

Chiang Ching-Kuo, Written Statement, 1964
Administrative Information

Creator: Chiang Ching-Kuo

Date of Statement: 1964

Length: 3 pages

Biographical Note

Chiang, Minister without Portfolio for the Republic of China (1958-1969), discusses a conversation he had with John F. Kennedy about the threat of Communist mainland China, among other issues.

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Chiang Ching-Kuo, Written Statement, 1964, (page number), John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program.

Oral History Interview

Of

Chiang Ching-Kuo

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Written Statement

by

Chiang Ching-Kuo

1964

For the John F. Kennedy Library

As I sit down to write this letter which will be deposited in the Kennedy Memorial Library for future historians, my mind goes back to the eleventh day of September of the year one thousand nine hundred and sixty-three when I, as a representative of my father President Chiang Kai-Shek, called on the late president John F. Kennedy at the White House. Because of a slight mix-up about the right entrance, I was a couple of minutes late for my appointment. When I was ushered in, I found him already waiting for me. After we sat down and exchanged greetings, he began asking questions about the situation on the Chinese mainland, with particular reference to the progress which the Chinese Communists were reportedly making in their nuclear research. The President's questions were most searching. I also gave him straightforward answers. We agreed that something must be done soon to stop the Chinese Communists from acquiring an atomic military capability, because if they succeeded, then they would necessarily pose a greater threat to world peace and security than ever before.

The President looked somewhat older than his pictures had indicated. It shows that three years in the White House had taxed his energy considerably. His main concern was the preservation of peace and the prevention of another global war. After I confided in him our intention to take military action against the Chinese

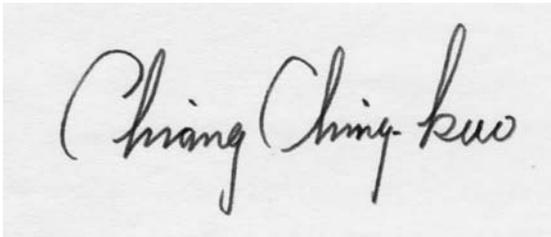
[-1 -]

mainland, he spoke briefly about the Bay of Pigs fiasco and warned that every effort should be made to prevent a recurrence vis-à-vis the Chinese mainland, when it is time for the Chinese Government troops, now on Taiwan, to go back there. We must be certain of support

from the people there, he said. He also asked me in detail about our maritime operations against the mainland of China. He indicated his particular interest in this matter. After I gave him an account of the operations, he expressed his deepest admiration for the heroic deeds of the officers and men participating in the operations who willingly risked their lives for the successful accomplishment of their missions. From his conversation, I definitely came away with the conviction that his sympathy was with our national cause but wished he could feel sure of our success. He asked many questions about our intelligence setups, and I told him how accurate they are. He loathed the Chinese Communist regime and he did not believe it has represented or will ever represent the real aspirations of the Chinese people. If the latter were given a chance to express their views freely, they would certainly disapprove the regime in a non-equivocal way. The President gave me the impression that he was all in favor of the overthrow of the Communist regime but was looking for an effective and at the same time safe way to do it. Fear of Soviet intervention was evident in his discourse.

[-2-]

President Kennedy's untimely death in the hands of a mentally deranged assassin was a great tragedy not only to his family which he loved, and his country which he was prepared to serve in peace or in war, but also to the entire free world. Had he been spared, no doubt he would have been able to advance the cause of man's freedom that much farther. He was fully aware of the responsibility of the United States as a leader of the free world, and likewise he was completely conscious of his responsibility as the chief executive of the Alliance of Freedom. To the people of the Republic of China, including the millions enslaved by the Communists on the mainland, President Kennedy's death has meant the loss of a great friend who could have done so much to help them in attaining their national goal—the restoration of freedom throughout the Chinese mainland, which necessarily would have helped the cause of global freedom.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and reads "Chiang Ching-kuo".

[-3-]

[END OF STATEMENT]

Chiang Ching-Kuo Written Statement
Name List

C

Chiang Kai-Shek, 1

K

Kennedy, John F., 1, 2, 3