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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

29 January 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION LIST

SUBJECT: NSDM 242 Targeting Study

Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
Date: 5 Dec. 2011 Authority: EO 13526
Declassify: _____ Deny in Full: _____
Declassify in Part: X
Reason: 3.3(b)(5) + 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6)
MDR: 10 -M- 1233-A1

Mr. Cotter has made some revisions in the memorandum forwarding the NSDM 242 Targeting Study to the President. The revised version is attached, together with a memorandum to Major General Wickham suggesting we brief the Secretary on the study before it is forwarded. Please give me your concurrence or suggested changes not later than 1200, Friday, January 31. Any additional comments on the draft report are desired at the same time.

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: DEC 05 2011



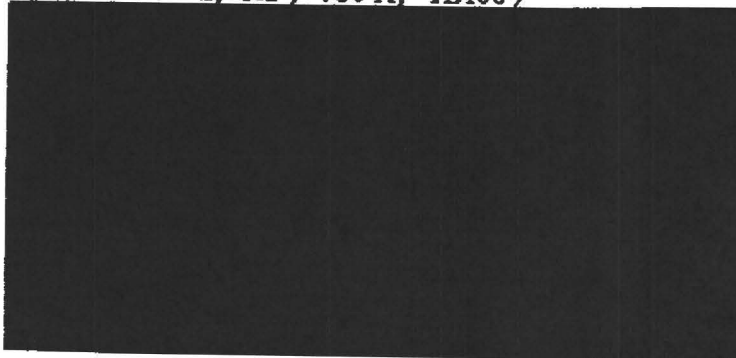
Lt Colonel, USA
OATSD(AE)
x51098

OSD 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)

Attachment

DISTRIBUTION

BGen Welch, AF, 78041, 4D1069



JS 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)

OSD 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6)

EXEMPTED FROM EO 13526
OSD/ESD
Re: Declassify On 30 Apr 2030
Other Agency Equity TBD

10-M-1233-A1

~~REMOVAL OF ATTACHMENTS THIS
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Exempted from EO 13526
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Chief, Declassification Division, WHS

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DRAFT

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL
Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: DEC 05 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR GENERAL WICKHAM
MILITARY ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: NSDM 242 Targeting Study (U)

(U) NSDM 242 directs the Secretary of Defense to analyze Soviet and PRC targets critical to their postwar power, influence, and ability to recover at an early time as a major power. We have completed a report of results to date, based on JCS and DIA inputs. The report, together with a summary of key findings, is attached for transmittal by the Secretary to the President, as directed by NSDM 242.

(U) I believe the Secretary will want to discuss the report before forwarding it. Therefore, I suggest you schedule a meeting with him and include the following people:

Dr. Hall, ASD(I)
General Brown, CJCS (or his representative)
General Graham, DIA
Mr. Aldridge, OASD(PA&E)

(U) I plan to ask Brigadier General Welch, who directed the analysis, to brief the Secretary at that time.

D. R. Cotter
Assistant to the Secretary
of Defense (Atomic Energy)

Enclosure: Memorandum to
the President

16
REF ID: A6012958
OSD FS - 071
Review/Declassify On 10 Apr 2030
Other Agency Equity TBD





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Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: DEC 05 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: NSDM 242 -- Policy for Planning the Employment of
Nuclear Weapons (S)

(S) In NSDM 242, President Nixon set forth a revised US policy for employment of nuclear weapons. This policy contains two major changes in previous guidance:

-- If nuclear war occurs, the primary objective is to terminate the conflict on terms acceptable to the United States and its allies, at the lowest level of conflict feasible. Plans for more limited and flexible use of nuclear weapons are being prepared to meet this objective.

-- In general nuclear war, increased emphasis is placed on targeting to destroy enemy targets critical to his postwar power, influence, and ability to recover at an early time as a major power. Provision is also made for withholding some forces even after a major retaliatory strike.

(S) The attached report, directed by NSDM 242, addresses the general nuclear war objective. The report identifies Soviet and PRC targets which are important to their postwar power. Because the importance of each target varies, however, there is room for considerable judgment in deciding how many to actually target. The NSDM 242 general nuclear war objective can be accomplished within the ceilings on delivery vehicles and MIRVs contained in the Vladivostok accord. Improvements in survivability, accuracy, and yield of US forces which are necessary for deterrence will also better enable the accomplishment of this objective through coverage of more targets. On the other hand, force reductions with reduced target coverage are also possible while still meeting the NSDM 242 objective.

(U) A summary of key findings of the report is also attached. Appropriate aspects of the analysis have been coordinated with the staffs of the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence.

The Secretary of Defense

- Enclosures: 1. Summary of Findings
2. Analysis of Targets Pursuant
to US Nuclear Policy (NSDM 242)



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January 28, 1975

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Authority: EO 13526
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: DEC 05 2011

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Analysis of Targets Pursuant to
U. S. Nuclear Policy (NSDM 242)

(S) In accordance with NSDM 242, the Department of Defense is conducting an analysis of the political, economic, and selected military targets considered critical to the postwar power, influence, and recovery of the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China as major powers.

(S) In the analysis, considerable judgment has been exercised in determining lists of targets "critical" to the early postwar recovery of the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China. The key findings in the analysis to date are summarized below. The second step in nuclear weapon employment planning, now underway, is to allocate current forces to the revised target structure in a way to best carry out the NSDM 242 employment policy.

(U) The target analysis and weapon allocation does not resolve the more complex problems of force acquisition or arms control planning. For acquisition and arms control planning, judgmental trade-offs must be made between the deterrent and other military benefits of increased target coverage and the fiscal, political, and foreign policy benefits of holding at or reducing current force levels. The final paragraph of this summary addresses this problem.

(S) The analysis of Soviet and PRC targets under NSDM 242 guidance has resulted in changes in the target structure for use in revising the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP):



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OSD 3.3(b)(5)
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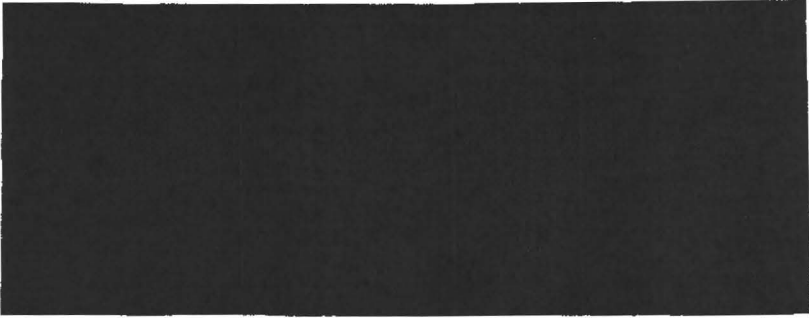
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OSD 3.3(b)(5)

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(S) The following numbers of targets in the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China have been identified as sufficiently important to warrant serious consideration for targeting in general nuclear war with current US nuclear forces:



JS 3.3(b)(5)

 OSD 3.3(b)(5)

JS 3.3(b)(5)

The importance of each target varies. Hence, there is room for considerable judgment as to how many of these targets need actually be covered. In fact, if there are sufficient forces, more targets can be usefully added to the list.

Employment Planning

(S) The number of targets does not equate with the number of weapons needed for SIOP planning. Collocation of targets means that one weapon may destroy more than one target. On the other hand, diverse considerations such as US force survivability and target hardness may call for more than one weapon for a given target. Precise determination of weapons required for use against critical targets, together with exact identification of installations to be targeted, must await 


OSD 3.3(b)(5)

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(S) Recognizing, however, that the sufficiency of target coverage is a matter of judgment, we can conclude that current or near term force capabilities afford sufficient target coverage to accomplish the NSDM 242 general nuclear war objective. This objective can be met within the ceilings on delivery vehicles and MIRVs of the Vladivostok accords. While the revised SIOP target structure will differ from the current one, the total number of aiming points is not expected to change materially.

(U) Whereas the urban labor force was targeted to some extent in the SIOP under past guidance, the declaratory doctrine of "assured destruction" led many to believe population was the primary target. The current change in employment policy removes population per se from the list of objective targets. This change can be used to clarify the public record in this regard and reduce the moral onus associated with US nuclear doctrine. Nevertheless, as a practical matter, the collocation of population with political, economic, and certain military targets means that substantial fatalities would still result, if the Soviets or Chinese did not evacuate their cities.

(U) Our study has not developed an immutable target list. The targets will change in importance with alterations in the Soviet or PRC military forces and industrial base. The list will also change as our intelligence information and analysis techniques improve. Our efforts to update and refine the target data base and target value systems are accordingly continuing as part of the ongoing implementation of NSDM 242.

Force Acquisition and Arms Control Planning

(U) Our analysis indicates that current and near term U. S. nuclear forces are adequate to carry out the general nuclear war objectives of NSDM 242 based upon the target list described in this report. Improvements in current forces, especially in survivability, accuracy, and yield, are necessary to maintain deterrence and will better enable the forces to meet the NSDM 242 objectives. On the other hand, force reductions with reduced target coverage are also possible while still meeting the NSDM 242 objectives. The target list summarized above is not a minimum set of requirements which absolutely must be met in acquiring forces or making SALT decisions. But, when examining such issues, this list and other aspects of employment planning must be considered equally with the other major elements bearing on acquisition or arms control decisions -- fiscal, political, and foreign policy elements.

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