BE 
AN INVINCIBLE DEFENSE AGAINST AGGRESSION. IF WE HOLD THIS 
LINE WE MAY HAVE PEACE — LOSE IT AND WAR IS INEVITABLE.

THE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF FORMOSA IS SUCH THAT IN THE 
HAND OF A POWER UNFRIENDLY TO THE UNITED STATES IT CONSTIT-
UTES AN ENEMY ALLENT IN THE VERY CENTER OF THIS DEFENSIVE 
PERIMETER, 100 TO 150 MILES CLOSER TO THE ADJACENT FRIENDLY 
SECTIONS — OKINAWA AND THE PHILIPPINES — THAN ANY POINT 
IN CONTINENTAL ASIA. AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE IS ON FORM-
OSA A CONCENTRATION OF OPERATIONAL AIR AND NAVAL BASES 
WHICH IS POTENTIALLY GREATER THAN ANY SIMILAR CONCENTRATION 
OF THE ASIATIC MAINLAND BETWEEN THE YELLOW SEA AND THE 
STRAIT OF MALACCA. ADDITIONAL BASES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN A 
RELATIVELY SHORT TIME BY AN AGGRESSIVE EXPLOITATION OF ALL 
WORLD WAR II JAPANESE FACILITIES. AN ENEMY FORCING UTILIZ-
ING THOSE INSTALLATIONS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE COULD INCREASE 

BY 100 PERCENT
BY 100 PERCENT THE AIR EFFORT WHICH COULD BE DIRECTED AGAINST OKINAWA AS COMPARED TO OPERATIONS BASED ON THE MAINLAND AND AT THE SAME TIME COULD DIRECT DAMAGING AIR ATTACKS WITH FIGHTER TYPE AIRCRAFT AGAINST FRIENDLY INSTALLATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES WHICH ARE CURRENTLY BEYOND THE RANGE OF FIGHTERS BASED ON THE MAINLAND. OUR AIR SUPREMACY AT ONCE WOULD BECOME DOUTTFUL.

AS A RESULT OF ITS GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND BASE POTENTIAL, UTILIZATION OF FORMOSA BY A MILITARY POWER HOSTILE TO THE UNITED STATES MAY EITHER COUNTERBALANCE OR OVERTHREAD THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FLANK OF THE U.S. FRONT LINE POSITION. FORMOSA IN THE HANDS OF SUCH AN HOSTILE POWER COULD BE COMPARED TO AN UNSINKABLE AIRCRAFT CARRIER AND SUBMARINE TENDER IDEALY LOCATED TO ACCOMPLISH OFFENSIVE STRATEGY AND AT THE SAME TIME COUNTERACT DEFENSIVE OR COUNTER-OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS BY FRIENDLY FORCES BASED ON OKINAWA AND THE PHILIPPINES. THIS UNSINKABLE CARRIER-TENDER HAS THE CAPACITY TO OPERATE FROM 10 TO 20 AIR GROUPS OF TYPES RANGING FROM JET FIGHTERS TO B-29 TYPE BOMBERS AS WELL AS TO PROVIDE FORWARD OPERATING FACILITIES FOR SHORT-RANGE COASTAL SUBMARINES. IN ACQUIRING THIS FORWARD SUBMARINE BASE, THE EFFICACY OF THE SHORT RANGE SUBMARINE WOULD BE SO DRAMATICALLY INCREASED BY THE ADDITIONAL RADIUS OF ACTIVITY AS TO THREATEN COMPLETELY SEA TRAFFIC FROM THE SOUTH AND INTRODUCE ALL SEA LANES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC.
PACIFIC. Submarine blockades by the enemy with all its de-
structive ramifications would thereby become a virtual
certainty.

Should Formosa fall and bases thereafter come into the
hands of a potential enemy of the U.S., the latter will have
acquired an additional “front” which will have been obtained
and can be maintained at an incomparably lower cost than
could its equivalent in aircraft carriers and submarine
tenders. Current estimates of air and submarine resources
in the Far East indicate the capability of such a potential
enemy to extend his forces southward and still maintain an
imposing degree of military strength for employment else-
where in the Pacific area.

Historically, Formosa has been used as a springboard for
just such military aggression directed against areas to the
south. The most notable and recent example was the utiliza-
tion of it by the Japanese in World War II. At the out-
break of the Pacific War in 1941, it played an important
part as a staging area and supporting base for the various
Japanese invasion convoys. The supporting air forces of
Japan’s army and navy were based on fields situated along
southern Formosa. From 1942 through 1944, Formosa was a vital
link in the transportation and communication chain which
stretched from Japan through Okinawa and the Philippines
to Southeast Asia. As the U.S. carrier forces advanced
into the Western Pacific, the bases on Formosa assumed an
increasingly
INCREASINGLY GREATER ROLE IN THE JAPANESE DEFENSE SCHEME. SHOULD FORMOSA FALL INTO THE HANDS OF AN HOSTILE POWER, HISTORY WOULD REPEAT ITSELF. ITS MILITARY POTENTIAL WOULD AGAIN BE FULLY EXPLOITED AS THE MEANS TO BREACH AND NEUTRALIZE OUR WESTERN PACIFIC DEFENSE SYSTEM AND MOUNT A BAR
OF CONQUEST AGAINST THE FREE NATIONS OF THE PACIFIC BASIN.

NOTHING COULD BE MORE FALLACIOUS THAN THE THREATening ARGUMENT BY THOSE WHO ADVOCATE APPEASING AND ISOLATION
IN THE PACIFIC THAT IF WE DEFEND FORMOSA WE ALTERNATE CON- TINENTAL ASIA. THOSE WHO SPEAK THUS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE
ORIENT. THEY DO NOT GRASP THAT IT IS IN THE PATTERN OF THE ORIENTAL PSYCHOLOGY TO RESPECT AND FOLLOW AGGRESSIVE,
RESOLUTE AND DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP — TO QUICKLY TURN ON A LEADERSHIP CHARACTERIZED BY TIMIDITY OR VACILLATION — AND THEY UNDERESTIMATE THE ORIENTAL MENTALITY. NOTHING IN THE
LAST FIVE YEARS HAS SO INSPIRED THE FAR EAST AS THE AMERICAN DETERMINATION TO PRESERVE THE BULWARKS OF OUR PACIFIC STRATEGIC POSITION FROM FUTURE ENCROACHMENT, FOR FIVE OF ITS
PROPOSED LEADER TO APPRAISER THE SAFEGUARD SUCH DETERMINATION BRINGS TO THEIR FREE INSTITUTIONS. TO PURSUE ANY OTHER COURSE WOULD BE TO TURN OVER THE FRUITS OF OUR PACIFIC VICTORY TO A POTENTIAL BANE. IT WOULD SHIFT ANY FUTURE BATTLE AREA FIVE THOUSAND MILES EASTWARD TO THE COASTS OF THE AMERICAN CONTINENTS, OUR OWN HOME COAST;
IT WOULD COMPLETELY EXPOSE OUR FRIENDS IN THE PHILIPPINES,
OUR FRIENDS IN
OUR FRIENDS IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, OUR FRIENDS IN
INDONESIA, OUR FRIENDS IN JAPAN, AND OTHER AREAS, TO THE
LUSTFUL THORNS OF THOSE WHO STAND FOR SLAVERY AS AGAINST
LIBERTY, FOR ATHEISM AS AGAINST GOD.

THE DECISION OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN ON JUNE 27 LIGHTED INTO
FLAME A LAMP OF HOPE THROUGHOUT ASIA THAT WAS BURNING DIMLY
TOWARD EXTINCTION. IT MARKED FOR THE FAR EAST THE FOCAL
AND TURNING POINT IN THIS AREA'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.
IT SWEPT ASIDE IN ONE GREAT MONUMENTAL STROKE ALL OF THE
HYPOCRIST AND THE SOPHISTRY WHICH AS CONFUSED AND DELUSED
SO MANY PEOPLE DISTANT FROM THE ACTUAL SCENE. — END OF
MESSAGE.