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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



20 JUN 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Policy Guidance for the Employment of Nuclear Weapons. (NUMEP-84)(U)

Transmitted herewith is the Policy Guidance for the Employment of Nuclear Weapons (NUMEP). This document amplifies the policy contained in National Security Decision Directive 13, Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy. The policy contained herein will be used to guide all planning pertaining to the employment of nuclear capable forces and associated command, control, communications and intelligence systems. This document supersedes the NUMEP dated June 1982.

The fundamental objective of our nuclear weapons employment policy is to deter direct attack — particularly nuclear attack — on the United States and its allies. A credible deterrent requires sufficient nuclear force capabilities and plans for their employment to be able to attack effectively and selectively the full range of the Warsaw Pact military, leadership, and industrial-economic target structure. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will ensure that the guidance contained herein is followed in developing the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) and all other nuclear weapons employment plans.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will have overall staff responsibility for actively monitoring the implementation and continuing review of this policy and supporting employment plans to ensure orderly progress. I encourage the continued interaction of my staff with the nuclear planners — particularly during the plan development phase — to ensure the highest level of consistency between our nuclear weapons employment plans and the policy contained in this document.

Attachment  
a/s

*Joseph L. Kerling*

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Authority: EO 13526  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS  
Date: SEP 25 2019

Office of the Secretary of Defense  
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS  
Date: 25 SEP 2019 Authority: EO 13526 + 50 USC 1552  
Declassify: \_\_\_\_\_ Deny in Full: \_\_\_\_\_  
Declassify in Part: X  
Reason: 3.3(b)(2)(5)  
MDR: 18 -M- 1697

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Classified by: UN/P  
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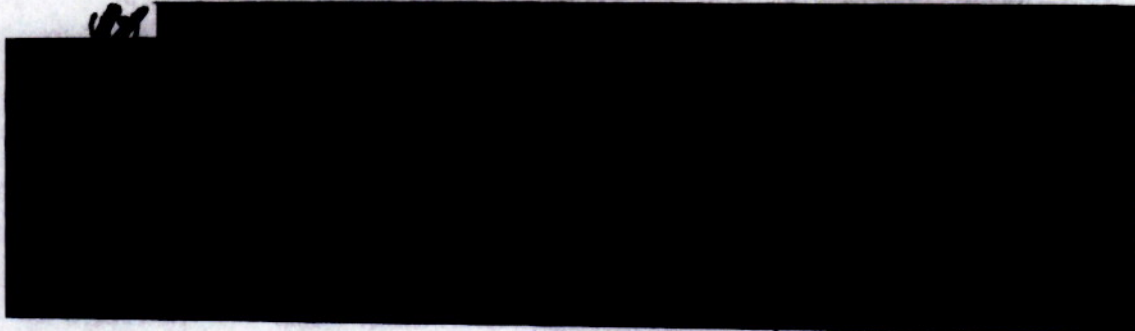
POLICY GUIDANCE FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NUWEP)

I. PURPOSE

(U) This document implements Presidential guidance and establishes policy within the Department of Defense for planning the employment of nuclear weapons. The policy contained herein applies primarily to the Soviet Union and its allies; however, specified portions also apply to other countries. The Joint Chiefs of Staff will ensure that the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) and other nuclear weapons employment plans are consistent with, and supportive of, this policy guidance. This document supersedes the NUWEP dated June 1982.

II. OBJECTIVES

(U) The fundamental objective of our policy for the employment of nuclear weapons is to deter direct attack -- particularly nuclear attack -- on the United States and its allies. Deterrence is best achieved if our defense posture makes Soviet assessments of war outcomes, under any contingency, so uncertain and dangerous as to remove any incentive for initiating attack. Consequently, we must continue to make the prospect of nuclear war even more remote by remaining capable, in all plausible scenarios, of waging war successfully so that the Soviet Union (or any adversary) would perceive that it could not achieve its war aims and, should it initiate an attack, would suffer losses that were unacceptable. The need for stable deterrence is most critical in a crisis situation, especially during a major conventional war involving U.S. and Soviet forces. This requires special attention to such wartime situations, during which some command, control, communications and intelligence (C<sup>3</sup>I) systems may be degraded as a result of conventional attacks.



III. CAPABILITY REQUIREMENTS

(U) Our nuclear forces and C<sup>3</sup>I systems must be capable of countering the growing Soviet threat and supporting our employment objectives. This requires that our nuclear forces be sufficiently survivable to deny the Soviet Union a victory even if subjected to a surprise Soviet attack. Further, our forces and their supporting C<sup>3</sup>I and logistics systems must possess sufficient endurance to provide the National Command Authorities with the sustained capability of employing weapons in a controlled manner throughout a conflict.

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(S) We must improve our employment flexibility to provide the capability of responding effectively and appropriately to any situation in which nuclear weapons may need to be employed to achieve U.S. objectives. For the near term, we will continue to be largely dependent upon the availability of a wide range of adaptable preplanned options to provide employment flexibility. For the longer term, we should develop an improved capability to adapt preplanned options and to construct new options in response to actual wartime conditions. This requires survivable and enduring C<sup>3</sup>I systems and planning capabilities that can rapidly assimilate near-real-time intelligence, produce employment plans, and disseminate targeting information.

#### IV. FORCE PLANNING

##### A. Force Readiness

(S) Planning will ensure that increased readiness levels can be achieved quickly and maintained for varying but extended duration without loss of responsiveness and effectiveness. Plans for returning to lower readiness levels shall not jeopardize or degrade our ability to respond to surprise attack or to return quickly to increased force readiness postures should the enemy attempt to deceive us through a false relaxation of tension.

##### B. Force Postures

(S) Plans for the employment of nuclear forces shall be structured to take advantage of the flexibility and capability of the forces expected to be available at the time of execution. Planning should also incorporate the results of an ongoing JCS prelaunch survivability study.

#### V. TARGETING OBJECTIVES

(S) Planning for strategic nuclear attack options will support, to the extent possible, the overall objectives set forth below. Other nuclear plans will be guided by the political and military situation for which they are being prepared. Allocation of weapons to support the SIOP targeting objectives described below shall be guided by the need for effective utilization of each weapon and for a weighted, balanced effort in keeping with the general order of priorities of the target categories and the requirement for effective options against each of the stated objectives.



OSO 33(b)(2)(5)

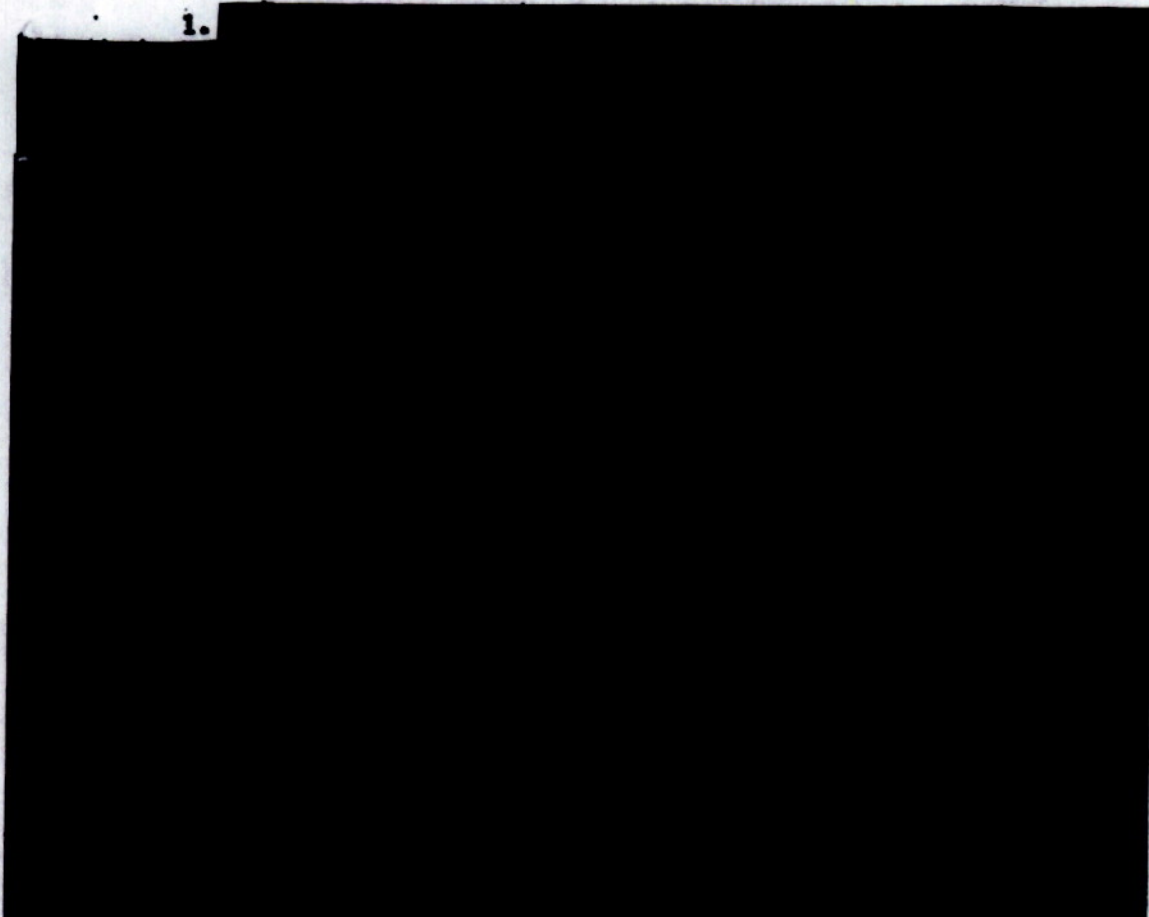
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A. USSR and Allies.\* The general targeting objectives for the Warsaw Pact countries, in order of general weapons allocation priority, are as follows:

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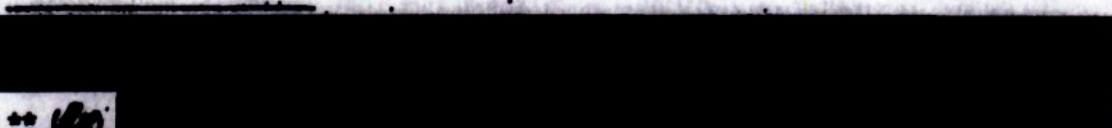


JS 3.3(b)(5)  
OSD 3.3(b)(2)(5)

VI. ATTACK OPTION STRUCTURE

**(S)** Employment plans must provide the NCA with the ability to conduct nuclear operations at various levels of conflict in ways that will be militarily effective while maximizing the chances for controlling the level and scope of the conflict. Plans should recognize, where appropriate, escalation boundaries such as geographic area, number and types of weapons employed, as well as the type of targets attacked.

**(S)** Preplanned SIOP and non-SIOP attack options shall be developed to provide the NCA with a range of nuclear alternatives with which to respond to aggression. These attack options shall be structured to permit denial of enemy



\*\* (S)

moderate or other damage levels to some targets may provide sufficient damage or disruption to meet the stated objective.

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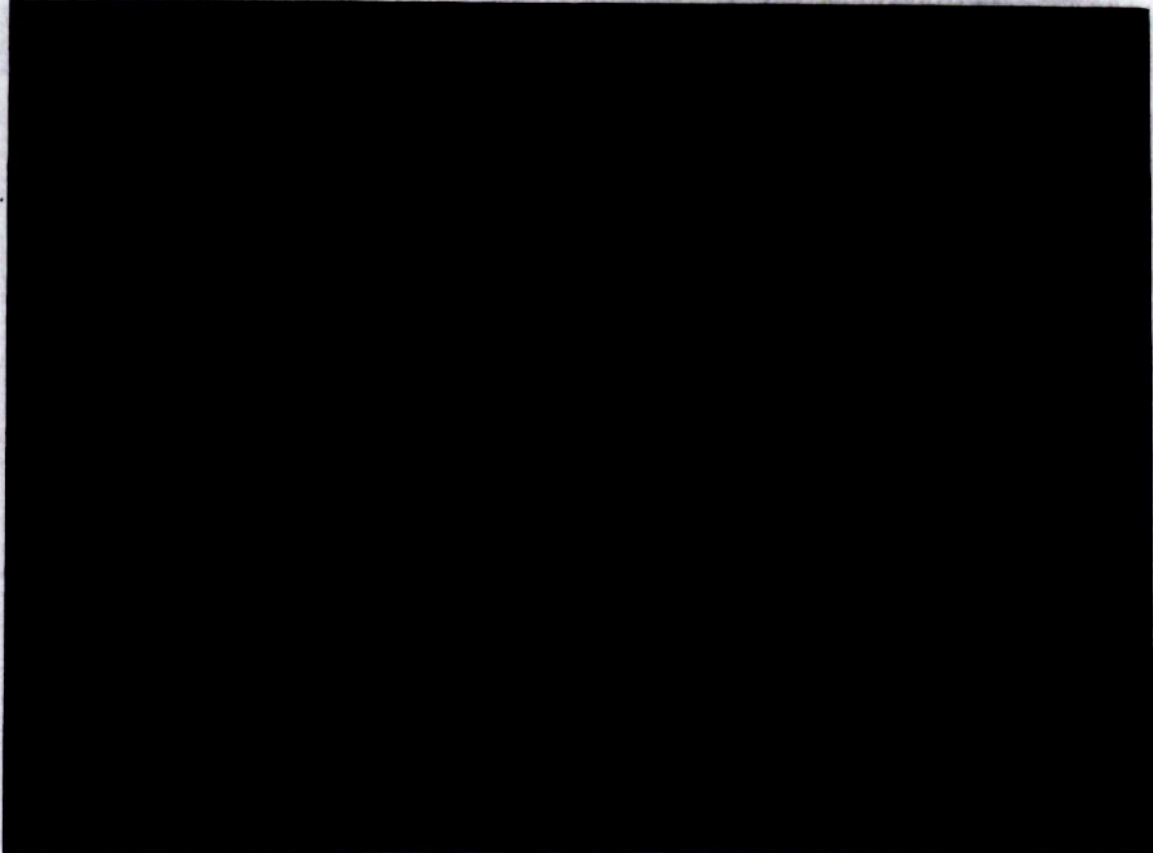
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objectives and achievement of U.S. objectives at the lowest possible level of destruction. To the extent practicable, each attack option shall be adaptable to the needs of the situation, should consider the Soviet's ability to assess the objectives of the attack, and should provide for the integration of strategic, nonstrategic nuclear, and general purpose force planning. The attack option structure shall consist of:

A. ~~(S)~~ Non-SIOP Options (NSOs) shall be developed to provide for relatively small-scale, low-intensity attacks using nonstrategic nuclear forces and/or strategic nuclear forces. NSOs are intended to achieve limited objectives

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with the intent of influencing his politico-military calculations and determination to continue the conflict. Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid or otherwise strictly limit attacks in the vicinity of densely populated areas. Collateral damage shall be minimized through selection of weapons systems of appropriate yield and accuracy. NSOs shall be preplanned in anticipation of potential conflict situations and developed as required when preplanned options are unsuitable.

B. ~~(S)~~ SIOP Options shall be developed to employ strategic forces against targeting objectives within the Soviet Union and its allied countries. To provide a range of alternatives within the SIOP, the following options shall be developed:



JS 3.3(b)(5)  
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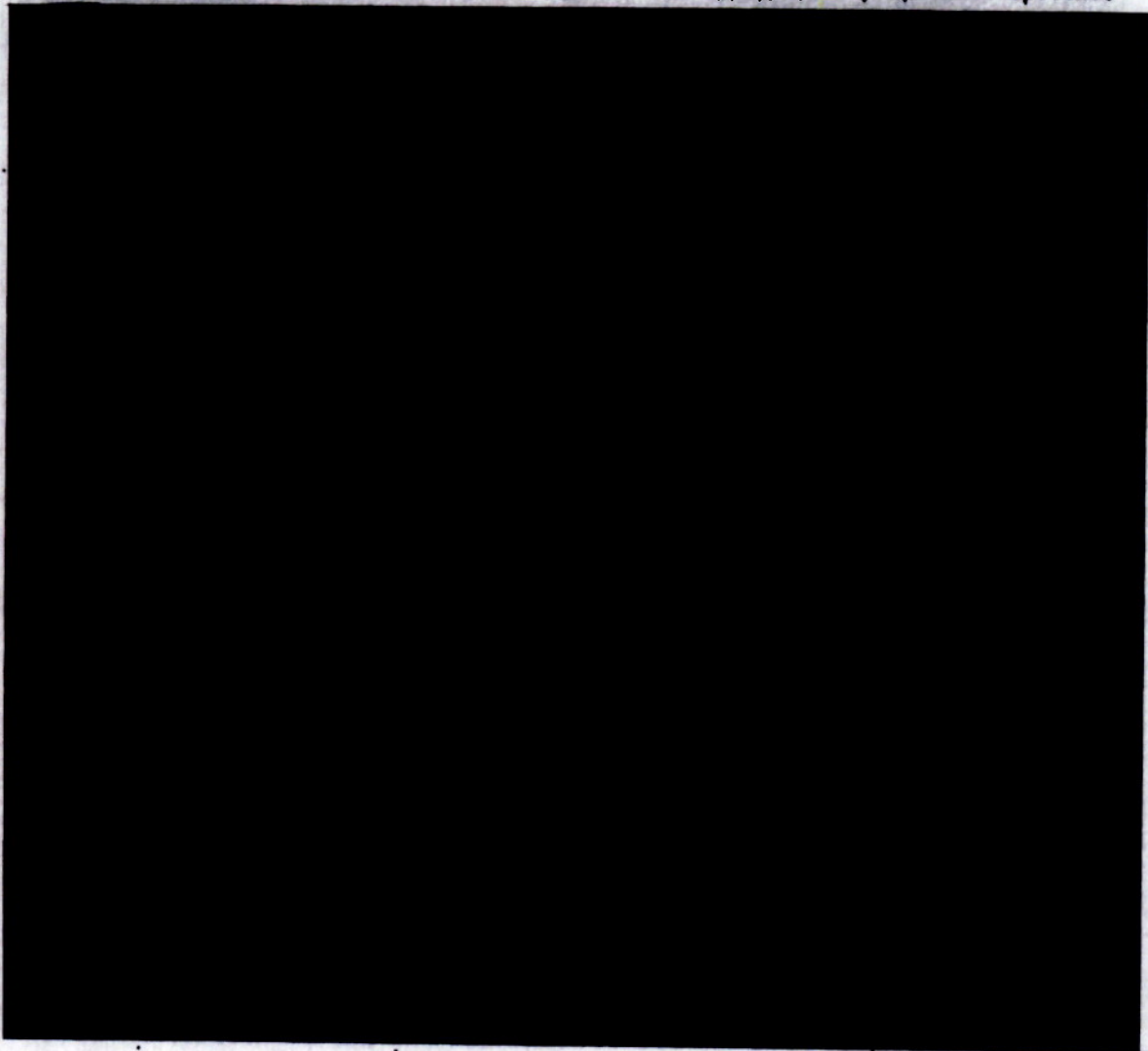
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C. ~~(S)~~ Contingency Planning. A flexible targeting capability will be provided to support timely construction of new attack options, supplement preplanned options, and cover significant forces/functions that emerge during Soviet mobilization or during the course of a war. The weapons systems so-identified should have the least adverse impact on the SIOP.

VII. TARGETING CONSTRAINTS

(S) To increase the flexibility of attack options and the potential for escalation control, certain target categories shall be prohibited from attack or planned as an optional withhold in specific options. As a minimum, the following targeting constraints will be applied to appropriate preplanned options.

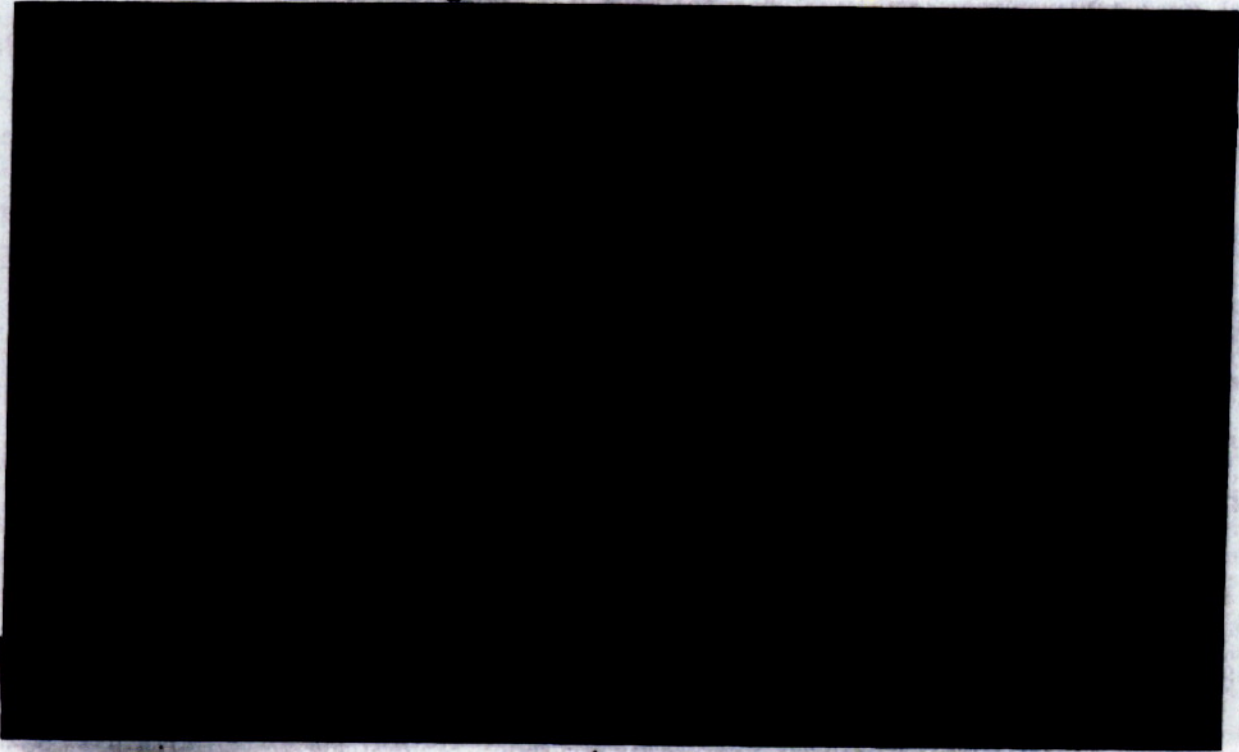


JS 3.3(b)(5)

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JS 3.3(b)(5)  
OSD 3.3(b)(2)(5)

IX. EXERCISES

(U) Exercises for nuclear employment operations shall include interaction between the Department of Defense and other federal agencies, as appropriate. Exercises will be conducted each year to provide the National Command Authorities the opportunity to evaluate our capabilities and our doctrine.

X. PLANNING ACTIONS

(S) The planning actions listed below shall be undertaken to support the requirements for more effective nuclear weapons employment as established by this document.



C. (S) Continue to improve the methodology for measuring attack effectiveness and for identifying and prioritizing those targets of greatest relative value.

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XI. RELATION TO OTHER POLICY

A. Acquisition Policy

(S) The implementation of the employment guidance contained herein depends, in large measure, upon the acquisition of improved force capabilities. The Nuclear Weapons Master Plan will define a coherent acquisition strategy that supports the employment policy, and the DoD Defense Guidance provides the appropriate resource planning and fiscal guidance.

B. Declaratory Policy

(S) A major objective of declaratory policy is to enhance deterrence in the eyes of our enemies and allies by conveying our determination and capability to deny any adversary, particularly the Soviet Union, the prospect of successful military aggression. In this regard, authorized statements of certain elements of our nuclear weapons employment policy can be beneficial in shaping the opinions of the Soviet Union, our allies, and potential adversaries, although details must of necessity remain closely held. However, all such public statements should fully conform to the language in such authoritative public documents as the annual Defense Report of the Secretary of Defense.



C. Defensive Systems

(S) Effective defensive systems would provide a significant increase in our capability to counter the growing Soviet threat, thereby strengthening deterrence and stability. The President's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) is designed to explore a wide range of advanced technologies in order to develop capabilities to enhance defense of the United States and our allies against ballistic missile attack. The introduction of such defensive systems would have a major impact on our offensive employment policy and weapon system requirements. The interrelationships between offensive and defensive systems is complex and must be kept under continuous review. Careful integration of these capabilities will provide the best means to meet U.S. objectives.

XII. CONTINUING POLICY REVIEW

(S) Follow-up efforts will be required to ensure that this policy guidance is implemented in a timely and accurate manner. To support this process, the Secretary of Defense shall be informed by the JCS, as early in the planning cycle as possible, of significant aspects for each SIOP revision. The JCS shall also provide an annual assessment of the extent to which this policy guidance has been implemented into our war plans and identify continuing capability shortfalls. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy will have responsibility for monitoring implementation of this policy.

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JS 3.3(b)(5)