DRAFT

~~TOP SECRET~~

20 December 1971

U.S. Strategic Objectives and Force Posture

Summary of Issues for Decision

E.2.A

JS 3.3(b)(5)(9)

Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
Date: 25 JUL 2013 Authority: EO 13526
Declassify: ____ Deny in Full: ____
Declassify in Part: X
Reason: 3.3(b)(1)(5),(9),(8)
MDR: 13-M-2840

QS TRANSFERRED/RECOMMEND RELEASE
TRANSFER FOR DIRECT REPLY - DOD

I. Issues for Decision

The DPRC has directed a review of strategic force policy in order to provide a basis for more refined, comprehensive, and integrated Presidential guidance than is contained in NSDM-16. A series of inter-agency studies were integrated and summarized in the Executive Summary.

The many issues that emerged about U.S. strategic nuclear policy objectives, their relative priorities, and how to attain these objecgives are so interrelated that most decisions in individual issues should be made within a framework of basic choices regarding overall U.S. strategic nuclear policy. Consequently, the study group developed a set of "General Strategic Alternatives" which deal primarily with strategic offensive forces and command/control. A second set of decisions concerns strategic

[redacted]

and their interrelations.

[redacted]

Decision B. Strategic Defense Alternatives. Should the strategic defensive posture be:

1. Minimum defense to support warning and surveillance;

2. Defense against small attacks;

3. Defense of strategic retaliatory forces and the NCA;

[redacted]
Downgraded at 2 year intervals
Declassified after 10 years

~~TOP SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: JUL 22 2013

Copy 1 of 20 copies

13-M-2840

4. Defense against small attacks and hard-site defense of land-based missiles; or

5. Defense to enforce favorable war outcomes?

[redacted]

-- Specifics of U.S. SALT proposals.

-- Whether new initiatives in the deployment of strategic weapons are necessary at this time in response to continued growth in Soviet strategic forces and, if so, what these initiatives should be. A broad policy issue (diplomatic sufficiency) related to this question is, however, discussed in Section II below.

II. Factors Bearing on Evaluation of Alternatives

Decisions on the above policy issues depend on judgments regarding many factors. Four factors seem particularly important:

-- Strategic nuclear policy objectives and their relative priorities.

-- Hedging strategic force capabilities against uncertainties.

-- Support of U.S. allies.

-- Views in the strategic balance.

A. Strategic Nuclear Policy Objectives and Their Relative Priorities.

The basic U.S. policy regarding strategic forces "is to deny other countries the ability ti impose their will on the United States and its allies under the weight of strategic military superiority." 1/ The President has further stated that, while he is committed to keeping U.S. strategic forces strong, he is equally committed to seeking a stable strategic relationship with the Soviet Union through arms limitation negotiations.

[redacted]

There is, however, disagreement about adding the following objective:

[redacted]

The first two of these objectives take priority over the others. The remaining objectives may compete or conflict. For example, maintenance of strategic stability may conflict with measures designed to limit damage to the United States and its allies if deterrence fails. Policy judgments are required to strike a balance in the actions we take to achieve competing objectives.

1/ "United States Foreign Policy for the 1970's," A Report by President Richard Nixon to the Congress, February 18, 1970, page 92.

2/ While not a matter of public policy, the study group agreed that early war termination is an ~~TOP SECRET~~ objective.

In order to simplify matters, the objectives are grouped, in subsequent discussion of the General Strategic Alternatives, into four categories -- deterrence, support of allies, strategic stability, and goals if deterrence fails.

Currently, strategic sufficiency is defined by NSDM 16. But many areas of strategic force planning are not addressed by NSDM 16. Moreover, there have been serious questions of interpretation of some of the original NSDM 16 sufficiency criteria:

-- There is agreement that the first criterion (second-strike capability) is a necessary element of U.S. strategic policy, but there is no consensus as to what, if any, additional capabilities are essential for deterrence of hostile Soviet actions.

-- There is agreement that the second criterion (crisis stability) is an important policy element, but there are differing views as to its planning implications.

JS 3.3(b)(5)(9)

-- There is agreement that, with prudent planning of strategic offensive forces, the third criterion (deny the Soviets any significant advantage in U/I damage) would be satisfied. But, there is some question whether this criterion has any effect on planning forces.

[redacted] The President's decision leading to these positions indicate a willingness to forego an area ABM defense if necessary to achieve an equitable SAL agreement. Choice of one of the strategic defense alternatives discussed in this paper would resolve this ambiguity.

The fourth NSDM 16 criterion, together with decisions by the Secretary of Defense (based on Presidential guidance) not to fund programs for improving missile counterforce capability, implies that [redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5)

Decisions on the major policy issues will depend on judgments about the priorities and feasible means to attain our strategic objectives.

There is little disagreement about what our objectives are; there are wide differences in perception about what it takes to support them. The complexity of these questions can be reduced by identifying issues that could result in significant changes in our strategic posture:

-- Is some absolute level of retaliatory capability a sufficient deterrent of attacks on the United States or does deterrence require a capability for ensuring relative advantage in war outcomes?

-- If an absolute level of retaliatory capability is adequate, is greater flexibility in the employment of U.S. strategic offensive forces necessary to meet our objectives?

[redacted]

-- Should flexibility be extended to include substantial improvements in missile counterforce capabilities to support additional attacks options or war-fighting goals?

The General Strategic Alternatives are organized to cover these issues.

B. Hedging

A dominant factor in the size, capabilities, and cost of our strategic forces is hedging against future threats to thse forces. Maintenance of the strategic force capabilities of any of the General Strategic Alternatives in the face of future uncertainties depends upon four hedging elements:

-- The degree of conservation used in estimating future threats and their effects on U.S. capabilities.

~~-- Appropriate R&D programs to develop knowledge of new~~ threat technologies and to reduce the leadtime to deploy new countermeasures.

-- The size of various components of U.S. strategic forces.

-- Appropriate diversity in the mix of strategic offensive systems to compound Soviet first strike problems, to hedge against unexpected degradation of weapon systems, and to hedge against unexpected threats. These complex considerations are regularly made in the normal defense planning process.

[redacted]

There are a variety of alternative approaches diversifying the offensive force mix. The costs of the General Strategic Alternatives shown in Table 1 below are given as a function of these force mix categories:

-- We could maintain a high level of pre-launch survival and penetration capability in each of our current systems, ICBMs, SLBMs, and bomber (triad).

-- We could keep three systems, but maintain high pre-launch survival and penetration capability in only two components (reduced triad).

-- We could phase out one force component, maintaining high pre-launch and penetration capability in the remaining two (Diad).

-- We could have three components, but stretch out our modernization program by, for example, modernizing only one component at a time (mini-triad).

Although a decision on strategic offensive force mix policy is not required at this time, there are widely held, but erroneous, views on the current policy. Some assume there is a force planning requirement to maintain an independent retaliatory capability in each force component. Although our forces currently have this characteristic, there is no agency which takes the position that we must maintain an independent retaliatory capability in each component against future threats. OSD 3.3(b)(5),(8)

The current policy is expressed in the President's Second Annual Review of Foreign Policy: " ... we will ... continue to review our forces in the light of changing threats and technology to ensure that we have the best possible mix to meet the requirements of sufficiency."

A policy issue which does need considertation now is the interpretation of the second NSDM 16 criterion on crisis stability. Of particular importance is the significance for crisis stability,

[redacted]

The term "crisis stability" refers to the degree to which the United States and the Soviets would tend to avoid the use of nuclear weapons in a severe crisis or lower level military conflict. While many factors bear on such incentives, the planning issue forcuses on the characteristics of the U.S. posture that might increase or decrease any Soviet incentive to strike first.

[redacted]

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

-- All agree that confidence in control of U.S. strategic forces and acquiring information on the status of forces and damage is important.

governments in case of nuclear accident are important

-- All agree that some level of flexibility in the employment of fofrces contributes to stability in a crisis situation.

-- All agree that rapid, direct communications between governments and procedures in case of nuclear accident are important factors.

OSD 3.3(b)(5)(8)

[redacted]

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

[redacted]

C. Support of Allies

The General Strategic Alternatives reflect the various perceptions about the role of strategic weapons in supporting our Allies. There are several problems underlying these issues -- the nature of our commitments, the objectives to be supported, and maintaining the confidence of allies in this support.

Commitments. This study did not attempt an reexamination of U.S. policy on commitments. It did conclude that existing commitments vary widely in their specificity, in the likelihood of real threats against various allies, in the degree of vital U.S. interests involved, and in the problems of U.S. credibility. Some deliberate ambiguity preserves our range of options for response to a particular situation. However, our Allies (e.g., NATO and Japan) depend heavily on the U.S. nuclear shield for their security. Our support also reinforces U.S. efforts to inhibit the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Objectives. How to attain our objectives for such support -- deterring attacks on or coercion of our Allies, and dealing with such attacks if deterrence fails -- depends on the relationship of our strategic forces to our theater nuclear forces and conventional forces:

-- All agree that U.S. strategic forces alone cannot provide a credible deterrent to attacks on our allies. The Soviets have had the capability to retaliate directly against the United States for many years. China is expected to have such a capability in the future.

-- Some believe that strategic forces have little direct utility as an extended deterrent. Apart from posing uncertain risks that an attack on U.S. allies might lead to general war, they believe our support rests on theater capabilities, nuclear and conventional, and that they must be planned independently of our strategic forces. Strategic forces should then be planned on the basis of general war scenarios.

-- Others believe that our strategic forces have significant utility as an extended deterrent. Strategic forces form part of a continuum of responses to aggression. Our theater nuclear and conventional forces couple and extend our strategic nuclear commitment down to any level of aggression. With appropriate planning, our total force capabilities can demonstrate a clear path of escalation to all-out war, coupling loss at one level to the risk to U.S. escalation to another. Strategic forces, coupled with theater nuclear options, create substantial uncertainties -- risks of seriously underestimating potential U.S. responses. With appropriate attack options the large gaps between levels of conflict, which might tend to decouple them, can be precluded.

These differences in perception and issues about what measures are necessary are reflected in the General Strategic Alternatives. They also bear on the larger questions of confidence.

Confidence. The confidence of our Allies in U.S. commitments is a most important element of our diplomatic and military posture. A decided weakening in allied confidence could have many undesirable effects, including the proliferation of nuclear weapons, or the seeking of political accommodation with the USSR. Of immediate concern is the possible erosion of allied confidence in the light of the continued build up of Soviet strategic armaments.

-- Some believe that allied confidence is already starting to erode, and we must take action to restore confidence.

-- Others argue that there have been problems of confidence for many years, evidenced by the British and French nuclear forces, multilateral force issues, and the necessity for intensive consultations within the NPG. Recent erosion, if any, is a matter of readjustment to the meaning of the new circumstances, but include worries over U.S. conventional withdrawals, MBFR, and uncertain affects of detente. Only if such an erosion leads to a concrete perception that our allies were decoupled from the U.S. nuclear shield, would major action be necessary. In this view, we are nowhere near that point; we still have room for lesser confidence measures. Such confidence measures are related to issues about the strategic balance.

D. The Strategic Balance

One issue, common to all General Strategic Alternatives is the relative balance of U.S. and Soviet strategic forces. Under all alternatives it is possible that we could have numerically inferior forces, even if they fully met our strategic requirements. Thus, there is an issue about the further, explicit requirement for the "diplomatic sufficiency" of our strategic force posture.

OSD 3.3(b)(8)

-- Some hold that large visible imbalances in U.S.-Soviet strategic force levels which favor the Soviets, [redacted] could undermine allied confidence in the U.S. will and ability to honor its commitments, and could make the Soviets more inclined to exercise military coercion in theater crises. They argue that such imbalances must either be prevented by SALT or that the United States should deploy more strategic forces.

OSD 3.3(b)(5),(6)

-- Others believe that a well hedged posture designed to support our military objectives precludes any significant military superiority to the Soviet Union -- any credible form of first strike capability; [redacted] since many other measures of relative power can affect perceptions -- technological quality, numbers of warheads, megatonnage as well as numbers of launchers; and that there is therefore an adequate basis for educating our allies about our own evaluation of real sufficiency, and of the complexities of defining the balance with simple numerical indices.

At issue, then, apart from the Alternatives discussed below, is ~~whether or not we need to buy more forces to restore an apparent~~ imbalance in weapons inventories with the Soviets as a political, not military requirement.

III. General Strategic Alternatives

The major policy elements characterizing the four General Strategic Alternatives are discussed in this section. A more detailed discussion of these policy elements is presented in the Executive Summary, pages 89-132. The costs of forces to support these General Strategic Alternatives are illustrated in Table 1 on page 25 below.

Alternative 1. [redacted]

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

OSD 3.3(b)(2),(5),(6)

[redacted]

The number of weapons resulting from our hedging policies would probably also provide some limited missile capability to destroy hard missile launchers, but programs intended to improve this counterforce capability would not be pursued.

JS 3.3(b)(5)(9)

Relation to Objectives

[redacted]

2. Support of Allies. This alternative would seek to deter attacks on our allies [redacted]

3. Strategic Stability

OSD 3.3(b)(5)(6)

This alternative is consistent with the view that crisis stability can be achieved by avoiding postures that seem to give the United States an effective first strike disarming or damage limiting capability and by maintaining forces that ensure the Soviets could not gain significant advantage in U/I damage [redacted] by striking first.

15 12

4. Goals of Deterrence Fails

[redacted]

Key Issues JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

The following issues have been raised concerning General Strategic Alternative 1:

1. Is a U/I retaliatory capability a sufficient deterrent of nuclear attack? Some maintain that the ability to inflict a substantial absolute level of damage in retaliation is sufficient to deter. Others argue that it is also necessary that the Soviet Union not perceive a significant advantage in surviving U/I and military assets. Still others assert that, even given the capability to inflict high absolute levels of damage, we need a capability to respond selectively to deter less than all-out nuclear attacks.

2. Would U.S. responses in a crisis be adequate? Some argue that the present options are sufficient to ensure an adequate response, others hold that more options are necessary.

3. Is the extension of the U.S. deterrent to our allies credible under this posture? Some maintain that the condition of parity between the United States and the Soviet Union causes our allies to doubt that we would risk our own destruction to defend them. Others assert that the risk of escalation posed to the Soviets by a well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability is a sufficient deterrent and is credible to allies.

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5),(8)

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

Alternative II. Alternative I Plus a Flexible Response Capability (Emphasis on Planning and Organizational Changes)

[redacted]

Relationship to Strategic Objectives

1. Deterrence. A well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability would remain the cornerstone of the U.S. deterrent, but this alternative would reinforce that deterrent by providing responses or counter-threats to less than all-out Soviet nuclear attacks on the United States. In particular, we would seek to deter Soviet attempts to coerce the United States with threats or attacks designed to force a U.S. choice between mutual destruction of cities and submission to Soviet demands.

2. Support of Allies. Alternative II would be intended to reinforce the credibility, to both the USSR and our allies, of the U.S. extended deterrent by increasing Soviet uncertainty regarding U.S. responses to attacks on our allies and demonstrating the possibility of early introduction of strategic nuclear weapons in a conflict involving our allies.

3. Strategic Stability. Greater stability in the employment of nuclear weapons could contribute to stability in a crisis by reducing the advantages the Soviets might perceive in less than all-out nuclear attacks on the United States in less than all-out nuclear attacks on the United States and providing more deliberate, measured procedures and options for responding to Soviet actions and threats in a crisis.

[redacted]

4. Goals of Deterrence Fails

[redacted]

Key Issues JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

The following issues have been raised concerning General Strategic Alternative 1:

1. Is a U/I retaliatory capability a sufficient deterrent of nuclear attack? Some maintain that the ability to inflict a substantial absolute level of damage in retaliation is sufficient to deter. Others argue that it is also necessary that the Soviet Union not perceive a significant advantage in surviving U/I and military assets. Still others assert that, even given the capability to inflict high absolute levels of damage, we need a capability to respond selectively to deter less than all-out nuclear attacks.

2. Would U.S. responses in a crisis be adequate? Some argue that the present options are sufficient to ensure an adequate response, others hold that more options are necessary.

3. Is the extension of the U.S. deterrent to our allies credible under this posture? Some maintain that the condition of parity between the United States and the Soviet Union causes our allies to doubt that we would risk our own destruction to defend them. Others assert that the risk of escalation posed to the Soviets by a well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability is a sufficient deterrent and is credible to allies.

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5),(8)

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

[redacted]

4. Goals if Deterrence Fails. In the event deterrence failed through accident or miscalculation, this alternative would provide limited strike options which could provide the opportunity to attempt early war termination by demonstrating restraint combined with resolve to defend our vital interests.

Key Issues

Issues arising out of an assessment of the risks associated with a strategic nuclear flexible response capability are as follows:

-- Would this flexible response capability weaken the U.S. deterrent? Some argue that the Soviets would interpret U.S. interest in limited nuclear strikes as a signal that we would not go to general nuclear war in order to support our allies and that this would broaden the range of hostile actions open to the Soviets without undue risk of general nuclear war. Others maintain that our well-hedged U/I capability, coupled with an appropriate conventional and theater nuclear force posture in Europe, would still pose grave risks of escalation to the Soviets and that greater flexibility for employment of nuclear weapons would reinforce Soviet perceptions of those risks.

-- Would there be increased pressure for use of nuclear weapons in a crisis? Some argue that the existence of a systematically planned and institutionalized capability for limited strategic nuclear strikes would make it more "tempting" to use that capability in a crisis which might otherwise be resolved by less violent means. Others argue that there will always be pressures for use of nuclear weapons in a crisis, that a systematically planned capability for limited nuclear strikes would facilitate dispassionate judgments in a crisis, and that careful development of the institutional structure would reduce the risk of creating a strong pressure group.

-- Would this flexibility lead to unwanted escalation to general nuclear war? Although this issue relates to the use of flexible response options, it is also relevant to the question of whether to have such options, since it bears on their utility in a crisis. Soviet doctrine regarding the use of nuclear weapons is one critical factor in assessing this risk. The evidence is limited and ambiguous. The Soviets have long maintained that a U.S.-USSR military conflict, even if it began with conventional forces, would rapidly escalate to general nuclear war. There is no evidence concerning the existence of Soviet plans for limited nuclear strikes, although they have the capabilities for such attacks. On the other hand, at SALT the Soviet leaders have placed a high premium on being able to communicate with U.S. leaders during a crisis (e.g., accidental launches or provocative attack by a third country), with the putative aim of precluding general nuclear war. Some argue that achievement of parity may increase Soviet interest in limited nuclear exchange options.

[redacted]

Another important factor in assessing the risk of escalation is whether U.S. limited strategic options include plans for first strikes, or are intended only as responses to a Soviet limited nuclear strike. If the United States were the first to use nuclear weapons in limited strikes, there is no sound way, based on currently available intelligence, to predict the Soviet response, which could be to negotiate, to launch limited nuclear strikes, or to escalate to large nuclear attacks. On the other hand, if the Soviets first executed a limited nuclear strike, there would be a strong presumption that they were willing to limit the conflict.

Some maintain that such first use by the Soviets is unlikely, that the risks of escalation would be too great to permit U.S. first use of limited nuclear strikes and, therefore, that a strategic flexible response capability would be of limited utility to the United States.

Others stress the possibility that the Soviets would launch limited strikes and argue that, to deter such strikes, we must have appropriate responses. They also argue that the risks of escalation would be greater if we found it necessary to use limited nuclear strikes for resolving a crisis, but had not carefully planned them in advance.

-- Would organization and planning changes provide sufficient flexibility? Some who support more flexibility argue that improvements would be needed in command and control and/or missile counterforce capabilities. Others argue that planning and organizational changes are sufficient. These issues are considered under Alternative III. Still others note that a choice need not be made at this time between Alternative II and III. Alternative II plus further study or R&D on command/control improvements or counterforce improvements could be implemented in the near term. These improvements could be deployed at some future time if required.

Alternative III. Alternative I Plus Flexible Response Capability (Including Command and Control and/or Counterforce Improvements)

The following discussion highlights the additional considerations which arise if a greater degree of flexibility is desired than provided by Alternative II. This posture would include the well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability of Alternative I and the planning and organizational changes of Alternative II. In order to provide greater flexibility than Alternative II, however, there would be improvements in command and control (Variant 3A), increased missile counterforce capability (Variant 3B), or both (Variant 3C). Variants 3B and 3C would result in force changes directed towards a nuclear warfighting capability over wide spectrum of conflict if large portions of the U.S. missile force were given improved hard target counterforce capability.

Variant 3A (C^3 Improvements). Improvements would be made in the survivability and responsiveness of strategic command and control systems beyond the capabilities needed for a well-hedged U/I retaliatory posture. These improvements would be made in order to provide an enhanced flexible response throughout a series of limited, but escalating, nuclear exchanges.

Variant 3A could provide the following capabilities:

-- Greater capability for rapid ad hoc generation of nuclear strikes (including missile retargeting) than provided by the planning and organizational changes of Alternative II.

-- Protracted crisis management and Presidential control, in a survivable mode, of U.S. forces.

-- More survivable and near real time collection and processing of information on the results of U.S. and Soviet nuclear strikes, to assist in decisions about diplomatic moves and further U.S. strikes.

Variant 3A implies a greater emphasis on Presidential survivability ~~during a crisis or during limited nuclear exchanges. Moreover, it~~ stresses close and continuous control of strategic forces and a capability for detailed crisis management for a survivable mode.

If the U.S. strategic posture is to place greater emphasis on flexible responses (i.e., either Alternative II or IIIO then the key issue connected with Variant 3A is whether the utility of the command and control improvements is commensurate with their costs (at least $1-2 billion in FY 73-77 over the costs of Alternative I or II, and quite possibly more). If there were an endorsement of -- or at least interest in -- the policy inherent in Variant 3A, then a detailed study of the costs and benefits of specific command and control improvements for support of strategic flexible response should be carried out in order to produce refined cost estimates and further issues for decision.

Variant 3B (Counterforce Improvements). Improvements would be made to the hard-target counterforce capability of some or all U.S. ballistic missiles in order to broaden the range of flexible response options available to the President. The counterforce improvements would not be so extensive as to be capable of significantly limiting damage from large nuclear attacks or to ensure a relative U.S. advantage in surviving military capabilities after a large nuclear conflict.

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5)

[redacted]

20 / 7

OSD 3.3(b)(5)

[redacted] would have clear utility for deterrence or early war termination, that improvements in missile counterforce capability could be destabilizing in a crisis, and that offsetting Soviet weapon deployments could be stimulated. They emphasize the possibility that the Soviets could not distinguish between limited counterforce improvements for flexible responses and improvements which were an initial step towards a disarming strike capability.

Others who argue for counterforce improvements maintain that we may otherwise not be able to deal effectively with all of the situations which we might face [redacted] They maintain that, given the size and diversity of Soviet strategic forces, limited U.S. counterforce improvements would not be destabilizing either in a crisis or in the long-term.

OSD 3.3(b)(3)(8)

Variant 3C (C^3 and Counterforce Improvements). This variant would provide improvements in both command and control and missile counterforce capability. If the counterforce improvements were limited to a small portion of the missile force then this combination would not produce additional issues beyond thos identified above. Some hold that if a large portion of the U.S. missile force were given a hard target kill capability to support a war-fighting capability over a wide spectrum of conflict, this would provide an additional measure of deterrence. Others believe it may upset the strategic balance or affect the kind of SALT limits the Soviets might otherwise agree to accept.

Alternative IV. Relative Advantage to the United States in any Strategic War

Policy. This alternative would provide a nuclear warfighting capability designed to attain for the United States a position of relative advantage after any level of strategic nuclear warfare with the Soviet Union.

The concept of relative advantage in war outcome is not well-defined; the definition itself constitutes an area of interagency disagreement. Relative advantage in war outcome should include measures of surviving population, industrial resources, and military (nuclear and conventional) capability. But, in a general nuclear war, deaths and industrial damage are likely to be very high on both sides, leaving residual military capability as the major determinant of relative advantage.

[redacted]

U.S. strategic forces would be planned to provide a favorable balance of surviving population, industry and military capability. As a by-product, these forces would have a well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability. Extensive improvements in missile hard target counter-force capability and protracted nuclear warfighting capability would characterize this posture. Command and control systems would be designed to have greater survivability, damage assessment capability and responsiveness for battle management throughout a spectrum of large and small nuclear exchanges than in the other alternatives. Balanced strategic defenses and vigorous R&D effort on damage limiting systems would be necessary characteristics of the posture. OSD 3.3(b)(5)

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5)(8)

Relationship to Objectives

1. Deterrence. This alternative is consistent with the view that our ability to inflict a high absolute level of damage in retaliation is important, but is not a sufficient deterrent. On this view, a credible deterrent also requires a clear capability to ensure that any nuclear war would result in a relative outcome favorable to the United States.

2. Support of Allies. This alternative is consistent with the view that strategic nuclear forces that provide for relative U.S. advantage in war outcomes are the most certain deterrent to Soviet initiation of attacks on U.S. allies.

3. Strategic Balance. This alternative is consistent with the view that in a crisis the Soviets would have no incentive to strike first, if a preemptive strike against the United States would clearly leave them in an unfavorable relative military position.

This alternative is consistent with the views that (a) the long-term stability of the strategic balance is of lesser importance than the other security objectives of the United States (b) that the Soviets do not make decisions on their force deployments primarily as a reaction to U.S. nuclear U.S. nuclear weapon deployments.

4. Goals if Deterrence Fails. This alternative is consistent with the views that, if deterrence fails, the United States must be

[redacted]

Under this view, U.S. war termination efforts would be effective only if we were in a position of relative advantage after any level of nuclear exchange. Otherwise, the USSR would be in a position to dictate terms of termination or to threaten escalation.

Key Issues

JS 3.3(b)(5)(9)

[redacted]

2. Could this alternative be consistent with SALT? If SALT constrains offensive forces to current levels and limits ABM defenses to low levels, it is doubtful that a posture ensuring a favorable relative balance can be achieved.

Some assert that certain actions (e.g., improve missile hard target counterforce capabilities and our strategic ASW capabilities) could be taken to improve our relative position that would be permitted under the SAL agreement.

Others argue that a SAL agreement which limits ABM defenses to low levels would effectively preclude achievement of a relative advantage posture for the United States.

Costs

Table 1 shows the cost of past and current U.S. strategic programs (as represented by the FYDP) and the FY 73-77 costs of the General Strategic Alternatives. These latter are displayed as a function of the strategic offensive force mix.

Table 1

Cost of Past and Current U.S. Strategic Programs
(Strategic Offensive Forces, C^3, Support, and RDT&E
TOA in Billions of Constant FY 72 Dollars)

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

	Past (FY 68-72)	Current (FY 73-77)
[redacted]		

Illustrative FY 73-77 Costs of Alternative Strategic Offensive Postures and Mixes a/

(Strategic Offensive Forces, C^3, Support, and RDT&E TOA in Billions of Constant FY 72 Dollars)

Offensive Force Mix	General Strategic Alternative 1/2	3A	3B	3C	4 c/
[redacted]					

a/ A brief description of the methodology behind this table is in Annex E of the DPRC Executive Summary.

b/ Includes deployment of hard-site defense for Minuteman.

c/ General Strategic Alternative 4 is not consistent with offensive force mixes other than a full triad.

~~SECRET~~

[redacted]

IV. Strategic Defense Policy Alternatives

Except in the case of General Strategic Alternative IV (Favorable Relative War Outcomes), the choice of a defense policy alternative depends primarily on factors distinct from the choice of General Strategic Alternative. These factors include our hedging policies, SALT outcomes, and our posture [redacted] General Strategic Alternative IV would require strond defenses (Level E below).

OSD 3.3(b)(6)

Five alternative defense levels, including ABM defense, air defense, strategic ASW, and civil defense, are summarized below. Table 2 shows their costs. Table 3 relates the defense levels to the General Strategic Alternatives [redacted]

There is some ambiguity in the current U.S. strategic defense policy. There are Presidential statements of record supporting an area defense system to protect the population against light attacks. There are also the Presidential decisions in SALT indicating a willingness to have little or no ABM defenses as part of an equitable SAL agreement. Choice of one of the following five defense alternatives would clarify the strategic defense policy to be followed in the future.

Defense levels C, D and E all include hard-site defense of Minuteman; Levels B, C, D and E also imply active defense of bomber bases. If one of these alternatives is chosen, the decision is tantamount to a hedging policy aimed at maintaining an independent retaliatory capability in those strategic force components protected by active defense.

Level A. Minimum Defense to Support Warning and Surveillance

This level would provide defensive forces sufficient for surveillance and warning of attacks on the U.S. It could include the following elements:

-- Two Safeguard ABM sites and associated radars to provide a protected surveillance system for warning and attack assessment against ballistic missiles. These sites would also protect some Minuteman launchers and bomber bases against small missile attacks. (This defense level is also compatible with a zero level ABM since we have other means of supporting these warning and surveillance functions).

-- Air defenses sufficient to provide air space surveillance and restriction of unauthorized overflight of U.S. air space.

-- Use of general purpose ASW forces (including SOSUS) to maintain surveillance of Soviet [redacted] submarine deployments.

-- Civil defense emphasizing population warning.

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5)(6)

[redacted]

Level B. Defense Against Small Attacks

Level B would provide balanced defenses designed to limit damage to U.S. cities and military forces from small (deliberate or unauthorzed) attacks. Against large attacks it also would secure additional time over that provided by Level A for safe escape of alert bombers and tankers and for relocation of the NCA to a survivable command center. The following forces could be included:

-- Twelve Safeguard ABM sites, including a light area defense.

-- Air defenses to provide protection against small bomber attacks by the USSR or third countries.

[redacted]

JS 3.3(b)(5)(9)

-- Civil defense as in Level A or perhaps increased to provide more fallout protection and evacuation plans for use in a crisis.

~~Level C. Defense of Strategic Retaliatory Forces and the NCA~~

Level C would provide balanced defenses of strategic retaliatory forces and the NCA, including a hard-site ABM defense of Minuteman and perhaps active defense of bomber bases. There would be no effort to defend U.S. cities, except insofar as they receive protection from defenses of the strategic retaliatory forces and the NCA.

There is an issue concerning the effect of hard-site defense deployment of the long-term strategic balance. Some believe extensive deployment of hard-site defense would raise Soviet fears that this defense would be a basis for ABM defense of U.S. cities, would cause further proliferation of Soviet strategic weapons, and would in turn result in deployment of more U.S. hard-site defense. Others note that deployment of hard-site defense would not protect U.S. cities and would indicate only an effort to preserve the U.S. land-based missile deterrent; they argue that such deployment need not stimulate proliferation of Soviet weapons if the USSR is sincere about leveling off strategic armaments.

Level D. Defense Against Small Attacks Plus Hard-Site Defense of Minuteman

Level D would add to the defenses of Level B a hard-site ABM defense of Minuteman in order to provide defense of population against small attacks and defense of retaliatory forces against large and small attacks.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Level E. Defenses to Ensure Favorable War Outcomes

In order to ensure that the United States has a favorable balance of surviving military resources after any level of nuclear war with the Soviet Union, extensive defenses of both strategic and general purpose forces would be needed. Moreover, even though defenses could not limit U/I damage from large attacks to a low level, they could, in conjunction with U.S. strategic offensive forces, contribute to achieving a favorable balance of surviving population and industry as well as military assets.

The size and cost of strategic defenses to enforce favorable war outcomes are difficult to project since they would depend on the future Soviet threat (including any measures the Soviets might take to offset a buildup in U.S. strategic defenses), as well as on the precise interpretation of the term "favorable outcomes". Defense Level E could, for example, include the defensive forces set forth in the JSOP Required Force: 16 ABM sites using Safeguard-type components, hard-site ABM defense of Minuteman, sea-based ABMs for mid-course intercept, and augmentation of the current air defenses with improved manned interceptors, OTH-B, SAM-D and AWACS.

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET~~

Table 2

FY 73-77 TOA for Illustrative Strategic Defense Levels
(Strategic Defense Forces, Civil Defense, RDT&E, and Support TOA in Billions of Constant FY 72 Dollars) a/

	Current Program	Level A	Level B	Level C	Level D	Level E
ABM Defense						
Safeguard-type ABM (sites)	9.0(12)	2.1(2)	9.0(12)	5.3(5)	9.0(12)	10.2(15)
Hard-site modules b/	0.6c/	0.6c/	0.6c/	4.8(18)	4.8(18)	4.8(18)
	9.6	2.7	9.6	10.1	13.8	15.0
Continental Air Defense	7	3	5	5	5	8
Strategic ASW	0.1	0.1	1	1	1	1
Civil Defense	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Totals	17	6	16	17	20	25

a/ The forces costed in each illustrative level are given in the Executive Summary of the DPRC Study of U.S. Strategic Objectives and Force Posture, pp. 132-137.

b/ The cost of hard-site defense ($5 billion in FY 73-77) is also included in Table 1 (Illustrative FY 73-77 Costs of Alternative Strategic Offensive Postures and Mixes).

c/ Prototype demonstration program only.

[redacted]

Table 3

Relation Among Strategic Defense Policy Alternatives and Other U.S. Strategic Policies

Strategic Defense Level	Relation With		
	General Strategic Alternatives (GSA)	Hedge Policies	Current U.S. SALT Programs a/
A (Warning and Surveillance)	Too low for GSA 4; Consistent with GSA 1-3.	Contributes to strategic warning	Consistent.
B (Defense Against Small Attacks)	Too low for GSA 4; consistent with GSA 1-3.	Contributes to bomber survival; limited contribution to MM survival.	Not consistent.
C (Hard Site Defense plus Defense Against Small Attacks)	Too low for GSA 4; it may or may not be consistent with GSA 1-3 (issue about effect of hard site defense on strategic stability).	Major contribution to MM survival; contributes to bomber survival.	Not consistent.
D (Enforce Favorable War Outcomes)	Consistent with GSA 4; not implied by GSA 1-3.	Major contribution to MM survival, contributes to bomber survival.	Not consistent.

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(5)(6)

a/ Cite references (i.e., dates on NSDMs) for "current" U.S. SALT proposals and note that U.S. position is now under review preparative for SALT VI.

28
25

[redacted]

25 26

[redacted]

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

30
27

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

[redacted]

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~31~~ 28

[redacted]

-- Would the above missile counterforce improvements significantly affect the U.S.-Soviet relationship?

OSD 3.3(b)(5),(6)

[redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(2),(4),(5),(6)

~~TOP SECRET~~

JS 3.3(b)(5),(9)

Still others assert that Soviet proliferation of weapons and diplomatic positions are determined by factors other than the capabilities of U.S. weapons and that the possible impact on the U.S.-Soviet relationship should not be a consideration in evaluating the [redacted]

Other key issues bearing on a decision regarding [redacted] These include (1) the technical feasibility of maintaining [redacted] throughout the 1970s, (2) the political inhibitions against using [redacted] and (3) the possible political benefits of even an [redacted]

OSD 3.3(b)(2)(6)