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DISCUSSION PAPER

TOPIC: In determining broad priorities for the allocation of resources in peacetime and wartime planning, what comes first: NATO or Southwest Asia?

Key Considerations

- The security of Western Europe and the assurance of continued access to Persian Gulf oil are both vital to the security of the United States. Given the sustained buildup of Soviet capabilities worldwide and the heightened threat in Southwest Asia, and because U.S. forces for the mid-term are insufficient to achieve all military objectives simultaneously, our strategy will require difficult choices.

- Western Europe is vital to the U.S. because of its geostrategic position, economic power and military contribution. For this reason, NATO and the LOCs leading thereto are second only to the defense of North America in priority for global wartime planning.

- Southwest Asia is vital to the Western allies (and hence to the U.S.) because the loss of access to Persian Gulf oil would leave Europe and Japan exposed to severe political and economic coercion.

- In a major war in either or both theaters, it must be assumed that neither the West nor the East would be able to obtain oil from the Persian Gulf, especially for the first few months. Control of the region during wartime, however, would give either side a significant military advantage.

- Unless the United States and its allies undertake a sustained effort to improve their military posture in both NATO and Southwest Asia, we will face a situation that seriously threatens our ability to deter or counter Soviet use of military power for purposes of coercion or direct aggression in both regions.

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- Southwest Asia is exposed, and Soviet military posturing in region continues unabated. No combination of regional forces alone, no matter how determined, could prevent Soviet military victory. European NATO members are neither willing nor able to provide substantial combat power to Southwest Asia contingencies. Yet the region is vital to all Western partners. U.S. rapid deployment potential offers the West the best chance of protecting our vital interests.

- The maintenance of a credible deterrent and warfighting posture in NATO requires a substantial military effort by all NATO members throughout this decade.

- U.S. cannot carry a disproportionate burden of protecting Western interests; burdensharing for both regions is a necessity. However, if the U.S. does less in NATO, European NATO will probably do less. The essence of the dilemma is that the United States does not have the resources to close the gap in both NATO and Southwest Asia.

Discussion

- If the U.S. does less in NATO, either in peacetime or in wartime planning, there is potential for weakening NATO cohesion and for reinforcing European pressures for accommodation with the Soviet Union. U.S. actions must be sensitive to Soviet efforts to divide the Alliance.

- There is a close strategic connection between NATO and Southwest Asia; a loss of access to regional oil could severely strain the Alliance. There is also a likelihood that Soviet military aggression initiated in either theater would soon involve combat in both theaters.

- In order for the U.S. to maintain a credible deterrent, the Soviet Union must be confronted with the prospect of a major conflict with the U.S. should it threaten the oil resources of the Gulf. To achieve this goal, the U.S. must allocate a large investment for capabilities which could be used in Southwest Asia.

- U.S. and NATO forces have significant capability to deal with the Soviet threat to Europe now. The same is not true in Southwest Asia.

- In order to meet a wide range of contingencies, our existing and programmed forces emphasize flexibility; they can deploy and operate in a number of threat environments. The current programming emphasis placed on mobility forces significantly contributes to this flexibility.

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DISCUSSION PAPER

TOPIC: What military force capability should be developed to counter the Soviet threat to U.S. interests in Southwest Asia (SWA)?

CONCLUSION: To acquire, by the end of the decade, sufficient capability to have a reasonable assurance of achieving U.S. wartime objectives in Southwest Asia while seeking to limit the likelihood of expansion of the conflict beyond the region and its supporting lines of communication (LOCs). For this issue, the key U.S. wartime objectives are to maintain control of and protect the Persian Gulf oilfields, transshipment points, and lines of communication.

A. Underlying Strategic Concept: A deterrent and warfighting strategy is necessary which recognizes that Western access to Persian Gulf oil is of vital interest to the United States and that the U.S. is the only free world nation capable of deterring in the region.

- Deterrent component. Deterrence is the first tier of defense planning. It combines in-theater capabilities (to include substantial and continuous military presence in the Indian Ocean/Southwest Asia), with rapidly deployable forces, a clear commitment to combat Soviet forces in the theater and the potential for escalation.

- Warfighting component. The second tier of defense planning is to combat Soviet forces in the theater to dissuade them from continuing their attack. U.S. forces would conduct military operations in the region in conjunction with allies and friends to achieve U.S. wartime objectives. U.S. forces would be committed to engage fully Soviet forces in the region in order to prevent them from gaining control over the Persian Gulf. The third tier of planning would be to prepare for executing counter-offensives on other fronts where the U.S. has advantages. The potential for this conflict to become global must be recognized and planned for.

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B. Other options considered

1. A lesser force capability. For deterrence, this would require greater reliance on the threat of U.S. military actions outside Southwest Asia. In the event deterrence fails, this would require execution of in-theater military action and counteroffensives on other fronts of clear U.S. advantage early on, in order to dissuade the Soviet Union from continuing its attack.

2. A greater force capability clearly sufficient to achieve U.S. wartime objectives without resorting to expansion of the conflict beyond Southwest Asia and its supporting lines of communication.

C. Facts

- The United States has two primary security interests in Southwest Asia: First, to prevent the Soviet Union from acquiring political-military hegemony in the region; second, to maintain continued Western access to Persian Gulf oil.
- The Soviet Union possesses a marked advantage to deploy and sustain forces in Southwest Asia. That advantage will remain throughout the decade.
- The Soviet Union enjoys options of attacking on other fronts at least as attractive as ours.
- In order to project and sustain U.S. forces in Southwest Asia, the U.S. is dependent on substantial support from intra- and extraregional allies and friends. There is a direct correlation between the size of the planned U.S. force commitment and the degree of required support.

D. Key Considerations

- It is in the interest of the U.S. to limit the scope of any conflict with the Soviet Union. However, due to the global military capabilities of both superpowers and the interrelationship of strategic theaters, the likelihood that any U.S.-Soviet conflict would expand beyond one theater to other theaters must be recognized and planned for. In any event, a U.S.-Soviet conflict in Southwest Asia will produce substantial escalatory pressures.

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- Deployed forces must be reinforced and sustained over lengthy lines of communication that are subject to hostile Soviet action.

- The United States must take precautionary actions worldwide to protect its vital interests. These actions will include mobilization and a heightened state of readiness for both strategic nuclear and conventional forces, both home and abroad. Similar actions can be expected from our allies.

- If a conflict between the superpowers takes place in Southwest Asia, the outcome would have a critical impact on the economies of the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan.

- It is in the interest of the U.S. to limit any U.S.-Soviet conflict to conventional means. However, deterrence is enhanced by an integrated strategy which compels the Soviet Union to reckon with the probability of nuclear escalation and the resulting risks and costs. Additionally, geographic escalation and nuclear escalation considerations are linked.

- Our military assessments indicate that, in the near-term, a successful in-theater defense against a determined Soviet attack cannot be achieved.

- By acquiring visible, robust conventional warfighting capability, the United States can hope to frustrate Soviet plans to establish political-military hegemony in the region in peacetime. In wartime, this warfighting capability provides an alternative to spiraling escalation or defeat.

E. The Bottom Line

- The threat of geographic escalation is and will remain an essential element of U.S. strategy but is not a substitute for adequate military capability.

- In the near term, existing Soviet advantages mean that our warfighting strategy must necessarily place significant emphasis on geographic escalation.

- The U.S. force capability established as an objective for Southwest Asia will enhance deterrence and will provide additional flexibility in the event deterrence fails. Once fielded, we will have a better chance of preventing the Soviet Union from undermining our vital interests in the region without being faced with the necessity to escalate the conflict beyond Southwest Asia.

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NSSD 1-82, Part III, Section C

MILITARY OBJECTIVES

I. Global

A. Introduction

The wartime strategy of the U.S. is to employ military force to achieve our political objectives and secure early war termination on terms favorable to the U.S. and its allies. In doing so, the U.S. must plan, in conjunction with allies, for a successful defense in a global war against the Soviet Union and its allies. At the same time, the U.S. will seek to limit the scope of a U.S.-Soviet conflict to the extent commensurate with protecting U.S. vital interests. Contingency planning should, however, include options for military actions in regions of clear U.S. advantage to dissuade the Soviets from continuing their attack. In this context, the threat of counteroffensives elsewhere is an essential element of U.S. strategy, but is not a substitute for adequate military capability to defend U.S. interests in the area in which they are threatened. Moreover, a decision to expand a war geographically must take account of the facts that the Soviet Union enjoys options of attacking on other fronts at least as attractive as ours, and that geographic expansion and nuclear escalation considerations are linked.

In contingencies involving direct Soviet aggression, the U.S. would expect to play a major role in defending U.S. and allies interests. In lower order, non-Soviet contingencies, we plan to rely on regional states and other friends and allies to the extent possible to deter or counter threats to common interests.

B. Priorities for Wartime Resource Allocation

Due to the global military capabilities of the Soviet Union and the interrelationship of strategic theaters, the likelihood that any U.S.-Soviet conflict would expand beyond one theater to other theaters must be recognized and planned for. This does not mean that we must have the capability to successfully engage Soviet forces simultaneously on all fronts. Rather, this means procuring balanced forces and establishing priorities for sequential operations among theaters to ensure that we, in conjunction with our allies, apply our military power in the most effective way. This includes preventing the Soviet Union from being able to force the U.S. to choose between initiating nuclear war and accepting the loss of vital Western interests. While recognizing that the political and military situations at the time of war will bear heavily on strategic decisions, the following priorities will apply for wartime planning:

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- The highest priority is the defense of North America (including Hawaii, Alaska and Caribbean SLOCs), followed by the NATO areas and the LOCs leading there to.

- The next priority is ensuring access to the oil in Southwest Asia, followed by defense of U.S. Pacific allies and the LOCs for the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and the defense of other friendly nations in Latin America and Africa.

In areas other than NATO and Southwest Asia, U.S. actions will be designed to protect essential U.S. interests, take advantage of Soviet vulnerabilities, and divert Soviet attention and forces from Europe and Southwest Asia.

Priorities for peacetime resource allocation may not always correlate to the above wartime priorities since special emphasis on specific capabilities may be required.

C. Equitable Burdensharing. Many nations with living standards equal to the U.S. contribute markedly less to the common defense. In 1982 and beyond, U.S. "quiet diplomacy" must be much firmer in insisting upon increased defense efforts by affluent nations which possess the potential to do more in the defense realm.

II. Regional Objectives

In the event of war with the Soviet Union, regional objectives provide only rough guidelines and must be viewed in a global perspective.

A. Europe

The security of Europe is closely linked to that of the United States. The unprecedented challenges to Western security, coupled with a continuing growth in economic interdependence, mandate a firm commitment by nations on both sides of the Atlantic to the coalition warfare strategy of NATO. While intra-Alliance problems such as burdensharing and anti-nuclear movements exist, it will remain important that we continue to recognize that the defense of Europe is vital to the national security of the United States.

NATO strategy MC14/3 stresses defense along the forward edge of NATO territory, supported by the possible NATO initiation of nuclear escalation if NATO is losing conventionally. This nuclear linkage -- and uncertainty -- is important to deterrence. But the Europeans must not be permitted to use

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nuclear linkage as an excuse for not funding conventional defense forces. Our policy should be to support MC14/3, while stressing that nuclear parity means a strong conventional defense is necessary for deterrence as well as for defense. While improvements are required across the full spectrum of the Alliance's military capabilities, a major increase over current efforts is especially required from all other members with regard to conventional capability. Without such an increase the nuclear threshold could be lowered and the Allies become more vulnerable to nuclear threats as the Soviets continue increasing their capabilities. Additionally, NATO should enhance deterrence through closer Allied coherence, and clearer expression of political will.

Within the context outlined above, the following are the specific U.S. military objectives for the European region:

Wartime Objectives

- To protect the territorial integrity of Western Europe.
- To defeat a Warsaw Pact conventional attack with conventional forces in a forward defense, and to deter Soviet use of chemical or nuclear weapons in accordance with current NATO strategy.
- To fully engage all NATO members in the conflict.
- To be able to sustain a war at least as long as the Warsaw Pact can.
- To weaken the Warsaw Pact's ability to wage war by engaging Pact forces on their own territory, disrupting their LOCs, and fragmenting the cohesion of the Pact alliance.
- To establish and maintain control of Atlantic LOCs.

Peacetime Military Objectives

- To enhance deterrence through improvements in NATO's conventional defense capabilities while also improving nuclear and chemical forces.
- To achieve increased Allied contributions to the defense of Western Europe and from Allies capable of doing so increased contributions in other areas of mutual benefit, to include Southwest Asia.

- To secure a more effective division of labor within NATO through cooperative efforts, such as Host Nation Support Agreements.

B. Near East/Southwest Asia. The United States has two primary national security interests in the region. The first is to prevent the Soviet Union from acquiring political-military hegemony in the region. This requires that the U.S. support the sovereignty of regional states friendly to the U.S. The second is to maintain continued access to Persian Gulf oil. This means that the U.S., in concert with intra- and extraregional allies and friends must be prepared to meet threats of any magnitude, from internal subversion to large scale Soviet aggression.

In this context, defense policy has three overriding objectives:

1. Deter Soviet overt military aggression and protect Western access to oil. To do this, U.S. defense planning has three tiers. First, we must plan for and demonstrate our ability to project the RDJTF -- Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force -- quickly into the region to prevent a Soviet fait accompli. Additional support from intra- and extraregional allies and friends must be obtained to support RDJTF requirements. Our private pressure upon them for realistic combined planning must be unremitting. Second, if deterrence fails, we must plan to combat the Soviets in the theater to dissuade them from continued aggression. The third tier of Defense planning is to prepare for executing counter-offensives on other fronts where the U.S. has advantages. Throughout this planning process, the potential for this conflict to become global must be recognized and planned for.

2. Maintain Israel's qualitative military advantage over any realistic combination of Arab foes. The latest SNIE concludes that Israel's military superiority is much stronger today than at the time of the 1973 war and projects that it will be much stronger in FY 87 than today. As the most militarily powerful state in the region, Israel's assistance would be of considerable benefit in the course of a conflict with the Soviets, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean, as augmentation for the Southern Flank.

3. Support moderate states against external aggression and subversion. This requires U.S. arms sales to help strengthen substantially the self-defense capabilities of key states in the region.

To accomplish these objectives for the region, the U.S. expects regional states to contribute to the extent possible to their own defense as well as assisting in supporting the employment of U.S. forces. Allies will be expected to offer their facilities for the deployment of U.S. forces to Southwest Asia. Additionally, they should be encouraged to

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contribute militarily to meeting specific threats if such participation would not substantially reduce their war fighting capability in their home region and would provide a beneficial contribution to the conflict.

Within the context outlined above, the following are the specific U.S. military objectives for the Near East, Southwest and South Asia region:

Wartime and Crisis Objectives

- To secure the oil fields, transshipment points and sea lines of communications essential to Western security. (This includes threats of all magnitude from internal subversion to Soviet aggression.)

- To preserve the independence of Israel.

- To engage friendly regional states, Western Allies and other extra-regional states in the execution of our strategy.

Peacetime Military Objectives

- To prevent Soviet hegemony and extension of influence.

- To acquire, by the end of the decade, sufficient capability to have reasonable assurance of achieving U.S. wartime objectives in Southwest Asia while seeking to limit the likelihood of expansion of the conflict beyond the region and its supporting lines of communication (LOCs).

- To maintain Israel's qualitative military advantage over any combination of Arab foes.

- To support moderate states against external aggression and subversion.

- To ensure access to a network of military facilities in the region for the rapid introduction and sustainment of sizable U.S. forces.

- To obtain overflight, landing, bunkering and access to enroute facilities for the deployment and support of U.S. combat forces.

- To obtain military contributions (including agreements for combat forces) from selected Allies in support of U.S. objectives in the region.

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- To maintain a strong naval presence in the area, together with as substantial a presence on land as can be managed given regional sensitivities and political constraints.

- To increase peacetime planning with regional states for wartime contingencies, including host nation support, prepositioning and combat roles for indigenous forces.

C. Far East. Our foremost peacetime objective in the Far East is, in conjunction with our allies and other friends in the region, to prevent the Soviet Union from expanding its influence in East Asia and the Pacific. Asian security relationships are fundamental to offsetting successfully Soviet global ambitions. U.S. strategy in East Asia and the Pacific is predicated on the stabilizing relationship between two security anchors. One anchor in Northeast Asia depends on cooperation among the U.S., Korea, and Japan, as well as the U.S. relationship with China. The other anchor in the Pacific Basin binds the U.S. to Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the somewhat more loosely to the remainder of ASEAN. Continued U.S. and allied force improvements and strengthened U.S. security relationships are required to establish and maintain an effective defensive network secured at both ends of the region. A direct U.S.-Soviet conflict in Asia is unlikely except in the context of a global war. Therefore, although other contingencies in the region could involve U.S. forces in hostilities short of U.S.-Soviet conflict, regional wartime objectives in Asia listed below are those supportive of global wartime objectives.

Wartime Objectives

- To maintain control of the Pacific lines of communication, including those to the Indian Ocean, and the bases needed to support the global strategy.

- To fulfill commitments to the Asian allies, given particular emphasis to protection of U.S. bases in the region, obtain allied support in the conflict, and seek to preclude a Soviet decision to redeploy forces for use against NATO.

- To have Japan provide for its own defense, including SLOC and air protection to 1,000 miles, and if possible, contribute more broadly to regional defense efforts.

- To have the PRC maintain military initiatives that would fix Soviet ground, air and naval forces in the USSR's Far Eastern territories.

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Peacetime Military Objectives

- To transform our relationship with Japan into an active defense partnership in which Japan significantly increases its own defense capabilities and, over time, contributes more broadly to regional defense.

- To continue to develop our relationship with the PRC in ways which maintain the PRC as a counterweight to the Soviet Union, enhance the durability of U.S.-PRC ties, and lay the foundation for closer future cooperation as appropriate.

- To maintain sufficient U.S. and allied strength on the Korean Peninsula to ensure stability there, and, if deterrence fails, assist the ROK in defeating hostile forces. Enhance deterrence, primarily by assisting the ROK to become increasingly self-sufficient in its defense capabilities.

- To increase peacetime planning with our allies for wartime contingencies.

- To have other regional states assume a greater share of the responsibility for the common defense and assist them in improving their capabilities to fulfill it.

- To improve the support of regional states for U.S. power projection from the Western Pacific to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf.

- To prevent the Soviet Union or Vietnam from achieving a dominant presence in Southeast Asia from which to foster actions inimical to our interests and those of our allies.

D. Western Hemisphere

The defense of North America is this nation's primary security concern. Since World War II, defense of the Western Hemisphere has meant that the U.S. would maintain strategic nuclear deterrence, develop closer relations with Canada and Mexico, and foster collective security arrangements among Latin American countries. It is becoming increasingly clear that a secure hemisphere is no longer a foregone conclusion. The U.S. must continue to build on interests shared with Canada and Mexico, while viewing Latin America not as a Third World area removed from the traditional focus of U.S. strategy, but as a contiguous region whose future bears directly on the security of the hemisphere as a whole.

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Latin America, and especially the Caribbean/Central American region, is an area with which we are closely associated by virtue of our Gulf Coast and Mexican borders, our dependence in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and the critical Panama Canal waterway. Nearly half of our trade and two-thirds of our imported oil pass through the Caribbean. Moreover, in event of war, half of NATO's supplies would transit by sea from Gulf ports through the Caribbean to Europe.

The South American continent is also a focus of major U.S. interests. Though strategically less pivotal to us than the Caribbean, South America includes several nations with which we enjoy long-standing close relations and which are among our most important trade partners. In addition, the east coast of South America faces the South Atlantic sea routes which represent a major petroleum lifeline for Europe and the United States.

Wartime and Crisis Objectives

- To defend North America (including Hawaii, Alaska and the continguous Caribbean Basin).
- To neutralize Soviet and other hostile forces in the Caribbean Basin.
- To control LOCs in the Caribbean, South Atlantic, and South Pacific including the Panama Canal.
- To prevent further aggression and subversion against regional states by forces hostile to U.S. interests.

Peacetime Military Objectives

- To modernize the strategic air defense system for North America.
- To reverse Communist gains in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Grenada and other areas in Latin America.
- To broaden regional military-to-military contacts and seek the active military cooperation of key countries in regional territorial defense, in the security of Caribbean Basin, South Atlantic and South Pacific sea lines of communication and in facilitating air and ocean movement.

- To maintain, or acquire as needed, base and facilities access, logistical support, and operating, transit, and overflight rights.

- To increase the level and exercise tempo of U.S. military presence in the region.

E. Africa. Africa's mineral resources (including oil), plus its strategic location astride the sea lanes from the Persian Gulf, make it of prime importance in economic (and therefore political) terms; the military requirement for the West is essentially preemptive: to deny the Soviets (and Libya) control over key African states and territory from which they could interdict the supply of minerals and oil from Africa and the Middle East. In case of a military struggle for control of the Middle East, Africa is important as a strategic territory for the movement of major Western forces to the area via the Mediterranean, across North Africa, or across Central Africa. It is also equally important, as a base for facilities from which both air and naval forces could operate to destroy Soviet naval threats to the sea lines of communication in the Indian Ocean, around the Cape, and the south Atlantic.

In peacetime, in addition to being a major source for minerals important to U.S., West European, and Japanese industry, Africa remains an important area for the political contest of Western and Soviet Bloc values in the Third World. The West must counter, and the U.S. must play a larger role in meeting, the Soviet/proxy challenge. Principal elements currently available are economic, security assistance, and special operations. Successful implementation of a counter-Soviet strategy in Africa will also require the development of a climate of supportive Congressional and public opinion, and the restoration of substantial "internal security" and covert action capabilities.

Wartime and Crisis Objectives

- To employ air and naval forces to neutralize Soviet or other hostile forces (especially Libya) in strategic locations in the region and adjacent waters.

- To protect access to and deny Soviet use of the region's mineral resources, key facilities, and LOCs.

Peacetime Military Objectives

- To gain base access and transit rights in pro-Western African states for the deployment and subsequent support of U.S. forces to Africa, Southwest Asia, South Atlantic, and contiguous areas and work to deny the Soviets similar access.

- To assist countries throughout Africa that are the targets of Soviet proxy, Libyan and Ethiopian aggressive, subversive or terrorist actions.