

Taiwan's Former Nuclear Weapons Program: A Hidden History Revealed



In the 1970s, Taiwan embarked on a top-secret nuclear weapons program that came close to success. The program was highly ambitious and involved the development of both nuclear bombs and nuclear missiles. The program was ultimately abandoned due to international pressure, but it remains a significant chapter in Taiwan's history.

Taiwan's Former Nuclear Weapons Program: Nuclear Weapons On-Demand by David Albright

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The Origins of the Nuclear Program

The origins of Taiwan's nuclear program can be traced back to the 1950s, when the United States began to provide Taiwan with nuclear assistance. The United States provided Taiwan with a research reactor and training for nuclear scientists. In the 1960s, Taiwan began to develop its own nuclear fuel cycle, and in 1974, it began construction of a nuclear power plant.

The decision to develop nuclear weapons was made in the early 1970s, after the United States withdrew its nuclear umbrella from Taiwan. The United States had previously provided Taiwan with a nuclear guarantee, but this guarantee was withdrawn in 1972. This left Taiwan feeling vulnerable to attack from China, which had developed its own nuclear weapons in 1964.

The Development of the Nuclear Weapons Program

The nuclear weapons program was highly ambitious and involved the development of both nuclear bombs and nuclear missiles. The nuclear bombs were designed to be dropped from aircraft, while the nuclear missiles were designed to be launched from submarines. The program was carried out in secret, and only a few top government officials were aware of its existence.

The nuclear weapons program made significant progress in the 1970s and 1980s. Taiwan successfully developed a nuclear bomb design and produced a small number of nuclear bombs. Taiwan also developed a nuclear missile, but the missile was never tested.

The Abandonment of the Nuclear Weapons Program

The nuclear weapons program was abandoned in 1988 due to international pressure. The United States and other countries had become aware of the program and were concerned about the risks of nuclear proliferation. The United States threatened to cut off all military and economic aid to Taiwan if it did not abandon the program. Taiwan agreed to abandon the program and signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1991.

The Significance of the Nuclear Weapons Program

The nuclear weapons program was a significant chapter in Taiwan's history. It showed that Taiwan was capable of developing nuclear weapons, and it demonstrated the country's determination to defend itself. The program also played a role in Taiwan's relations with the United States. The United States was initially supportive of the program, but it later became concerned about the risks of nuclear proliferation.

The abandonment of the nuclear weapons program was a major setback for Taiwan. However, it also showed that Taiwan was willing to comply with international norms. Taiwan is now a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and has pledged not to develop nuclear weapons.

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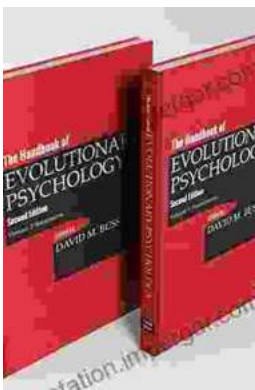


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