Ike Near Decision On Red China War

Joint Chiefs Get Data

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WASHINGTON, March 9. — President Eisenhower and military chieftains were reported today at the point of a decision which may determine whether there will be general war with Red China this year.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff met to receive an urgent report from Adm. Robert B. Carney, chief of naval operations, on his conferences on Formosa with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and top Chinese Nationalist military men.

DULLES' POINT.

At the same time, high United States officials revealed that the main point Secretary of State Dulles wanted to get across to Red China in his Tuesday night speech was that the United States and her allies may and probably will carry general war onto the China mainland itself if there is further Red aggression in Asia.

The Secretary was vague purposely once again on the question of the Nationalist-held offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu, saying the President would decide whether these outposts should be defended.

Pentagon reports said the meeting of the Joint Chiefs today would go far toward helping the President make up his mind whether defense of Quemoy and Matsu was essential to the defense of Formosa.

There is no question about United States intentions right now to defend Formosa. In addition to the mutual defense treaty which went into effect last week, Dulles stressed in his Tuesday night speech the Chinese feeling that "so far as the United States can assure it, there will always be a free China."

QUESTION OF ISLANDS.

Officials close to the Secretary pointed out he would not have emphasized this "Chinese" feeling unless it was accurate.

The President and Dulles have said that the question of whether to defend Quemoy and Matsu will depend on whether the Chinese Reds mean to use these islands as stepping-stones toward Formosa, roughly 100 miles away over open water.

There could be some subter-