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talk w/ #13
Cotter
about notes

Limited Nuclear Option (LNO) Discussion
Monday, 2 December 1974

Present were Sec Def, CJCS, CSA, CNO, CSAF, DCMC, D. R. Cotter,
Director - Joint Staff, Gen Pauly, Gen Wickham

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SAC Briefing on LNO vs Soviet POL assets

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Observation: Minimized off-target casualties. Could minimize further
with tailored payloads (e.g., lower yields, non-MIRV MM)

Sec Def



Constrain unnecessary casualties--minimize incentive of Soviets to
escalate in retaliation.

[redacted] and Cuba, if necessary, [redacted]
Non-military casualties would be high
if attacks were nuclear. [redacted]

CINCSAC



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21-M-0075

Cotter's notes on tank meeting

(H) Don Cotter talked to
Generals Elder & Pauly about this

185-11

7 Feb 75

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JS 3.3(h)50X5
STRATCOM 3.3(h)50X5

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CJCS

Has Soviet situation, in terms of nuclear capability, changed sufficiently since JRS Rand NUOPTS report (1967-68) to change Sec Def mind [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] How will Soviets react?

Sec Def

This generation of leaders probably will, as always before, back down. Very conservative. Next leadership may be tougher. We'll have to worry about that. Preparing attack options and letting them know it will [REDACTED]

How does this look to CINCSAC? Does this strategy seem "desirable"?

CINCSAC

Depends on situation. But better than a lot of options we now have.

Sec Def

We should look at areas where there are [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CINCSAC(?)

Attack of Soviet VLF subcommittee? CNO - No. Would defeat purpose of limited attack concept.

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Sec Def

With our [REDACTED]

CNO - Tough job.

CSAF

Need for good recce in LNO's to be sure we accomplished what we set out to do.

Penetrations of defenses by recce-birds, even without attacks, would be persuasive demonstration of ability to penetrate. Also, nonnuclear attacks with PGM's on hardened hangars, for example, would be good demonstration of capability.

Sec Def

How much "SIOP worship" is there? What effect on LNO development?

CJCS

That was broken by experience in SEA. B-52 and carriers went off SIOP commitments. Doesn't see this as a problem.

However, worries about degradation in training and readiness if SAC crews and FBM crews feel their mission is degraded. They identify SIOP capabilities with mission. If they don't have "religion" about mission, capability will erode.

Sec Def

Need to change targetting strategy as essential part of enhancing deterrence.

[REDACTED]

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CJCS

Referring to WWMCCS. Wonders if we are inputting properly to handle LNO's.

DRC

[REDACTED]

Sec Def

How about political-military gaming on LNO's? Get Jones (RAND) into act.

[REDACTED] If we can do that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Tough technical problem. May be a possibility if total numbers are constrained by SALT.

DRC

[REDACTED]

CSAF

Could set aside some number of missiles and aircraft for LNO's. Special payloads could be configured.

CNO

[REDACTED]

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CSAF

Should exercise LNO special force. [REDACTED]

CJCS

On political guidance for option development: wants to do in-house thinking first.

JRS

Doesn't see need for rushing things. Thinks US will need LNO and RNO capabilities by about 1979. (Tied to possible changes in Soviet leadership?)

CJCS

Will have a CINC's workshop on LNO's - 18-19 December.

CSAF

Need to set priorities to minimize unnecessary work in revising poor options.

Actions needed. Discussed by DRC with Wade, ISA/PP, and Elder, J-5.

1. Develop political guidance in-house. Priorities for LNO, and do some gaming. Wade to give J-5 a paper on this. J-5 will organize gaming exercise. Get Jones, RAND, in to see what he's done.

2. [REDACTED]
JCS, NTA, NA. Wade has some work going (from NTA) with DNA RDA. Meeting on this early January.

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3. New generation of Soviet leaders. Get something started with Kohler and others.
4. Soviet view of LNO's.
5. Tailored payloads for LNO's.

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