

1949

Speeches/Documents

**Title:** Issues that must be stressed in sea-crossing operations] (cable to Lin Biao),

**Author:** Mao Zedong

**Date:** 18 December 1949

**Source:** Mao Zedong Junshi Wenji [Collected military works of Mao Zedong], Vol. VI (Beijing: Military Science Publishing House and Central Documents Publishing House, 1993)

**Description:** Chairman Mao in a cable sent to Gen. Lin Biao, who was then preparing for the campaign against Hainan Island, stressed the lessons of the Quemoy defeat for the upcoming amphibious operation:

Sea-crossing operations are completely different from the experiences in all of our Army's prior operations: they require paying close attention to the tide water and wind direction, they require concentration of a complete force—transportable at a single time—of at least one corps (40-50,000 men), carrying provisions for at least 3 days, to make the landing in front of the enemy, establish a solid beachhead position, and immediately independently advance, without a need to rely on reinforcements. Since the tides require that after 12 hours the 1st-wave transport vessels can return to deliver a 2nd wave, and the enemy can use its naval air forces to sever our transport, then one simply must select an opportunity for a sea crossing and landing involving a single transport of one corps, and must be able to independently advance, establish a position, and obtain provisions; but in case reinforcements do not follow, the troops will be in danger of sustaining major losses. The Third Field Army's Ye Fei [10th] Army, after capturing Xiamen, failed to understand the above conditions, and with 3½ regiments, 9000 men, attacked 30,000 [sic] enemy troops on Jinmen Island; with no help and no provisions, they were besieged by the enemy, and the entire force was annihilated. They [i.e. your troops] must study this lesson