

What is the United States position? In regard to Formosa itself, as I have said, the United States is firmly committed to its defence by treaty, even though the legal and political status of that island may be uncertain. But - and this is often forgotten - that same treaty gives the United States the right to restrain aggressive Chinese nationalist action from Formosa.

What about the coastal islands of Quemoy and Matsu, the immediate point of armed conflict between the two Chinas, and therefore the point of most immediate danger? United States policy here is based on acceptance of the responsibility to make secure and protect "positions and territories" which in the judgment of the President, "are necessary to, or related to the defence of Formosa." That does not involve a commitment or a purpose, as Mr. Dulles put it in New York on February 17, to "defend the coastal islands, as such"; but, he added, the Chinese communists themselves have "linked the coastal positions to the defence of Formosa". Therefore, in his own words, the United States "will be alert to Chinese communist actions, rejecting for ourselves any initiative of warlike deeds".

As I understand it, this is a warning to the Peking government not to use force against these islands, preparatory to attack or as a build-up for an attack on Formosa. The President alone has the power to decide at the time whether such an attack is local against the islands or a stage in an assault on Formosa itself. Mr. Dulles restated that position on March 8, and he added something to his earlier statement when, in discussing the responsibility of the President in this matter, he said:

"How to implement this flexible defence of Formosa the President will decide in the light of his judgment as to the over-all value of certain coastal positions to the defence of Formosa and the cost of holding these positions."

Well, that is not going to be an easy decision for the President to make if unfortunately the time ever arises that he has to make it. If it has to be made, I am glad the decision is in the hands of a man like President Eisenhower, a man of character and integrity, with a passion for peace.

On their part, the Chinese communists insist that these islands are part of the mainland of their own country and that if Chiang Kai-shek's troops do not evacuate them they will be driven out.

The possibility of serious trouble arising out of these conflicting positions is obvious and creates understandable and real anxiety, because the consequences might involve more than the two Chinese governments.

The Canadian position on this matter has been stated in the House. We have accepted no commitment to share in the defence of either Formosa or the coastal islands, or to intervene in any struggle between the two Chinese governments for possession of these off-shore islands. Our obligations in this matter arise only out of our responsibilities as a member of the United Nations, and I have stated in this House what those are. We also