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NSC review completed

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U. S. National Security Strategy

PART III
Military Component

Section D
Nuclear Forces

SECTION D, U.S. NUCLEAR FORCE (U)

SUMMARY (U)

(S) The NSSD review has reconfirmed the validity of the overall objectives of U.S. nuclear forces policy as enunciated in NSSD-13. Specifically, our most fundamental national security objective is to deter direct attack--particularly nuclear attack--on the United States, its forces and its allies and friends. Deterrence can best be achieved if our defense posture makes Soviet assessment of war outcomes, under any contingency, so uncertain and dangerous as to remove any incentives for initiating attack. The nuclear forces of the United States also, in conjunction with conventional forces, contribute to deter nonnuclear aggression and to support NATO strategy for the defense of Europe. This requires that we be convincingly capable of responding in such a way that the Soviets, or any other adversary, would be denied their political and military objectives. Should nuclear attack nonetheless occur, the United States and its allies must prevail and in the process be able to force the Soviet Union to seek earliest termination of hostilities at the lowest possible level of violence and on terms favorable to the United States.

(S) U.S. strategy to realize these objectives is founded on the ability to provide the initial, trans- and post-attack target coverage required by existing National level guidance. Similarly, the requirements for damage limitation, flexibility of options, crisis stability, escalation control, support of allied commitments, preservation of the continuum of conventional and nuclear deterrence, maritime nuclear employment and forward deployment of non-strategic nuclear forces were revalidated.

(S) U.S. nuclear employment planning supports this strategy by ensuring the availability of the greatest amount of targeting flexibility to the NCA, strengthening the linkage between nuclear and conventional forces, limiting collateral damage, and maximizing the Soviet uncertainty regarding their ability to successfully execute a nuclear attack.

(S) The resulting force requirements and the development and modernization program for our nuclear forces were found to be expressed and directed in NSDD-12 and NATO's modernization decision.

(S) Arms control can complement military forces in support of U.S. objectives and national security.

(S) There were no issues generated by this section which require addressal by the NSC.

End of Summary

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SECTION D: U.S. NUCLEAR FORCES (U)I. Introduction (U)

(S) The basic national guidance on U.S. nuclear force employment and acquisition policy is provided in NSDD-13, Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy, signed in October, 1981. NSDD-13 was this Administration's initial review of U.S. national nuclear policy and superceded the Carter Administration's PD-59. This section has reexamined that guidance and found it to remain valid. The following discussion of U.S. nuclear policy is fully consistent with NSDD-13.

(S) It should be noted that given today's forces and related command, control, communications and intelligence (C³I), not all elements of our strategy are fully executable. NSDD-12, Strategic Forces Modernization Program, signed in October, 1981, outlines this Administration's program for improving our capability to execute national strategy. It mandates improvements in the areas of: strategic C³I to improve the survivability and endurance of our ability to control our forces and our basic connectivity to those forces at all times; our offensive forces themselves to increase their survivability, endurance, and effectiveness; and our active and passive capabilities to limit damage to the U.S. through strategic defense. The improvements outlined in NSDD-12 will not be fully completed until well into the next decade.

(S) By July of this year the Department of Defense will provide a Master Plan which identifies where specific capability shortfalls exist and how specifically we intend to synchronize our employment and acquisition policies to minimize risk.

II. Objectives (U)

(S) Our most fundamental national security objective is to deter direct attack--particularly nuclear attack--on the United States, its forces and its allies and friends. The nuclear forces of the United States also, in conjunction with conventional forces, contribute to the deterrence of nonnuclear aggression and to support NATO strategy for the defense of Europe. Deterrence can best be achieved if our defense posture makes Soviet assessment of war outcomes, under any contingency, so uncertain and dangerous as to remove any incentives for initiating attack. This requires that we be convincingly capable of responding in such a way that the Soviets, or any other adversary, would be denied their political and military objectives. Should nuclear attack nonetheless occur,

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the United States and its allies must prevail and in the process be able to force the Soviet Union to seek earliest termination of hostilities at the lowest possible level of violence and on terms favorable to the United States.

III. Strategy for Nuclear Forces (U)

(S) The United States remains committed to a deterrent use of military strength; our objective is to deter aggression or to respond to it should deterrence fail. As a consequence our strategy is designed to insure the realization of our objectives after the enemy has seized the first initiative to deny him his political and military goals and to counterattack so strongly that we inflict an unacceptably high cost on the enemy. Specifically, our strategy will reflect the following elements with respect to nuclear forces:

A. Initial Target Coverage (S)

(S) We will deploy and maintain forces capable, under all conditions of war initiation, of attacking a wide range of targets. U.S. strategic nuclear forces must be able to render ineffective the Soviet (and Soviet allied) military and political power structure through attacks on nuclear and conventional military forces, political/military leadership and associated control facilities, and industry critical to military power. This includes the ability to deny the Soviet Union a military victory at any level of conflict.

B. Target Coverage Throughout Protracted Conflict (S)

(S) U.S. nuclear forces will be survivable and enduring in order that we can maintain sufficient forces throughout a protracted conflict period and afterwards. We must have the capability to inflict unacceptable levels of damage against a broad range of targets of the Soviet Union and its allies. This will provide the Soviets strong incentive to seek conflict termination short of an all-out attack on our cities and economic assets.

C. Target Coverage for Protection and Coercion (S)

(S) We will maintain in reserve, under all circumstances, survivable nuclear offensive capabilities for protection and coercion during and after a prolonged nuclear conflict. We must deny the Soviet Union or any other country the opportunity to coerce the United States, our allies or third countries, or to dominate the post-war situation.

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D. Damage Limitation (U)

(S) U.S. nuclear forces, by offensive actions and in conjunction with active and passive defense measures, should be capable of limiting damage to the United States and its allies.

E. Strategic Defense (U)

(S) U.S. nuclear forces, in conjunction with conventional forces should seek to:

(1) control access to U.S. airspace in exercise of our sovereignty;

(2) preclude a surprise precursor attack by air breathing weapons which could disrupt our prompt retaliation;

(3) provide active defense against atmospheric attack to limit damage to the U.S. as specified above;

(4) provide post-attack privacy from hostile reconnaissance;

(5) provide the capability to negate targets in space and ensure our rights of free access to space;

(6) - and support passive defensive measures against both atmospheric and ballistic attack.

F. Range of Options (U)

(S) We will maintain the capability for a full range of options, and, by holding at risk targets which are important to an aggressor, demonstrate the risks inherent in initiating or continuing aggression.

G. Crisis Stability (U)

(S) Our force posture should minimize the extent to which Soviet nuclear threats could be used in a crisis to coerce the United States and our allies, and should ensure that in crisis conditions the USSR has no incentive to initiate a nuclear attack and that the United States is not under pressure to do so.

H. Escalation Control (U)

(S) U.S. nuclear weapon employment plans should provide the NCA with the ability to conduct military operations at all levels of conflict in ways that will be militarily effective and will maximize the chance of controlling escalation. Plans for the

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controlled use of nuclear weapons should seek, in conjunction with other political and military actions, to:

(1) provide the U.S. and its allies with leverage for a negotiated termination of fighting;

(2) reverse an unfavorable military situation for a sufficiently long period to cause an enemy to pause and provide him the opportunity to reconsider the consequences of his continued aggression;

(3) diminish the enemy's expectations of success both by the direct military effect of the attacks and by evidencing U.S. willingness to respond as appropriate, while indicating clearly the limited character of the U.S. response executed to that point;

(4) convince an enemy that previously calculated risks and costs were in error and that early termination of the conflict or a reconsideration of his course of action is the most attractive alternative;

(5) and leave the enemy with sufficient remaining political, and economic resources clearly still at risk so that he has a strong incentive to seek conflict termination.

I. Support for Alliance Commitments (U)

(S) The United States will maintain nuclear forces to support our alliance commitments including those expressed in agreed NATO strategy (MC 14/3).

J. Preserving the Defense Continuum: Regional Role of Nuclear Forces (S)

(S) We must ensure on a worldwide basis that nuclear forces are available in various regions to establish and maintain a continuum of deterrence with a force posture and associated employment plans which reflect the facts that:

(1) non-strategic nuclear forces provide the essential link between the conventional and the strategic nuclear forces;

(2) nuclear forces cannot be viewed as a substitute for a strong conventional warfighting capability; the use of nuclear weapons would represent a basic qualitative change in warfare;

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(3) nuclear forces will be configured to provide a wide range of options, from highly selective and limited strikes up to and including general nuclear release;

(4) SIOP planning must not become dependent on a contribution from non-strategic nuclear forces for achievement of key objectives;

(5) nuclear forces, as with all force elements, must have the capability to conduct offensive and defensive operations in a nuclear or chemical environment;

(6) U.S. nuclear forces may be used to place at risk targets in geographic areas other than that in which the main thrust of aggression is being made in order to draw enemy resources away from the initial theater of operations;

(7) U.S. nuclear capabilities must support planning for counter-offensives to threaten the aggressor including Soviet and Warsaw Pact assets.

(8) and release authority for the use of nuclear weapons will be neither immediate nor automatic.

K. Maritime Nuclear Employment (U)

(S) Response to Soviet nuclear attacks at sea will not necessarily be limited to the sea. Therefore, nuclear assets must be available and capable of putting at risk selected targets vital to the Soviets in order to confront them with massive uncertainties when considering nuclear release at sea.

L. Forward Deployment of Non-Strategic Nuclear Forces (U)

(S) Forward deployment of non-strategic nuclear forces will be made to:

(1) provide for maximum flexibility and capability for forward defense by their continued deployment in Europe [redacted] 25X1

(2) provide for early deployment from peacetime locations in a crisis for survivability. Such deployments should be as far forward as is consistent with their range and expected use;

(3) reflect the fact that the only currently deployed non-strategic nuclear land-attack systems outside Europe [redacted] 25X1 are carrier-based, and as such they should be planned for possible

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use in conflict scenarios involving Soviet forces or Soviet nuclear weapons support;

(4) and maintain adequate stocks of nuclear weapons in those theaters that pose high risks of developing into nuclear conflict. such as Europe [redacted] The ability to deploy non-strategic nuclear forces rapidly, and to reinforce that deployment, into those areas in which non-strategic nuclear forces are not normally deployed, will be maintained. 25X1

IV. Nuclear Employment Planning (U)

A. Types of Planning Required (U)

(S) In order to provide the greatest degree of flexibility to the NCA and to regain the initiative necessary to realize our objectives, U.S. nuclear employment planning will include:

(1) preplanned options against targets in the Soviet Union, its allies, and other potential enemies; these options will be the primary vehicles for selective use of nuclear forces;

(2) rapidly developable selective use options to provide the capability to attack significant targets that emerge during a conflict and to integrate nuclear and general purpose force options;

(3) the capability to plan adaptively. We must establish an improved capability for identifying and destroying military leadership targets, including those which are hardened, mobile, and reconstituted.

B. Planning Guidance (U)

(S) Planning should be developed which will strengthen the linkage between U.S. strategic and non-strategic nuclear forces.

(S) Methods of attack on specific targets should be chosen to limit collateral damage consistent with effective accomplishment of the attack objective. Where appropriate, overall plans should include the option of withholds to limit such collateral damage.

(S) While it will remain our policy not to rely on launching our nuclear forces in an irrevocable manner upon warning that a Soviet missile attack has begun, we must leave Soviet planners with strong uncertainty as to how we might actually respond to such warning.

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And we must be prepared to launch our recallable bomber forces upon warning that a Soviet nuclear attack has been initiated.

(S) Plan non-strategic nuclear forces primarily for selective use in direct defense with priority given to stopping the thrust of enemy offensive action, or for escalatory options with emphasis on interdiction and attack of second echelon forces, including theater nuclear delivery capacity and C³I assets. Use of non-strategic nuclear forces in SIOP support roles will be planned as a secondary function.

(S) To the extent feasible, and without unacceptable degradation of our ability to execute the SIOP, strategic nuclear forces which are capable of executing non-strategic nuclear options may be tasked for those missions; however, release of strategic nuclear forces to such missions is not automatic, and non-strategic nuclear planning should not depend on strategic force contributions.

(S) In order to maximize the uncertainty of Soviet Union risk assessments and employment planning, United States non-strategic nuclear forces deployment and normal operations will maintain a survivable retaliatory strike capability and a high state of readiness to support rapid response to NCA direction. Operations, to include C³I and exercises, will be conducted to minimize the likelihood of, and incentives for, a Soviet pre-emptive strike.

V. Resulting Force Requirements (U)

(S) U.S. nuclear forces and supporting C³I also must be:

(1) capable of assuring warning and attack characterization and capable of controlling the forces in the prosecution of the war;

(2) capable of responding to any initial attack on the United States with preplanned strike options;

(3) capable of carrying out controlled nuclear counter-attack over a protracted period while maintaining a reserve of nuclear forces sufficient for trans- and post-attack protection and coercion;

(4) capable of attacking a full range of targets, to include hard and superhard installations, both on a time urgent and on a sustained basis;

(5) and capable of being integrated effectively with general purpose forces to achieve theater campaign objectives.

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VI. Nuclear Force Development and Modernization (U)

(S) U.S. nuclear forces development and modernization should be designed to continue to deter nuclear attack on the United States and its allies. The cornerstone of our modernization effort is the program enunciated in NSDD-12 and the NATO decision to modernize its deterrent force. Consequently, our programmatic steps must:

(1) provide greater emphasis on a multiplicity of nuclear systems and basing modes to strengthen the overall capability of our nuclear forces;

(2) provide forces and associated C³I that achieve greater survivability, endurance and effectiveness through active and passive measures;

(3) include a subset of strategic offensive forces and associated C³I systems that have a high probability of enduring survival in a nuclear war to provide protection and coercion in the post-major exchange situation;

(4) implement, as the highest priority for non-strategic nuclear force modernization, the program to modernize NATO's armory with deployment of GLCM and of Pershing II;

(5) give high priority for non-strategic C³I systems which assure the ability to execute nuclear strike plans. This must be followed by the integration of national and tactical capabilities which contribute to the acquisition and tracking of second and third echelon mobile targets, poststrike reconnaissance and damage assessment of those targets;

(6) provide a national level C³I system that has a high probability of assuring connectivity between the NCA, the forces, and sensors;

(7) provide for modernization of strategic defenses including air and space defenses; a vigorous research and development program will be conducted on a ballistic missile defense system;

(8) emphasize development programs for nuclear warheads which reduce the usage of special nuclear materials; and for modernized nuclear systems having improved military effectiveness, safety, security, survivability, and endurance; and for upgrading stockpile weapons to enhance safety and security.

(9) and recognize that either threshold or comprehensive bans on the testing of nuclear devices can have a significant impact on the achievement of the above and on the reliability of our existing nuclear stockpile.

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VII. Relationship to Arms Control (U)

(S) Arms control can complement military forces in support of U.S. objectives and national security. It is essential that arms control agreements provide the opportunity for the U.S. to develop and possess sufficient military capability relative to that allowed to potential adversaries to execute the U.S. national military strategy with reasonable assurance of success.

VIII. Issues (U)

(U) There are no issues generated by this section which require addressal by the NSC.

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