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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
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26 April 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF

SUBJECT: Philosophy of the Secretary of Defense on Nuclear War (U)

1. I would like to have prepared a paper which contains official statements by the Secretary of Defense on nuclear war such as those found in the Presidential memorandums, testimony before Congress and replies to JCS papers. I am thinking of such sub-subjects as:

- a. Assured Destruction vs Damage Limiting
- b. Credibility of the Deterrent
- c. Withholding (b)(1) as a Bargaining Lever
- d. Level of Sufficiency
- e. Unbalancing Theory

2. In addition to the above, I would like to have all of the fragmented Secretary of Defense quotes succinctly and accurately transposed into a Secretary of Defense "Philosophy on Nuclear War."

*Earle G. Wheeler*

EARLE G. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

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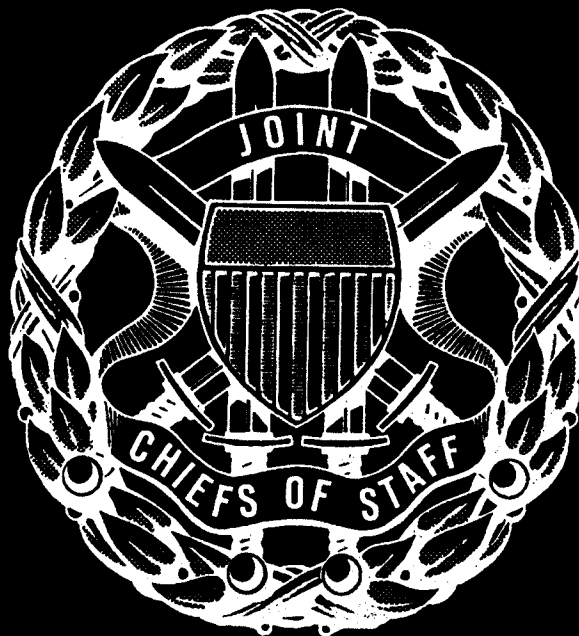
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# *Philosophy of the Secretary of Defense on Nuclear War*

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## JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

PART TWO

SNYOPSIS

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PHILOSOPHY OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
ON  
NUCLEAR WAR

PART TWO  
SYNOPSIS

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SYNOPSIS OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SECRETARY  
OF DEFENSE ON NUCLEAR WAR

The over-all philosophy of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara on nuclear war has its genesis in his often repeated belief that our strategy for general war must be based upon an ultimate deterrent to a deliberate nuclear attack on the United States or its allies, that is a clear and unmistakable ability to destroy the attacker as a viable society, and, should deterrence fail, by accident or miscalculation, that forces be available not only to destroy the attacker but to limit the damage of such an attack to ourselves and our allies.\*

Of the requirement for an assured destruction capability, Secretary McNamara is adamant and he feels that our strategic offensive forces are far more than adequate, even after absorbing a surprise Soviet first strike. Of the complimentary problem of damage limitation, he expresses the concern that it is dominated by great uncertainty as to the Soviet response to our actions. In 1964, he labeled his nuclear strategy "damage limiting" as the most practical and effective course to follow, encompassing within it the first objective of assured destruction.

The forces to be available for damage limiting include not only the defensive forces but the offensive forces, strategic missiles and bombers, used in a damage limiting role. The size and composition of these forces constitute the area in which most force issues arise as the Secretary attempts to afford the United States with a range of alternatives. However, while there are differences in judgment as to how large the force should be, there is general agreement, in his opinion, that it must be at least large enough to ensure destruction, either singly or in combination, of the Soviet Union, Communist China, and communist countries of Europe as national societies. It must be measured under the worst possible conditions of war initiation that can be reasonably postulated and, in addition, must be able to destroy their capability to wage war so as to limit damage to this country.\*\* The extent of our "damage limiting" programs, economically and technically feasible and timed to be effective in a balanced defense posture, compound the uncertainty of the Soviet response.

\* Posture Statement, 3 January 1966

\*\* Posture Statement, 6 January 1964

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From the outset of his tenure, Secretary McNamara advised that maintenance of our nuclear strike power as a deterrent was not, in itself, enough. "In a world in which both sides may be capable of inflicting severe damage on each other, we must," he said, "have machinery for the command and control of our forces, which is itself able to survive attack and to apply the surviving forces in consonance with national security objectives. This protected command and control system gives flexibility to choose among several operational plans, but does not require that we make any advance commitment with respect to doctrine or targets. We shall be committed only to a system that gives us the ability to use our forces in a controlled and deliberate way. . . ."\* He cited examples of his concept:

"We may have to retaliate with a single massive attack. Or, we may be able to use our retaliatory forces to limit damage done to ourselves, and our allies, by knocking out the enemy's bases before he has had time to launch his second salvos. We may seek to terminate a war on favorable terms by using our forces as a bargaining weapon -- by threatening further attack."\*

The concept of command and control utilizing the machinery produced has broadened with revolutionary growth and effect, and its implementation has reached new plateaus such as in Vietnam at the other end of the spectrum of conflict. It is noteworthy that the success of a controlled and deliberate response strategy depends in great measure on informing potential enemies to the maximum of this country's capabilities and intentions in the expectation of rational self-interest and, as an inducement, to plan similarly in the event that nuclear war does occur.

Early in 1961 at the direction of the President, the Secretary of Defense undertook an extensive reappraisal of the entire defense effort. The studies and questions that were directed to the DOD and special task groups were for the purpose of establishing a foundation for the determination of requirements. Strategic forces and continental air

\* Secretary of Defense Statement Before American Bar Association, Chicago, 17 February 1962

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defense, limited war requirements, and research and development were examined. The response of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to these studies endorsed mixed delivery systems, acceleration of research and development, the need for warning systems, assignment of specific damage to each category of targets, and the emphasis on a survivable system of national level political/military command and control as an absolute prerequisite of controlled response and selective discriminate attacks.\*

The fact that these studies set the pattern for the years to come is evidenced by Secretary McNamara's testimony from his first appearance before the House Armed Services Committee to the present. Adequate defense at the least cost was the standard set and the combination of programs he soon selected to meet the threat under this criterion remains, with few exceptions, determinant in force considerations.

An example of the direction in which we were headed was his analysis in early 1962 that we must determine the aiming points of the target system, the numbers and explosive yields of weapons which must be delivered on the aiming points, and the size and character of the forces best suited to deliver these weapons. Since preparation for a first strike by the enemy must also be made, the calculations included allowances for losses of our forces or the additional factors of the size and character of the enemy's forces, the effectiveness of his attack and the vulnerability of our own strategic weapons system. Using high and low limits of the range of estimates in the analysis of capabilities, calculations were made which helped determine the size and character of strategic retaliatory forces required over the next five year period to destroy an attacker after we absorbed a first blow.\*\*

It should be noted that at this early date Secretary McNamara discussed, in some instances, bombers before missiles and the necessity for a mixed force, but stated that if the Soviets build a large, hardened and dispersed ICBM force, then we must concentrate our efforts on a force that can ride out an all-out nuclear attack and strike back decisively.

\* Memo for the Secretary of Defense, dated 10 January 1962, subject: A Study of Requirements for US Strategic Systems (U)  
\*\* Posture Statement, 9 January 1962

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"Although," he said,

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there is still a role to be played by the manned bomber. They will be useful in tracking down and destroying targets of uncertain location and in attacking hardened targets."\* In 1966, his summary for the assured destruction mission carried the manned bombers in a supplementary role for the reason that they can force the enemy to provide defense against aircraft in addition to defense against missiles. However, in this role he said that large bomber forces are not needed; a few hundred aircraft can fulfill this function.\*\* He feels that the greatest single military error made by the Soviets in the last 10 to 15 years is their expenditure for air defense, but he also says, which seems somewhat contradictory, that our bomber force causes the defender to "waste" a large part of his resources for this defense.\*\*\*

For the assured destruction mission the Secretary of Defense, in 1966, makes it plain that missiles are preferred. In his opinion, the hundreds of successful firings support their reliability, and they are less complex, more flexible as weapons, and allow more decision-making time than bombers.\*\*\*\* With regard to survival it is highly unlikely, in his view, based upon the latest intelligence, that the Soviets would be able to destroy any of our POLARIS submarines at sea or inflict high levels of prelaunch attrition on our land-based missiles.# He has stressed that this is not the case with bombers which present a soft concentrated target, perhaps half would be destroyed on the ground in a Soviet first strike and the remainder, though they have a high capability for successful penetration today, will, as Soviet air defenses improve, have progressively more difficulty in penetrating to major target areas.##

\* Posture Statement, 9 January 1962

\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 8 March 1966

\*\*\* Posture Statement, 8 January 1966

\*\*\*\* Hearings, House Armed Services Committee, 9 March 1966

# Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 23 February 1966

## Hearings, House Subcommittee on Appropriations, 3 March 1965

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Enveloping his entire philosophy is Secretary McNamara's position on the likelihood of nuclear war. He has maintained, on numerous occasions, that it is almost inconceivable in the near term that we would face any such nuclear threat from the Soviet Union. His latest expression given before the Appropriations Committee this year is that the more likely confrontation would be at the lesser scales of force application such as a conflict over Berlin or on the flanks of NATO that would not lead to a likely nuclear exchange.\*

Even the fact that the Soviet's are greatly increasing the invulnerability of their missile force is not necessarily to our disadvantage in his judgment, because then, he says, "there is less pressure on them to carry out a preemptive strike in a period of crisis. . . .""\*\* This thought was carried further by his antithetical expression in 1966, "a nation can reach the point at which it does not buy more security for itself by buying more military hardware -- we are at that point."\*\*\*

## II

Secretary McNamara in his early testimony in 1961, asserted that the problem of deterring an all-out nuclear war has been greatly complicated by the introduction of intercontinental ballistic missiles by our major adversary. "Only a year or so ago," he maintained, "the principal general war threat to our security was surprise attack by large numbers of nuclear-armed manned bombers. A year or two from now," he continued, "our principal concern will be a surprise attack by large numbers of nuclear-armed ICBMs."\*\*\*\*

In 1962, he reasoned that the problem of securing our strategic deterrent forces is much more serious against an ICBM attack, and the shift from manned bombers to ICBMs opens up a host of new problems. His major concern, in reevaluating our general war position, was to reduce our dependence on deterrent forces which are highly vulnerable to ballistic missiles, or which rely for their survival on a hair-trigger

\* Hearings, House Committee on Appropriations, 14 February 1966

\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 21 February 1963

\*\*\* Address by Secretary McNamara before American Society of Newspaper Editors, Montreal, Canada, 18 May 1966

\*\*\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 4 April 1961

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response to the first indications of such an attack. He said, early in his examination, that a greater emphasis would be placed on the kind of forces which could ride out and survive a massive nuclear attack and which could be applied, according to his command and control concept, with deliberation and always under the complete control of constituted authority.\*

The fundamental aspect of survivability in his philosophy continues to dominate his approach to the deterrent problem. In 1966, his statement to the Congress contained these words:

"Designing our own forces on the basis of the worst possible case denies the Soviet any incentive for deliberate attack. . . . Even if the Soviets in the 1970 period were to assign their entire available missile force to attack on our strategic forces (reserving only refire missiles and bomb-delivered weapons for urban attacks), more than half of our total forces would still survive. . . . Indeed, it appears that an ability to deliver and detonate [400 one MT warheads over Soviet cities] would furnish us with a completely adequate deterrent to a deliberate Soviet nuclear attack on the United States or its Allies."\*\*

He amplified his remarks before the House Appropriations Committee on 14 February 1966 by saying, ". . . we start with [redacted] missiles, and we have surviving a Soviet first strike [redacted] We start with [redacted] bomber weapons and we have surviving [redacted] missile weapons and 1330 bomber weapons, or a total of about [redacted] warheads survive a Soviet attack, and of that [redacted] warheads we need only [redacted] detonated on the Soviet Union to kill [redacted]

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The much publicized "no cities" strategy for a completely adequate deterrent which has caused much editorializing of the strategy of the Secretary of Defense, has its basis in his commencement address at Ann Arbor in 1962. He clearly enunciated there a "no cities" option,

\* Posture Statement, 9 January 1962

\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 23 February 1966

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offering the Soviets an incentive to follow a plan not to attack our cities. His preface was that the United States had concluded that basic military strategy should be toward military objectives and that the very strength of the Alliance made possible reserve power to destroy the enemy society if driven to it.\* No Soviet response is known, nor has the impact of the offer been indicated in his testimony in subsequent years. The "no cities" idea appeared in NATO meetings and in his testimony before the Congress, though the statements are cast differently and each must be considered in light of the circumstance in which it is given.

For example, in the NATO Ministerial Meeting in May 1962 in Athens, he said:

"... to the extent feasible basic military strategy in general nuclear war should be approached in much the same way that more conventional military operations have been regarded in the past. This is to say, our principal military objectives, in the event of a nuclear war stemming from a major attack on the Alliance, should be the destruction of the enemy's military forces while attempting to preserve the fabric as well as the integrity of allied society. Specifically, our studies indicate that a strategy which targets nuclear forces only against cities or a mixture of civil and military targets has serious limitations for the purpose of deterrence and for the conduct of general nuclear war . . . ."

In his posture statement in January 1964, the Secretary expressed his belief that it is quite likely that the Soviet Union, in an attack on the United States and Western Europe, would not fire all of its strategic nuclear weapons in a "salvo launch" and, regardless, of whether the strike was at our cities or our military installations, it would extend over a considerable period of time. He added, "... time for us to receive the first blow, to strike back not only at Soviet cities, if that be our choice, but at the elements of their

\* Remarks, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, University of Michigan, 16 June 1962

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forces that had not yet been launched." Thus, the idea of a controlled counterforce strategy persisted and preparations continued for a posture not only adequate for the strategy but that would limit damage to the United States. Just how he contemplates that the Soviets could achieve the discriminating destruction of our military bases and strategic weapons without serious damage to our urban areas, or how we would be able to discriminate between an attack on our military as opposed to our cities, is not clear and the record is not articulate on the subject.

In 1966, the statements of the Secretary of Defense were tied closely to assured destruction and damage limitation. His expressed thoughts provide little evidence of the earlier idea of a countermilitary type exchange and, when considered with his analysis that a "full first strike force" is simply unattainable, are indicative that he has outwardly fallen back from his "no cities" strategy. Also, his financial summaries of major programs show that although the over-all defense budget has risen from \$44.9 billion in FY 1962 to \$61.4 billion in FY 1967, the budget for strategic offensive and defensive forces has been reduced from \$7.6 billion to \$5.1 billion and \$2.2 billion to \$1.4 billion serially. Conceding his view that assured destruction is capable of more precise measurement than damage limitation, the budget reductions in the area of strategic defensive forces appear unwarranted in light of the acknowledged increasing Soviet threat and the uncertainties which the Secretary states exist. Other considerations including the Vietnamese conflict (the most pronounced budgetary changes commence in 1965) may be overriding in his analysis and compelling his change of emphasis, because any limitation of the range of options is contrary to his basic "controlled response" concept.

With respect to protection in the damage limiting problem, Secretary McNamara maintains that it will be virtually impossible for us to be able to ensure anything approaching complete protection for our population. This is his position even if we strike first and no matter how large the strategic force we provide. He believes that the Soviets can increase their first strike capability at an extra cost to them substantially less than the extra cost to us of additional damage limiting measures we might take and that their technical and economic

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capacity would prevent us from achieving a posture which could keep our fatalities below some tens of millions.\*

His two other basic damage limiting considerations in 1966 are that each of the Soviet strategic offensive systems, i.e., land-based missiles, submarine-launched missiles, and bombers can inflict severe damage to us and a good defense against only one system would have limited value; and, that for any given level of Soviet offensive capability, successive additions to each of our various damage limiting systems have diminishing value.\*\* These considerations were used in further justification of his recommendations on the size and composition of damage limiting forces.

### III

Undoubtedly, the most controversial issue the Secretary of Defense has had to deal with in the area of strategic offensive forces has been that of the manned bombers. The shifting of emphasis from liquid to solid fuel missiles, deferring mobile MINUTEMAN, MRBMs, and relegating the attack carrier primarily to a limited war role, have caused much controversy, but the bomber force and new advanced strategic aircraft have been the subject of more testimony and criticism than other weapon systems.

In 1961, when he indicated his thoughts on the matter were still in the formulation stage, he said, "I think the evidence points to a declining emphasis upon them (manned bombers) but I am not personally prepared at the present time to say for sure they are on their way out,"\*\*\* and, "I personally believe it is unlikely we will proceed with the production of the B-70."\*\*\*\* He followed this in February 1962 with the statement, "I think until we have more experience with the missiles, we should continue to place primary reliance on the bombers."#

However, that his concept for the future had begun to take shape rapidly is indicated by the statement he made in not procuring another

\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 8 March 1966

\*\* Posture Statement, 3 January 1966

\*\*\* Hearings, House Armed Services Committee, 11 April 1961

\*\*\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 4 April 1961

# Hearings, Senate Appropriations Committee, 15 February 1962

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wing of B-52s and in consigning the B-70 to a development program in 1962:

"Furthermore, manned bombers present soft and concentrated targets and they depend upon warning and quick response for their survival under attack. This is a less reliable means of protection than hardening, dispersal, and mobility. Moreover, reliance on warning and quick response means that the bomber must be committed to the attack very early in the war and cannot be held in reserve to be used in a controlled and deliberate way. Finally, bombers are expensive. It costs about 1.4 billion to buy a wing of B-52s, together with the tankers and SKYBOLT missiles, and to operate it five years. For the same cost, we can buy and operate for the same period of time 250 hardened and dispersed MINUTEMAN missiles or six POLARIS submarines."\*

In this instance, Secretary McNamara used most of the arguments that previously had been used for, instead of against, the manned bomber. He had even used some of these arguments in favor of the manned bomber only a year before.

In 1963, in reply to the question that as far as prime targets are concerned in 1968, very substantial reliance would be placed on missiles and very little on manned aircraft, he replied, "Yes sir, I think that is a fair conclusion."\*\* Only a week prior, he had forecast that manned aircraft as a launch platform for gravity bombs had no long range future, but might be used in tactical situations.

In 1965, he expressed no hesitance in saying that the missile force can be depended upon and results predicted with greater confidence than those of a bomber attack. Replying to questions on the future of bombers, he said, "I don't know of a single study in the Defense Department that makes clear the role of the manned bomber in 1975."\*\*\*

The exhaustive inquiry continued in 1965 and 1966 with the FB-111 and AMSA aircraft. Now, however, the Secretary's firmness in his position is obvious:

\* Posture Statement to Armed Services Committee, January 1962  
\*\* Hearings, House Appropriations Committee, 7 February 1963  
\*\*\* Hearings, House Armed Services Committee, 23 February 1965

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"... the foundation of the strategic nuclear force must be the intercontinental ballistic missile and no airplane can be a substitute for that in the ICBM age. . . . If you accept that premise . . . then what is the role of the airplane? . . . It is very difficult."\*

In reply to the statement that it is an insurance factor he said:

"It is not an insurance factor. This is exactly the point I am making. No one has suggested that any one of these airplanes, certainly not the AMSA is an insurance against failure of the missiles because it is not."\*

In providing a warning to the enemy, as it was advanced in justification of bombers, he said, "I submit to you that time such as we are talking about is a . . . dangerous time to be flying bombers around for the purpose of warning, because you may give him warning that it's about time he committed suicide instead of being murdered."\*\*

In 1966, Secretary McNamara's justification for maintaining the B-52 force and procuring at \$2 billion, 210 FB-111s was twofold. First, they would supplement other missile forces and cause the Soviet Union to maintain a more expensive force. Secondly, that the FB-111 is a dual purpose aircraft and can also be used for tactical situations.

His views, with respect to the AMSA, are reflected by his statement this year to the Appropriations Committee:

"... we are not likely to need the AMSA, if we need it at all, at a time such as to require further action in 1967, and secondly, we are not likely to be sufficiently clear of the character of a follow-on bomber if we need such a bomber in 1967 to properly spend these funds."\*\*\*

The solidification of his philosophy on manned bombers for assured destruction is now clearly indicated by his 1966 background briefing:

"The ICBM, including the POLARIS is and will continue to be the foundation of our deterrent force, and the ICBM force,

- \* Hearings, House Appropriations Committee, 16 February 1966
- \*\* Background Briefing, 25 January 1966
- \*\*\* Hearings, House Appropriations Committee, 15 February 1966

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including the POLARIS itself is several times the size of the force required to accomplish our assured destruction objective. And we propose to keep it that way, because the ICBM is far superior to the manned bomber as an assured destruction weapon, and it is assured destruction which is the foundation of deterrence and we must therefore select the most effective weapon to accomplish that purpose."\*

#### IV

Consistency in the recommendations of the Secretary of Defense for limiting damage and grouping defensive forces under his philosophy is apparent from reviewing his annual presentations to the Congress. In 1962, he listed the defensive tasks in this order:

1. Reduce vulnerability of existing bomber defense systems to ballistic missile attack.
2. Improve the certainty and timeliness of warning of ballistic missile attack.
3. Provide, to the extent feasible, for an active system of defense against ballistic missile attack.
4. Improve our defense against attack by submarine-launched missiles.
5. Develop a system for the detection, tracking, and identification of unfriendly satellites and study the problem of destroying unfriendly satellites.
6. Provide, to the extent possible, fallout protection for the population.

While he did not emphasize strategic missile security in his listing, he did include it in his discussions with the Congressional committees so that the tasks are essentially the same as the ones he considered in 1966.

He listed fallout protection last, but announced then a position which he has reiterated down through the years, that providing fallout shelters should precede our provision of antiballistic

\* Background Briefing, 25 January 1966

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missiles for defense. An efficient damage limiting effort requires, in his estimation, a mix of measures including a full fallout shelter program, and the shelter program is the first, most important, and cheapest action.\*

Warning systems including missile and satellite detection and highly survivable airborne warning and control systems, he believes, also find important application in the tactical situation. Anti-submarine warfare research and development are needed to hedge against the possibility of a more sophisticated threat in the future.

In his posture statement in 1966, he pointed out that the elaborate defenses we erected against the bomber threat no longer retained their original importance and their contribution is problematical in view of our complete lack of defense against Soviet ICBMs.\*\* The recasting of the defensive effort includes recommendations that the fighter interceptor force be phased down and new interceptor aircraft continued in a test status. He foresees no need for F-12 type interceptors for the period beyond the 1970s unless we decided to seek a very large damage limiting program or the Soviets were to increase their bomber threat. Neither of these conditions, he thinks, are in prospect. "In addition to the F-12," he stated, "we will continue to have the option of using a version of the F-111 as a replacement for our present interceptors for many years to come."\*\*\*

The emergence of the Chinese Peoples' Republic as a nuclear threat and indications by the intelligence community of initiation of the deployment of missile defense in the USSR, together with the possibility of US area missile defense may be effecting his stand on our own antiballistic missile defense system. For his main objection to deployment of an antiballistic missile in 1962, he said:

"... even if we could devise an antimissile system with a high degree of effectiveness, we would still not solve the

\* Hearings, House Appropriations Committee, 14 February 1966  
\*\* Posture Statement, 3 January 1966

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problem of nuclear fallout from surface explosives outside the defended area. There is a limit to the range of effectiveness of any terminal defense system, and fallout from ICBMs outside this range could be lethal."\*

Also, he has held repeatedly that an ABM system can be offset by penetration aids and additional missiles at much less cost than a defensive system. However, beginning in 1965, when he discussed the CHICOM threat at greater length, a change in the tenor of the Secretary's statements is noticeable and in January 1966, he said:

"... the situation has now been changed significantly by the emergence of the possibility of developing an area missile defense based upon the use of long-range interceptor missiles. . . . Against a relatively light attack, such as the Chinese communists may be able to mount in the mid to late 1970s, an area defense alone might be very effective, offering the possibility of avoiding substantial damage. Even against a heavy sophisticated Soviet attack, an area defense would be a valuable supplement."\*\*

While his position may be viewed as modified due to the change in the nature of the threat, it still must be recognized that it has not changed to the point of recommending that an estimated \$20 billion be appropriated for production.

His stated reasons for not recommending in 1966 production and deployment of an antimissile system are directed both at the CHICOM and USSR threats. He said:

"With regard to Communist China the timing of a US light ABM deployment should be linked to the pace at which the threat actually evolves. Since we do not now believe the Chinese communists could deploy any significant ICBM force before the mid 1970s, no production decision on that account is needed at this time."\*\*\*

\* Hearings, House Armed Services Committee, 24 January 1962  
\*\* Posture Statement, 3 January 1966  
\*\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 8 March 1966

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Relative to the USSR, his reasons are twofold. First, that it almost surely causes the Soviets to react by introducing penetration aids, additional missiles or other modifications, which could be done at approximately 10 to 20 per cent less cost than our defensive systems. Secondly, that even if they did not react to our unbalancing actions, the reduction in lives is achieved only at a tremendous cost to us and never takes us down to a situation of survival in any meaningful sense.\* In recommending his program in 1966, he concluded that while the decision should not be made now for an all-out damage limiting effort, development of all elements of the system should be vigorously pursued to include exoatmospheric and terminal interceptors and the new associated radar.\*\*

With regard to civil defense, his principal innovation for FY 1967 is a modest experimental program which would provide the option, even if we decided against a major damage limiting effort, that would be compatible with a lighter damage limiting effort such as the one in connection with the possible emergence of a Chinese communist strategic nuclear threat.\*\* His lack of major success with the shelter program, which he has so consistently held to be our first step, and the appearance on the horizon of CHICOM nuclear power and USSR antiballistic missile defense, are critical factors in considering damage limiting objectives, and he has made it plain that he is ready to make some adjustment in his past stand on shelters:

"We have made strenuous efforts in the past to obtain larger appropriations and have been unsuccessful. I think it wise instead of wasting our time on continuing to press something we cannot accomplish, to spend our resources on other more fruitful areas of activity and that is why we are submitting a budget again higher than Congress approved last year by some 25 per cent but still lower than we requested in the past."\*\*\*

- \* Hearings, House Appropriations Committee, 14 February 1966
- \*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 8 March 1966
- \*\*\* Hearings, House Appropriations Committee, 15 February 1966

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He has also stated when testifying on NIKE-X and the Joint Chiefs of Staff position that recommendations for the antiballistic system need clarification:

"But they did not describe what kind of a system they had in mind, either. It could be anything from a light defense directed against the Red Chinese threat to a very heavy, sophisticated defense directed against the Soviet threat and ranging in cost from perhaps less than \$5 billion in one case to \$20 to \$30 billion in another. What they had in mind . . . is not clear to me."\*

V

The remarks of Secretary McNamara at the commencement exercises of the University of Michigan on 16 June 1962, signalled his approach to the theater nuclear problem. Although prior to this time he had stressed in his appearances before the Armed Services Committees the need for more nonnuclear strength, ". . . that the decision to employ nuclear weapons in limited conflicts should not be forced upon us simply because we have no other means to cope with them,"\*\* the address in Michigan encompassed almost wholly, his ideas on NATO and his philosophy on nuclear war in Western Europe.

He said, in exposing his view, that most of the arguments on the controversies involving NATO are mistaken; the interdependence on both sides of the Atlantic has increased and the effect of the Western European economic success, increasing vulnerability of the United States to attack, and the growing nuclear threat enhance the need for the closest coordination of our efforts.\*\*\* "A central issue facing NATO is the role of nuclear strategy," he continued, "and four facts dominate that role:

"First, the Alliance has over-all nuclear strength adequate to any challenge.

- \* Hearings, Subcommittee on Appropriations, Senate Appropriations Committee, 1 August 1966
- \*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 4 April 1961
- \*\*\* Remarks, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, University of Michigan, 16 June 1962 (Ann Arbor)

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"Second, the strength not only minimizes war but makes possible a strategy designed to preserve the fabric of our societies should war come.

"Third, damage to the civil societies of the Alliance from nuclear exchange could be very grave, and

"Fourth, improved nonnuclear forces could enhance deterrence of any aggression short of all-out attack."\*

He cautioned that a surprise nuclear attack is not a rational act for an enemy, but there is no guarantee that war cannot take place, and for that reason our best hope lies in unity of the Alliance, concentration of authority, and central direction. He emphasized that weak nuclear forces operating individually under the control of a single nation were dangerous, obsolete and costly. The desirability of a combination of nuclear strength and a strategy of controlled response without depending solely on nuclear power was also set forth.

In his 1966 posture statement, the Secretary again repeated that the principal military issue in NATO revolved around nuclear policy, and his conclusions were substantially as presented the year before; namely, that:

1. Theater nuclear capabilities are a necessary complement to but not a substitute for nonnuclear capability which should be the preferred option.
2. A theater nuclear capability is needed to deter Soviet use of tactical nuclear weapons and support our nonnuclear force if unable to hold an attack.
3. NATO nuclear forces should be primarily for theater nuclear war; external forces will cover the USSR.
4. Theater nuclear force should provide a broad flexible range of options as to length and intensity of the war.
5. Weapons and control systems should have greater survivability and more flexible use to insure the nonnuclear option.

\* Remarks, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, University of Michigan, 16 June 1962 (Ann Arbor)

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6. Present NATO strategy is still unsatisfactory in the response it provides for aggression less than general war.\*

It is evident, therefore, that Secretary McNamara continued to hold to his belief that conflicts most likely to occur in Western Europe would begin in a nonnuclear fashion and that if we can manage local or limited conflicts we will not have to meet the extreme contingencies.\*\*

Throughout his Congressional testimony on theater nuclear problems, the Secretary reflects a theme that essentially SACEUR's forces provide [REDACTED] due to their vulnerability, the lack of a USSR command and control system to conduct a constrained nuclear war and the extraordinary complexity of tactical nuclear war.\*\*\* It is difficult for him to see, he has said, how tactical nuclear superiority can become a means of controlling escalation and, while we are firmly committed to a forward strategy and propose to use whatever means may prove necessary to maintain those positions, reliance mainly on nuclear weapons is not to our over-all comparative advantage.\*\*\*\* A NATO response with nuclear weapons would be met by powerful Soviet nuclear weapons, in his opinion, and might invite a theater-wide preemptive blow. He concluded, in giving his reservations about establishing a firebreak at the level of engaged nuclear battle, that such a process once started would be difficult to stop short of general nuclear war.\*\*\* He has repeatedly advised that many of our problems in Europe are the result of overselling a nuclear defense; that SACEUR's forces are out of balance; and that NATO's strategic concept is unsatisfactory and should be changed to stress options for less than general war.

The Secretary of Defense capsulized his approach to the problem in 1966 when he said:

"A sophisticated nation, a nation acquainted with nuclear weapons, acquainted with the results of their use, knows well

\* Posture Statement, 3 January 1966

\*\* Speech, NATO Ministerial Meeting, 14 December 1962

\*\*\* Draft Memo, 26 October 1964

\*\*\*\* Draft Memo, 29 October 1965

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that they are absolutely fundamental to deterrence of large-scale attack by other powers. But, they are very limited in the degree to which they will deter other forms of political and military aggression. The Soviet Union knows this and observes it, knows other forms of military power are required to deter these lesser forms of actions and that conventional forces are absolutely essential for such deterrence; and that in the event such conventional forces are not available, one can expect from hostile powers, or we can expect from hostile powers, a probing for weakness and eventual political and military moves of aggression."\*

In relation to the Southeast Asia theater, he has expressed firmly the opinion that there is no military requirement in the current situation in South Vietnam for nuclear weapons and no useful purpose would be served by their use. With respect to Soviet interpretation of our actions in this area he has stated, "They also know, as we do, that it is not in their national interest to use strategic nuclear weapons except in response to . . . a large-scale attack, that is one striking at the very survival of the nation. Since they know that, they do not misinterpret our action in Southeast Asia today."\*\* He has also said, ". . . I would guess that we have more than [REDACTED] in the tactical situation in Vietnam, but none of us anticipate or contemplate any such requirement in South Vietnam,"\*\*\* and, "I said, and the President implied, any extensive military operations with [REDACTED] They know that."\*\*\*\*

#### VI

The views of the Secretary of Defense on arms control constitute an essential element of his nuclear philosophy. The problem, in his opinion, is very complex, and a successful solution involves a

- \* Senate Subcommittee on National Security, Government Operations Committee, 21 June 1966
- \*\* Hearings, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, 7 March 1966
- \*\*\* Hearings, Senate Armed Services Committee, 21 January 1966
- \*\*\*\* Hearings, House Armed Services Committee, 4 February 1966

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comprehensive program designed both to make it difficult for proliferation to take place and to create an international atmosphere in which nonnuclear states realize that their security is lessened by acquisition of nuclear weapons. Nonproliferation, peaceful nuclear programs, test bans, and strengthening of the United Nations and other international security arrangements are elements of the program.\*

On proliferation, his view, stated initially in 1963 and repeated in 1966, is that the probability of further diffusion of nuclear weapons poses a severe threat to our security. Proliferation, he warned, would:

1. Increase the likelihood of accidental detonation.
2. Increase the risk of small wars and, in turn, a large war.
3. Cause destabilizing shifts in the balance of power.\*

It must be clear to India, Japan, Germany, and others that they can be major powers without acquiring nuclear weapons, he asserted, in explaining that while we must be willing to accept restraints and obligations, nonproliferation is essentially an act of self denial.\*

With respect to test bans, the Secretary took the position, after the Soviets resumed testing in 1961, that the United States had no alternative but to proceed.\*\* In 1963, after completion of our tests, he said that we could, on balance, safely agree to a moratorium because we had developed sufficiently to be ahead of the Soviets\*\*\* and he supported the limited test ban. In 1965, he endorsed the proposal for a threshold test ban and in 1966, strongly supported the nonproliferation resolution of the Senate.\*\*\*\* His approach is that each arms proposal or test ban agreement must be examined individually in light of our security and not changing the balance of power.#

\* Hearings, Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, 7 March 1966

\*\* New York Times, 4 March 1962, Statement by Secretary McNamara

\*\*\* Hearings, House Armed Services Committee, 1 February 1963

\*\*\*\* Hearings, Joint Committee Atomic Energy, 7 March 1966

# Hearings, Senate Committee on Appropriations, 1 August 1966

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However, with respect to the Soviets, his remarks before the Senate Committee on Government Operations this year indicate a deeper design, compatible with his over-all strategy. While discussing increased nuclear planning and consultation for NATO through the "McNamara Committee"; the multilateral force, joint ownership, operation and financing of nuclear forces by NATO members; and, repeating that "veto" control must and will rest with the President of the United States, he said in "sheer speculation":

"It is my judgment that it is not the Soviets' concern over possible dilution of the United States veto that is standing in the way of their participation in a nonproliferation treaty, but rather there is their desire to use the issue as a means of dividing the members of the alliance . . . as soon as they find that we are firm, . . . I am inclined to believe that the Soviets will move to a reconsideration. . . ."

Thus, in essence, the Secretary of Defense sums up his entire philosophy of nuclear war - complete command and control of all allied nuclear weapons under our constituted single authority in order to permit a controlled and deliberate response and to create an atmosphere wherein negotiation may be possible with the ultimate objective of minimizing the likelihood of nuclear war.

\* Hearings, Senate Committee on Government Operations, 21 June 1966

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