

Time For Communist Invasion Of Hainan Depends On Fog, Wind

(Editor's note—United Press Correspondent Robert C. Miller has arrived in the Far East to cover the expected communist invasion of Hainan Island, Miller began reporting from the island in 1944, while making the dash through France with the U. S. 3rd Army. His recent assignments included the Palestine war and communal fighting between Hindus and Muslims in India. In his first dispatch from Hainan Island he reports that wind and fog will force a decision on the fate of Hainan within the next 10 days.)

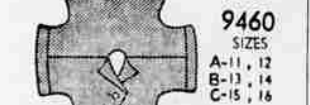
By Robert C. Miller
United Press Correspondent
Hoihow, Hainan Island, Feb. 21—(U.P.)—Fate of the strategic Chinese Nationalist island stronghold of Hainan will be decided within the next 10 days. The outcome depends upon the wind. The communist invasion fleet from the mainland is expected to sail across the 18-mile-wide Hainan strait covered by fog and using the seasonal north wind to fill the sails of their junks.

Favorable Winds
The northerly winds, which have been blowing for the past week, would enable them to cross in less than three hours.

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The favorable winds and fog are expected to last until March 1. It is believed that an invasion will be impossible once the winds change, for then the junks would lose the cover of fog and would be forced to beat their way in long lulls against an unfavorable wind. This would increase crossing time by many hours and make the loaded junks easy prey to sea and air attack.

The nationalists are braced for the attack. Troops are alerted, coastal defenses fully manned, dawn to dusk air searches are out, and navy patrols are on guard in the strait.

A report circulated here that five junks attempted to make an initial landing Thursday night but were intercepted. One was captured. The nationalists claimed that the other four were sunk, but there were no reports of wreckage or bodies washed ashore.

Soldiers Give Up
Sixty communist soldiers captured in the one junk gave up without a fight because they were helplessly seasick. The captives were paraded through the streets of this coastal town Saturday as part of the Chinese New Year celebration.

Guards marching with the captives carried large banners saying "We Don't Like Russians." The captives, including one officer, shuffled along in apparent unconcern over their possible fate. They seemed mightily glad to be on firm ground anywhere, even nationalist territory.

The most reliable estimates place at 180,000 the number of communist troops massed in invasion readiness on Luchow peninsula, across from Hainan. Thousands of small craft and junks, most powered by sail but some motorized, have been dispersed under camouflage along the coastal bays and inlets. Although camouflaged, they are subject to daily nationalist bombing attacks by Martin B-26's.

The communist invasion objective is to link up with the communist guerrillas who hold the mountainous interior of the 6,000-foot high island. The guerrillas held a 20-mile strip of the island's coastline last October, but they now have been driven inland by strong nationalist attacks.

Wounded Brought Out
Some 40 nationalist wounded were brought to Hoihow last week as result of a recent clash with guerrillas. Many were treated at the American-staffed Presbyterian hospital directed by David Thomas, of Kansas City, Mo.

Thomas and his staff have said they are determined to remain in Hoihow even if the city and island are captured by the communists. Among the staff are S. P. Seaton, Princeton, N. J.; N. Dercovitz, Pasadena, Cal.; Dr. Ester Morse, Orting, Wash.; Caroline Beagle, Warwick, N. J.; Caroline McCreery, Berkeley, Cal.; and Margaret Burkawall, Kansas City, Mo.

Military observers say the position of Hainan is similar to that of England following Dunkerque. A high nationalist officer admitted that Hainan could have been captured last fall by less than 3,000 communist troops. The island then was filled with retreating nationalist troops, demoralized, disunited and feared as much as the communists by the Hainanites.

Situation Improved
But today the situation is vastly improved under the nationalist military commander, Gen. Hsueh Yeh, former governor of Kwangtung province. The groups have been unified and order restored.

Troops manning the beach defenses are armed with excellent

and well-kept equipment. Their morale seems to be high and they appear rested, fat and happy.

The backbone of Hainan's defense is the air force, which is less susceptible to communist infiltration than the other arms. Its planes take to the air unopposed to patrol the invasion peninsula.

Several gunboats have been added to the Hainan anti-invasion fleet but the morale of the navy still is questionable. The natives of Hainan are calm and everything is on a basis of "business as usual." However, Maj. Gen. Claire L. Chennault's civil air transport line is keeping a number of planes available to fly out its staffers if necessary.

Medicine Man Claims World Will Blow Up Before Next Winter

Aztec, N. M., Feb. 21—(U.P.)—An old medicine man's prediction that the world will blow up before next winter was received today without so much as a flicker of the eye by 60,000 Navajo Indians.

But their white brothers were thrown into jittery excitement. Three hundred townspeople rushed down to buy extra copies of the weekly Aztec Review, which carried the prediction.

The tribal leader's prediction was half-believed by some and completely debunked by others. But in almost every Aztec household the prediction was the main topic of conversation.

George Bowra, editor of the Review, said the prophecy was made by an elderly medicine man who had noted that the ants and squirrels didn't bother to store food this winter. Therefore, the medicine man concluded that next winter would never arrive.

Dead line on Classified Ads: 5:30 p.m. for following day; 10 a.m. Monday noon Saturday for Sunday ads.

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McKay Asks Support For Red Cross Drive

Salem, Ore., Feb. 21—(U.P.)—Gov. Douglas McKay today asked citizens of Oregon to join him in supporting the 1950 Red Cross drive starting March 1.

San Francisco, Feb. 21—(U.P.)—Delegates to the fourth annual convention of the Western States Meat Packers association opening Tuesday will discuss proposals to "up grade" government grading of meat.

Children's clothes. Free needlework pattern is printed in book.

FEPC Backers Seek To Head Off Filibuster

Washington, Feb. 21—(U.P.)—FEPC supporters today sought a way to prevent a threatened all-night house filibuster Wednesday against their controversial civil rights measure.

Southern democrats are expected to throw up every parliamentary roadblock they can to stall action on the administration's bill.

The most controversial of President Truman's civil rights proposals, it would outlaw racial and religious discrimination in employment.

Rep. Andrew J. Biemiller, (D., Wis.), an FEPC leader, said the floor fight may be "the longest and bitterest in the history of the house. We may be in session all night and then some."

Hollywood, Feb. 21—(U.P.)—Actress Mercedes McCambridge, who won a 1949 Academy award nomination for her role in "All The King's Men," honeymooned today with Radio Producer Fletcher Markel.

Some 1,900 Japanese police women are now on active duty.

Since the first oil well was drilled at Titusville, Pa., in 1859, the United States has produced and consumed approximately two-thirds of the world's oil and is still doing so.

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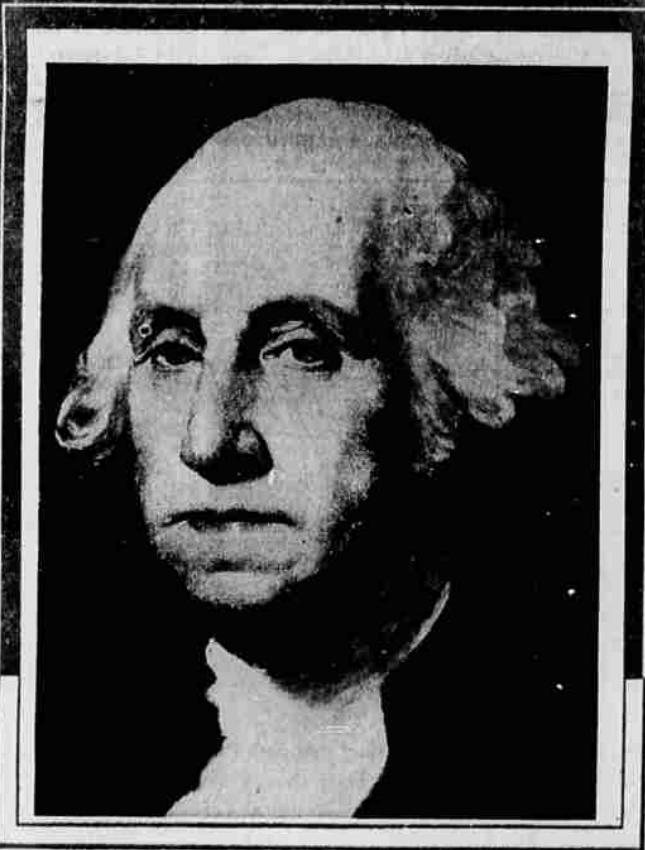
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