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U.S. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

AND

FORCE POSTURE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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27

C. Nuclear Weapon Employment Plans

Employment plans for nuclear weapons include the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) and various contingency plans of SACEUR and our theater commanders. These are discussed below, as is our current capability for ad hoc planning of nuclear strikes.

1. SIOP

The National Strategic Targeting and Attack Policy (NSTAP), prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, provides guidance for preparing employment plans of U.S. nuclear offensive forces against the Soviet Union and other communist nations. The SIOP integrates U.S. strategic forces and designated theater nuclear forces for preplanned attacks on targets for the purpose of accomplishing the NSTAP objectives, of which there are three:

-- Destruction of nuclear offensive threats to the United States and its allies, in order to limit damage.

-- Destruction of a comprehensive military target system, in order to assist in destroying overall Soviet and other Warsaw Pact military capability.

-- Destruction of war-supporting urban and industrial resources. [The NSTAP goals are to inflict moderate damage in 70% of the war-supporting industry and to destroy 30% of the people.] 1/

To meet the above objectives, there are three SIOP tasks, designated ALFA, BRAVO, and CHARLIE.

-- Task ALFA includes strikes on ICBM and IR/MRBM sites, bomber bases, ballistic missile submarine bases, local military command and control sites, nuclear weapon storage sites, and defense suppression targets.

-- Task BRAVO includes strikes on tactical airfields and other military targets critical to the overall conduct and direction of military operations.

-- Task CHARLIE includes strikes on urban/industrial targets and military targets colocated with cities.

1/ The JCS representative notes that destroying people is not a specific NSTAP objective.

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Table III-2 shows the number of targets and the number of weapons assigned to each task.

Table III-2
Summary of SIOP Targeting
(SIOP) Revision H; Numbers Rounded)

<u>Task</u>	<u>Total Installations</u>	<u>Preemptive U.S. Attack</u>		<u>Retaliatory U.S. Attacks</u>	
		<u>Installations Targeted</u>	<u>Warheads Programmed</u>	<u>Installations Targeted</u>	<u>Warheads Programmed</u>
ALPHA	2800	1700	3200	1600	2900
BRAVO	1800	500	300	500	300
CHARLIE	4300 ^{a/}	4300 ^{a/}	700	4300 ^{a/}	800

^{a/} An installation is a particular target within a city. The 4300 installations targeted are located in cities.

There are five attack options which can be selected by the NCA in executing SIOP strikes. Three of these options (designated Attack Options 1, 2, and 2 extended) provide for executing the SIOP tasks in a preemptive attack. Table III-3 shows the relation between attack options and the SIOP tasks.

Table III-3
Summary of SIOP Options
(X=executive; other tasks are reserved for possible later use)

<u>Task</u>	<u>U.S. Preemption</u>			<u>U.S. Retaliation</u>	
	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2 Extended</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
ALFA (nuclear threat targets)	X	X	X	X	X
BRAVO (other military targets)		X	X	X	X
CHARLIE (urban/industrial targets)			X		X

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UNCLASSIFIED

29

Under each attack option, the SIOP provides for selective withholding, by task and by country, of attacks against China and the Far Eastern and East European communist nations. In all options, however, the Soviet Union would be attacked. Moreover, attacks on the government centers in Moscow and Peking may be withheld in all attack options. On the other hand, SIOP strikes against China and North Korea can be expected without ordering SIOP attacks against the Soviet Union or other communist nations.

The following points are of importance:

-- Task ALFA (nuclear threat targets) is included in all attack options.

-- The smallest preemptive SIOP attack which the NCA can order against the Soviet Union (with the option of withholding against the Soviet NCA) includes task ALFA which involves about 2500 weapons.

-- The smallest SIOP retaliatory strike against the Soviet Union (again with the option to withhold includes tasks ALFA and BRAVO which involves about 2600 weapons.

Given these employment plans, U.S. strategic forces as currently targeted have the following capabilities for achieving the NSTAP objectives:

-- They cannot destroy a significant part of the Soviet nuclear delivery capability.

-- They can destroy about half of a comprehensive Soviet military target system.

-- They can inflict damage on 70% of the war-supporting economic targets in the USSR and China.

-- They can support our allies by destroying a significant number of Soviet bomber bases and soft, fixed IR/MRBM launchers.

-- They cannot significantly limit damage to the United States and its allies.

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30

-- They cannot insure termination of hostilities under conditions advantageous to the United States as measured in terms of residual military resources and limitation of damage to the U.S. urban/ industrial base.

Unless there are changes to current strategic programs or to current SIOP planning objectives, these capabilities will remain unchanged through the 1970s, except our ability to support NATO operations will decline if the Soviets harden more of their IR/MRBM sites.

(An annex with more detailed information and a separate analysis of the SIOP by the JCS are being distributed on a selective basis.)

2. Contingency Plans

The contingency plans of SACEUR and SACLANT for employment of NATO theater nuclear weapons are coordinated with the SIOP, and many of the NATO theater nuclear strike forces have common target assignments under both the SIOP and the NATO plans.

There are also contingency plans for the use of theater nuclear weapons (primarily tactical air forces), limited use of B-52s, and very limited use of SLBMs by U.S. unified commanders for tasks not incorporated in the SIOP. These plans are coordinated with the SIOP and with one another.

3. Capabilities for Selective Release and Ad Hoc Planning

In addition to the SIOP attack options and the above contingency plans, the President can currently use selective release procedures or ad hoc planning if he wants to execute a limited strike with nuclear weapons. Although CINC selective release procedures for tactical nuclear weapons are periodically exercised, those for strategic nuclear weapons are not and, therefore, their responsiveness in a crisis is uncertain.

-- The emergency action message procedures contain provisions for selective release of individual bomber or missile sorties which are programmed in the SIOP. This procedure could be extended to incorporate pre-planned or ad hoc limited strike options.

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31

-- Small attacks tailored to a specific crisis could be planned on an ad hoc basis, using current forces, staff organizations, and command and control systems.

Selective Release

Once the President has selected specific SIOP sorties for release, these sorties can be executed within 15-20 minutes after his decision. The time required for Presidential review and selection of these sorties is, however, uncertain; it could be several hours or over a day, depending on the number of political-military factors which must be taken into account. There are routine drills involving the communications systems, but we do not have systematic provisions for interface between the President and the planning staffs for the purpose of reviewing SIOP sorties for selective release.

Moreover, several factors bear on the choice of pre-programmed sorties from the SIOP for execution in a crisis:

-- The most obvious factor is that the pre-programmed sorties may not provide the attacks most suitable to the crisis.

-- SIOP attacks are planned with a high degree of mutual support among individual sorties for penetration of Soviet defenses. Thus, individual bomber sorties into areas with extensive air defenses or missile strikes into areas defended by the Moscow ABM system may not have much chance of success if the attack size is to be kept low.

-- A pre-programmed sortie with the MIRV-ed Minuteman III or Poseidon would generally be targeted against several targets, some of which the President might not want to attack.

-- Execution on a selective basis of many SIOP sorties would start to raise concerns about erosion of the effectiveness of the SIOP attack options, because of the high degree of mutual support among individual sorties. This threshold is uncertain and would depend on the sorties which were selectively released.

-- If SAC headquarters had been destroyed, the President could still review SIOP sorties for selective release, using airborne command posts, but capabilities to estimate prospective strike results, particularly collateral deaths, would be very limited.

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32

Ad Hoc Planning

Ad hoc strike planning could permit a small strategic nuclear strike to be tailored to fit any crisis situation. The time required for this planning is uncertain and would depend on the attack size. It might be possible to plan and execute a small attack (10-20 weapons) in 24 hours or less. However, as with selective release, we do not exercise our capabilities for ad hoc strike planning. Nor do we have provisions for interface between the President and planning staffs for the purposes of providing ad hoc responses. In fact, there are no staffs dedicated to and trained for planning such strikes. ^{1/}

1/ The JCS representative notes that while the statement is true in respect to a dedicated staff, it is misleading since it is not clear that a "dedicated" staff would be necessary for these operations. In respect to training, selected individuals probably possess adequate training.

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IV. Special Issues

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IV. SPECIAL ISSUES

Several outstanding issues should be discussed in some detail before considering the basic choices regarding U.S. strategic policies. These include:

- Support of allies;
- Strategic stability;
- Strategic flexible response;
- Improved missile counterforce capabilities.

A. Support of Allies 1/

The U.S. has stated on many occasions that it could and might use its strategic nuclear forces to support its Allies in the event of threats or attacks. 2/ The implications of these statements can best be analyzed by asking:

- What are the nature and levels of the U.S. strategic commitment?

1/ The State Department believes the section on Support to Allies inadequately treats the subject. In particular, the political and psychological aspects of maintaining a credible deterrent are not fully considered, and all relevant alternatives (e.g. greater allied control over U.S. nuclear forces, a European nuclear force) are not considered. Moreover, the ability of each of the General Strategic (offense) alternatives to meet the objective of Support to Allies is asserted rather than demonstrated.

2/ The JCS representative notes that in the Final Decision on MC 14/3 the United States is committed, as a member of the NATO Alliance, to act jointly and maintain a credible capability to conduct a general nuclear response as the ultimate deterrent. MC 14/3 further specifies that should aggression occur, the Alliance should initiate the appropriate major response if the aggression were a major attack.

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34

-- What contribution can strategic forces actually make?

-- Under the current balance, how credible are our commitments to the Soviets and Allies?

This section will focus on support of our NATO Allies. A subsequent section on China will discuss our commitments to Allies vis-a-vis China.

1. The Nature and Level of the U.S. Commitment

This study did not attempt to reassess U.S. commitments. It did conclude that existing commitments vary widely in their specificity and in the degree of U.S. vital interests involved.

2. The Contribution Which Strategic Forces Can Make

Strategic forces are part of a continuum of forces for ensuring the security of our allies: our theater nuclear forces and conventional forces couple and extend our strategic nuclear commitment down to any level of aggression, coupling the loss at one level to the risk of U.S. escalation to another.

With regard to this continuum of U.S. forces supporting the Allies:

-- NSDM 95 established U.S. conventional force policy in Europe and directed further study of tactical nuclear issues in Europe;

-- NSSM 69 is studying the U.S. conventional and tactical nuclear policy in Asia, as well as the strategic policy.

However, even when trying to focus only on strategic nuclear policy, we must note that the planning distinction between "strategic" and "theater" weapons is often overlooked in practice. On one hand, strategic forces might be employed for theater operations. For example, the President has recently approved commitment of Poseidon warheads for supporting the SACEUR strike plan thus continuing the support which had been provided by Polaris for several years. SACEUR's strike plan covers a wide area extending out to about 55° east longitude. On the other hand, theater forces contribute to strategic planning. For example, U.S. tactical nuclear forces in Asia directly support the SIOP against China; 32% of SIOP weapons planned against targets in China are by theater forces.

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Table IV-1 summarizes our tactical nuclear stockpile and deployments by major weapon class. There are, in addition to those shown in the table, about 2500 tactical nuclear warheads and 1100 ASW/AAW nuclear warheads stockpiled in the United States. Table IV-2 shows the number of tactical offensive weapons which are available for delivery on the Soviet Union and China, given their current deployment.

Table IV-1

Tactical and ASW/AAW Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization
(End FY-72)

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number Deployed in Theaters</u>				
	<u>Atlantic</u>	<u>Europe</u>	<u>Pacific</u>	<u>Afloat</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tactical Offensive <u>a/</u>	0	6000	1600	1300	8900
Tactical Defensive <u>b/</u>	0	1200	200	0	1400
Fleet ASW and AAW	<u>50</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>2200</u>	<u>2600</u>
Total	50	7400	1950	3500	12,900

a/ Includes tactical bombs, surface-to-surface missiles, and artillery

b/ Includes atomic demolition munitions, air-to-air missiles, and surface-to-air missiles.

Table IV-2

Number of Offensive Tactical Nuclear Warheads Which
Could be Employed Outside of Battlefield Area
(End FY-72)

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number Capable of Striking <u>a/</u></u>		
	<u>Warsaw Pact Nations</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>China</u>
Surface-to-Surface Missiles	600	0	0
Tactical Bombs	2600 <u>b/</u>	2600 <u>b/</u>	1700

a/ From current deployments.

b/ There are 2600 tactical nuclear bombs in Western Europe and afloat which could be delivered against either Warsaw Pact nations or the Soviet Union.

~~TOP SECRET~~
UNCLASSIFIED

36

As for the contribution which strategic forces can make in strategic support of allies, there is sharp debate. Strategic forces in the SIOP are planned against targets threatening our allies. However, our present employment planning would use these strategic forces in the context of a large strike; we have very limited capabilities for a small strategic attack. ^{1/}

-- Many question how helpful these capabilities are given the current balance. Presumably we would hesitate to launch a large strategic strike unless the Soviets had launched such a strike or were apparently on the verge of launching such a strike. Our capability to launch a limited strike is small at present and there is great uncertainty over the Soviet response to be expected. Those who question the present contribution of our strategic forces often argue for improvements in the capabilities of these forces. These improvements could include: increased flexibility, improvement counterforce capabilities, and/or the ability to insure favorable relative outcomes. Such improvements and their implications are discussed in subsequent sections.

-- Others say that the existence of sufficient strategic forces, such as we have now, deters Soviet use of strategic weapons. The Soviets would fear a large U.S. response to any large attack by them and would be uncertain how the U.S. would react to a more limited strategic attack against the Allies. Improvements in capabilities such as those suggested above and discussed in detail later, would not substantially increase the contribution of strategic forces, since they would not reduce the uncertainty of the Soviet response. Moreover, such improvements might lower the threshold of strategic warfare.

^{1/} The JCS representative believes that our capabilities for support of Allies should not be incredible and that a counterforce capability to support our commitments reinforces credibility.

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37

-- Others argue that it is not clear that procuring new or additional systems including defenses will in itself alleviate allied concern about the U.S. nuclear guarantees which, in turn, is related to the broader issue of their concern about future U.S. commitments to their security. While allies' questioning the commitment might in part be due to the changed strategic balance, it is also due to unilateral U.S. political and economic moves as well as the growth of bilateral U.S. and Soviet negotiations. Therefore, whether any General Strategic Alternatives will improve allied confidence in the U.S. commitment and the credibility of the deterrent is unclear. There are also political and psychological factors which may not be addressed by force improvements or new deployments. Some believe it might require other, more far-reaching measures. For example, greater allied participation in planning, targeting or control of U.S. nuclear forces might be considered, or we might encourage an independent allied nuclear force. Obviously, such measures would involve far-reaching changes in U.S. policy and involve a series of considerations beyond the scope of this study. The key element is not the U.S. telling our allies we can do this or that, but their "seeing" it can be done and participating in the process. Others believe that such measures would not be in the U.S. interest

3. The Credibility of Our Commitments

It is difficult to assess how credible our commitments are to ourselves, the Soviets, our Allies, and other countries. Confidence is often elusive, not directly tied to actual capabilities.

-- Some feel that the recent Soviet buildup and the U.S. reactions have whittled away at the confidence which many have in our commitment.

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Revised January 5, 1972

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UNCLASSIFIED

38

-- Others feel that there is no evidence of any dangerous erosion of this confidence.

Even if the U.S. were to plan and maintain fully sufficient capabilities supporting all functions judged necessary to meet our objectives, the Soviets could end up with a strategic posture which seemed to have "more" than the U.S. For instance, they could have more strategic delivery vehicles. Such a disparity in "visible" postures might affect perceptions of credibility.

If there is a serious problem of confidence in U.S. commitments now or if one does develop, there are several alternatives for dealing with it:

-- We could make the effort to educate and convince our Allies of our evaluation of sufficiency, and of the complexity of defining balance with numerous indices.

-- We could choose a more ambitious policy on sufficiency based on building real military capabilities for a relative advantage.

-- Between these two alternatives, if we observe a significant erosion of confidence, we might take military measures such as changes in deployment policies, operating procedures, or new procurement in order to restore an apparent imbalance in weapon inventories with the Soviets. We would do so at minimum cost to restore the strategic balance in terms of a political rather than a military requirement. Also arms control offers another alternative for maintaining political, visible balance of forces.

B. Strategic Stability

Strategic stability has two aspects: (1) Crisis stability and (2) the long-term balance of strategic arms between the United States and the USSR.

1. Crisis Stability

The term "crisis stability" refers to the degree to which both the United States and the Soviet Union would tend to avoid the use of nuclear weapons if facing one another in a deep political or military crisis.

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39

The incentive which either side might have for use of nuclear weapons in a crisis is dependent on many factors, including how much they felt their vital interests threatened, their perceptions of the other side's capabilities, intent and resolve, assessments of risk and gain, the political and psychological factors prevailing during the crisis, the personality of the leaders involved, and their own military force characteristics.

This section focuses on the characteristics of U.S. nuclear postures. Concerns can arise in many ways about how the U.S. strategic posture decreases or increases Soviet incentive to strike first in a crisis. But a major crisis stability question which must be faced now -- because of pending SALT and budget issues -- relates to the possible future vulnerability of fixed land-based missiles. 1/

There is general agreement that a principal contributor to stability in a crisis is a well-hedged retaliatory capability against urban/industrial targets. If each side has such a capability, there probably will be no assured advantage (in terms of absolute levels of U/I damage) to either side in preemption, since neither side could hope to greatly reduce its opponent's U/I retaliatory capability.

Analysis shows that, with current capabilities, neither the United States nor the Soviet Union can, by striking first, reduce by more than a few million the deaths or by a few percent the industrial damage they might expect in a general nuclear war. Both sides currently have sufficiently survivable and diverse strategic offensive forces that they can, either in a first strike or a second strike, almost totally destroy the urban population and industry of the other.

Also related to crisis stability is the relative balance of U/I damage after a general nuclear war. This question is treated in Annex C.

There is also general agreement that other factors besides a well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability have a bearing on stability in a crisis. There is not, however, a consensus regarding how and to what extent to change our current strategic force posture, if at all, in order to reduce (or avoid increasing) Soviet incentive to strike first in a crisis. Some changes which have been considered, however, include the following:

1/ The JCS representative believes that the Soviet Civil Defense Shelter Program is also a factor in crisis stability.

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-- Changes in the command and control system to improve some or all of the following: (1) Presidential survivability in a crisis; (2) continued and positive NCA control of U.S. forces; (3) NCA knowledge of the status of U.S. forces; and (4) NCA knowledge of the damage caused by U.S. conventional and nuclear military actions during a crisis or the early phases of a slowly escalating nuclear exchange.

-- Greater flexibility in the employment of nuclear forces.

-- Greater attention being given to the positive or negative contribution of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons (especially their survivability and forward deployment) to stability in a crisis.

-- Provision for rapid communications between the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union during a crisis. We and the Soviets have recently signed agreements which lay out procedures in the event of nuclear accidents and which will result in improvements to the U.S. - USSR direct communications link.

Many of these factors and their relation to crisis stability are discussed below in connection with general strategic alternatives. An issue which is, however, relatively independent of the general strategic alternatives is that of a vulnerable force component. There is wide disagreement about the value of insuring that no U.S. strategic offensive force components becomes very vulnerable to a Soviet first strike.

Some argue that a substantial decrease in survivability of a force component could be destabilizing in a crisis by making it easier for Soviet leaders to perceive -- rightly or wrongly -- an advantage to striking first in a crisis if they believed war was imminent. Attack on a vulnerable Minuteman force is the most common example, although SSBNs, bombers, or strategic C³ and surveillance targets have also been suggested. The Minuteman example is of particular importance because, if large threats to Minuteman develop, the currently envisaged means of maintaining Minuteman survivability (i. e., active defense or a land-mobile ICBM program) could be precluded by SAL agreement, by fiscal constraints, or by Congressional refusal to fund such programs.

On the question of whether an excessively vulnerable Minuteman force would unacceptably degrade crisis stability, there are two views:

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41

One view is that this question must be answered affirmatively and we must keep Minuteman survivable or phase it out (or at least reduce it to a lower level, say less than 100-200). Proponents of this view argue as follows:

-- If the United States allowed Minuteman to become vulnerable to a Soviet strike which could destroy perhaps 900 or more Minuteman launchers, the Soviets would probably be convinced that we intended Minuteman primarily for first-strike counterforce attacks, particularly in view of the public emphasis we have placed on survivable forces.

-- During an intense crisis, our primary leverage on the Soviet Union is the implied threat of military action to preserve our vital interests. Resolute U.S. actions in a crisis would of necessity cause the Soviets to consider nuclear war to be more likely and could lead them to believe we were about to launch Minuteman. In such a situation, the Soviets might decide that their only alternative short of general nuclear war would be to launch an attack on Minuteman, seek to forestall retaliation by threatening to attack U.S. cities, and negotiate with the United States.

-- The feasibility of a strike on Minuteman and the credibility of their threat to U.S. cities would be considerably increased if they could do so with only part of their ICBM force (possible in the mid-to-late 1970s) or if they could quickly reload their ICBM launchers. ^{1/}

In summary, proponents of this view assert that an excessively vulnerable Minuteman force could be destabilizing in a crisis, even if we had strong bomber and SLBM forces, because the threat to our cities might deter us from using these forces after an attack on Minuteman. At the very least, they argue, the President's options for diplomatic and military actions in a crisis would be more constrained if Minuteman were vulnerable, in order to avoid any suggestion that we intended to launch Minuteman in a first strike.

^{1/} Regarding the present Soviet reload capability, the intelligence community estimates that each of the soft SS-7 and SS-8 launchers has a capability to launch a refire missile 2 to 4 hours after the initial launch. Silo launchers currently deployed do not have a refire capability.

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42

Another view of crisis stability is that a vulnerable Minuteman force is not destabilizing so long as we can insure that the Soviets would not perceive substantial gains in lives, industry or military targets saved by striking first, rather than second. Proponents of this view argue as follows:

-- The President's options in a crisis would not be limited by the existence of a vulnerable Minuteman force. In a crisis both sides would take action to avoid false interpretations of first strike intent, whether or not ICBMs were vulnerable. The overall evaluation shows that any constraint on Presidential options is only a small element in the many factors that condition crisis stability.

-- The above concern about the destabilizing effects of a vulnerable Minuteman force rests on the premise that Soviet objectives in a crisis would warrant their risking over 100 million lives and almost all their industrial capability. Save for totally reckless actions by the United States in making direct threats to the Soviet homeland, proponents of the second view do not believe the Soviets would have such objectives.

-- The Soviets realize that the survivable Minuteman force was designed for a second-strike capability. Reduction in Minuteman survivability because of Soviet force improvements would not necessarily convince the Soviets that this would cause the U.S. to shift from a second-strike to a first-strike policy.

-- Arguing the plausibility of a Soviet attack on Minuteman assumes that the nuclear war follows a "start-stop" scenario, which depends on the Soviet ability to deter U.S. nuclear attacks after the initial Soviet strike. But, the Soviets would assess the risk of a U.S. bomber and SLBM counter-strike after a nuclear attack on Minuteman as extremely high.

-- A Soviet planner preparing for a first-strike on Minuteman would have to consider the possibility of a U.S. launch on warning.

Because of the extreme consequences of such a counter-strike on the USSR, the Soviets would have to seriously weigh their possible gains and losses if the nuclear war continued after their initial strike. Recent analyses ^{1/} for SALT show that Soviet fatalities could be reduced by at

^{1/} The JCS representative notes that this presupposes that the Soviets calculate the results of simulated nuclear exchanges using U.S. -type analytical models in the same manner as U.S. analysts. This assumption may not be correct.

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Revised 11 January 1972

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43

most 30 million from a fatality level of 140 million) and save at most 30% of their soft military targets if they destroyed 900 Minuteman. Hence, it is argued, Soviet attacks on Minuteman in a crisis are unlikely, provided we maintain high survivability in alert bombers and SLBMs.

-- In assessing the risk of attacks on Minuteman, the Soviets would have to take into account the expected number of U.S. deaths from fallout. Depending on the time of year, the prevailing weather, and the size of the Soviet attacks, fallout deaths could vary from as low as 2 million to as high as 40 million over a six-week period. Moreover, the Soviets would have to take into account the operational uncertainties of attacking Minuteman (greater-than-expected collateral deaths, less-than-expected damage to Minuteman, and launch-on-warning), and the retaliatory capability of even a hundred surviving Minuteman missiles which could destroy up to 15% of the Soviet population with zero or NCA ABM.

-- If Minuteman is phased out or reduced to low levels, crisis stability could be reduced because the Soviet problem of simultaneously attacking U.S. bombers and land-based ICBMs would be eliminated. Thus, it is argued, the Soviet incentive to strike the bombers would be increased.

-- The Soviets could gain little military advantage in a strike on Minuteman. At best, they would be trading part or all of their ICBMs for ours. With the capabilities inherent in our bomber and SLBM forces (especially as these forces would be fully generated in a crisis) for attacking U/I and soft military targets, attacking Minuteman would reduce our capability to attack their ICBMs.

Judgment is required to determine which view to emphasize as a guide for strategic force planning and for resolving SALT issues. In particular, judgment must be exercised on the following points: 1/

-- The degree to which the danger of Soviet miscalculation of U.S. intentions and strategic force capabilities might be increased if we had a large force of vulnerable Minuteman launchers;

1/ The JCS representative believes that an immediate issue is how much to invest for protection of sunk costs in our present systems over the next 8-10 years.

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44

-- The extent to which the President's options in a crisis might be constrained if we had a large force of vulnerable Minuteman launchers.

-- The plausibility that any objective other than protection of their homeland could cause the Soviets to make a large attack on even a vulnerable Minuteman force and to accept the risks that general nuclear war might result.

2. Long-Term Strategic Stability 1/

Other sections will consider in detail the possible impact of specific policies and programs on the long-term strategic stability between U.S. and the Soviet Union. There is, however, an underlying uncertainty about Soviet goals which affects evaluation of this impact. A major difficulty in assessing Soviet goals involves, of course, fundamental differences in strategic views. Moreover, our perceptions are inevitably distorted since the application of a U.S. analogue (our basic approach) is only partially appropriate at best.

Our perceptions of Soviet goals are especially uncertain at this time. The Soviets demonstrate an apparently serious interest in achieving a SAL agreement and other forms of improved relations with the United States and its allies. On the other hand, there is clear evidence of a continued Soviet arms buildup -- e.g., new ICBM development, the deployment of new silos and Y-class SSBNs (there are currently 25 Y-Y-class SSBNs operational and 16 under construction), the development of a new strategic bomber, and a very active ABM R&D program. Such ambiguity lends to a variety of views about Soviet goals and perceptions of the strategic balance. A range of views is presented below: 2/

-- The Soviets are driving hard for strategic superiority and will be influenced only by a U.S. show of strength. In this view, the United States should not be concerned about stimulating Soviet weapon deployments. Rather, these deployments will continue independently of U.S. programs and U.S. efforts at modernation will only be viewed by the Soviets as signs of weakness and further encourage them to continue to deploy strategic arms.

1/ See Annex F for more complete discussion of Soviet doctrine.

2/ It should be noted that these views are overly simplistic. In fact, motivations are probably more complex and interrelated than suggested.

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45

-- The Soviets are striving to achieve nuclear parity with the United States. They are seeking a stable strategic balance and want to avoid needless expenditures on strategic arms, but their perceptions as to what constitutes a stable balance are different than ours. In this view, negotiations and dialogue with the Soviets are particularly important in order to bring the views of both sides closer together. U.S. sensitivity to the effect of our strategic programs on Soviet weapon developments and deployments, as well as on the diplomatic positions of the Soviet government, should be a major factor in our planning.

-- The Soviet government is split into at least two major factions, those advocating strategic superiority and those seeking long-term stability in the strategic balance. In this view, the anomalies we see in the Soviet strategic arms policies are caused by conflict and compromise between these two factions. This would imply that U.S. strategic programs and discussions in SALT should be structured so as to reinforce those in the Soviet government who are seeking strategic stability, but also so as to hedge against the advocates of superiority achieving the upper hand.

C. Strategic Flexible Response Options

The earlier review of current U.S. nuclear weapon employment plans found that:

-- These plans consist primarily of preplanned nuclear strike options which provide for large attacks against various Soviet and Chinese military targets, as well as options for large urban/industrial strikes. A notable example is that the smallest preplanned SIOP option which can be ordered against the territory of the Soviet Union involves about 2500 weapons.

-- We currently have some capability for rapid selective release of SIOP weapons and for planning small ad hoc strikes within a day or so, but these capabilities are not systematically directed or exercised toward providing limited and flexible strategic nuclear strike options.

-- These plans do not provide options appropriate to all situations that the President might want to be prepared to deal with.

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46

Greater flexibility in the employment of strategic nuclear weapons would entail planning and organizational changes to provide options for smaller strikes than currently in the SIOP and for selection of weapon-target combinations suitable for both the political and the military situations in which they might be used. Improvements in command and control or in counterforce capability might also be entailed, but increased strategic flexibility could be attained without necessarily increasing the number of U.S. strategic forces.

1. Purposes of Strategic Flexible Response

There are at least three circumstances in which limited nuclear strikes might be an effective U.S. action:

-- First, the Soviets do not understand what constitutes vital U.S. interests and take hostile actions in the belief that we will not resort to the use of nuclear weapons.

-- Second, they do correctly understand what constitutes vital U.S. interests, but (possibly misreading our resolve) seek to coerce us by posing unacceptable choices designed to drive the United States to acceptance of Soviet demands.

-- Third, through Soviet design, Soviet miscalculations, or failures in U.S. diplomacy, the credibility of the U.S. deterrent is called into serious question.

Any of these circumstances might or might not include the first and limited use of nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union.

There are three major purposes for U.S. strategic flexible response options: deterrence, early war termination, and demonstration of resolve to our allies.

-- Deterrence. One purpose for a known capability for limited and flexible strategic nuclear option would be to reinforce U.S. deterrent by providing suitable responses to a Soviet threat or attack on a limited set of U.S. targets. It could also help deter Soviet nuclear or conventional attacks on U.S. allies by increasing Soviet uncertainty about U.S. responses. These aspects of a flexible response capability suggest primarily U.S. second use of strategic nuclear weapons, although the implied threat of U.S. first use in response to tactical nuclear or conventional attacks on our allies is an element of deterrence.

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47

-- Early War Termination. In our analysis, we found it difficult to identify credible scenarios for deliberate Soviet nuclear attacks, although this does not completely rule out such threats. We did identify circumstances of miscalculation which could lead to such attacks. In such cases, a combination of limited U.S. strategic nuclear strikes (showing at the same time restraint and resolve) and diplomatic initiatives might bring an early termination to a nuclear conflict without sacrificing vital U.S. interests. The threatened or actual use of limited strategic strikes could also assist in halting tactical nuclear or large conventional attacks on U.S. allied forces, although this could involve U.S. first use of nuclear weapons.

-- Demonstration of Resolve to Allies. The NATO Allies, in particular, favor a strong coupling between their forces and the U.S. strategic force. They reason that even a small-scale conflict could be rapidly escalated to a general nuclear war, then the Soviets would be deterred from initiating even smaller-scale aggression. A U.S. flexible response option might demonstrate to our Allies our resolve not to permit the Soviets to decouple U.S. strategic forces from Allied forces.

To be consistent with these purposes, a strategic flexible response capability could have some or all of the following elements to varying degrees, depending on the improvements in command and control deemed appropriate:

-- Provisions for a high degree of interaction between the President and military commanders in selecting specific attack options and in attack timing.

-- The ability to control Soviet deaths to within desired margins.

-- Avoidance of attacks which could reduce or destroy the control of Soviet political leaders over their strategic forces.

-- Continued positive Presidential control over U.S. nuclear forces throughout a series of limited nuclear exchanges, including the provision of appropriate information to the President concerning the status of U.S. forces and the results of U.S. and Soviet strikes.

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49

a. Weakening of the U.S. Deterrent

-- Some argue there is a risk that a U.S. flexible response posture could weaken the deterrence of conventional and nuclear attacks on NATO and other U.S. allies and of limited strategic attacks against the U.S. The risk, in effect, is that the Soviets would interpret a U.S. flexible response posture as an "admission" that we would not respond to Soviet attacks on our allies with large nuclear strikes on either urban or military targets and thus broaden the range of hostile actions the Soviets believed they could get by with.

-- Supporters of flexible response options argue to the contrary, stating that our extended deterrent is less credible unless we have the capability for any level of response in a spectrum varying from conventional defense to general nuclear war. They point out that strategic flexible responses would fill a gap which currently exists in this spectrum. Moreover, these options in no way decrease the U.S. U/I retaliatory capability and, hence would not reduce the risks the Soviets would face in an escalating crisis with the United States.

b. Increased Pressure for Use of Nuclear Weapons

-- Some assert that the existence of a systematically planned and institutionalized capability for limited strategic nuclear strikes would make it more "tempting" to exercise that capability in a crisis which might otherwise be satisfactorily resolved without resort to nuclear weapons. Staffs and other personnel involved in planning for the limited use of nuclear weapons could constitute a persuasive group of advocates for their use during a crisis. Moreover, the existence of a group of people psychologically conditioned to the limited use of nuclear weapons might increase the risk of accidental or unauthorized launches.

-- Others argue that pressures for use of nuclear weapons in a deep crisis will always exist and that systematic provisions for development and review of limited nuclear strike options in such a crisis will enhance the President's capability to evaluate the utility of employing nuclear weapons. Moreover, they assert that careful attention to the details of institutionalizing a flexible response capability and to the selection of staff personnel can mitigate the risk of creating an independent pressure group.

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2. Issues

The following major policy issues were identified in this study and are evaluated below:

-- Should we have greater flexibility for employment of strategic nuclear weapons in limited numbers?

-- Should there be command and control improvements to support flexible nuclear strike options?

-- Should there be improvements in U.S. missile counterforce capability to support flexible nuclear strike options? This question will be discussed in conjunction with other counterforce issues.

3. Should We Have Greater Flexibility for Employment of Strategic Nuclear Weapons?

Although one can visualize circumstances in which limited U.S. strategic strikes could help halt an escalating conflict with the USSR, it is difficult to devise credible scenarios leading to these circumstances. On the other hand, many major crises and conflicts have occurred under conditions which were not foreseen in advance (e.g., the Pearl Harbor attack and the Cuban missile crisis).

Some assert that we should have more flexibility for employment of strategic nuclear weapons than provided by current plans, even though the precise circumstances for use of flexible response cannot be predicted in advance. They emphasize the potentially severe consequences of being faced with a choice between general nuclear war and backing down in a deep crisis with the Soviet Union, because our war plans could not provide appropriate strike options in a timely manner. They also emphasize the escalatory risks inherent in selective release or ad hoc strike planning if the use of limited nuclear strikes has not been carefully planned in advance.

Others point to the low likelihood of ever having to use flexible response options and emphasize the risks associated with a strategic flexible response posture. There are three types of risk:

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50

c. Unwanted Escalation. Probably the most serious risk associated with the limited use of nuclear weapons during a crisis is that it could trigger uncontrolled escalation to general nuclear war. Although this relates to the use of flexible response options, it is also relevant to the issue 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 would rapidly escalate to general nuclear war, even if it began conventionally. Soviet military theorists appear to be nearly unanimous in their belief that a limited conflict is both unlikely and inherently unstable. Moreover, there is no reliable evidence whether the Soviets plan for limited nuclear strikes (although they have the capabilities for such attacks).

On the other hand, the Soviet political leaders are not bound to follow the doctrine of military theorists. At SALT, the Soviets have indicated that they place a high premium on being able to communicate with U.S. leaders during crises (e. g., accidental launches or provocative attack by a third country), with the putative aim of precluding general nuclear war. Moreover, some argue that achievement of strategic equality may cause the Soviets to rethink their attitudes toward limited nuclear exchanges. But there is no evidence of a recent shift in Soviet views regarding the instability of limited nuclear war.

Thus, 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.

If U.S. limited nuclear strikes were made in response to Soviet limited nuclear strikes, we would still only know that the Soviets were willing to launch an initial limited strike; their next step would still be uncertain. However, the risks to the U.S. of initiating a limited first-strike as compared to responding to a Soviet first strike seem substantially different. If we observe a limited Soviet strike, there is a strong presumption that they are willing to play the flexible response game, i. e., to keep the conflict limited. For a U.S. first strike, we have no idea whether the Soviets would even try to keep their response limited in nature.

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51

This analysis carries two implications regarding the utility of increased strategic nuclear flexibility:

-- The United States should consider execution of flexible response options (particularly the first use of such options) only if faced with a challenge to vital national interests and only if the consequences of other alternatives make acceptable the risk of escalation to general nuclear war.

-- If the United States executed a limited strategic strike, every precaution should be taken to reduce the likelihood of unwanted escalation, including appropriate use of diplomatic channels and public announcements, direct communications with Soviet leaders via the hot-line and strict avoidance of attacks which would lessen the control of Soviet leaders over their nuclear forces.

4. Command and Control

Some argue that improvements in command and control would be needed in order to effectively provide greater flexibility in the employment of U.S. strategic forces. Some or all of the following improvements might be necessary.

-- Provision of a survivable command post from which the President could direct flexible nuclear operations during a crisis. Options include ABM defense of NCA, and Advanced Airborne Command Post (AABNCP) with capabilities for directing and monitoring flexible strategic responses air defense of the NCA against air-supported threats including cruise-missile and low-altitude bomber attacks, and the construction of a Deep Underground Command Center (DUCC) to withstand several large-yield nuclear bursts.

-- Plans could be made for placing a designated successor in a survivable command post during a crisis.

-- Improvements in the survivability and resolution of the early warning satellite system to assure prompt accurate assessment of attacks on the United States throughout a series of limited nuclear exchanges and to improve our capability for assessing the results of U.S. strikes. Survivability improvements could include redundant satellite coverage, spare satellites, decoy satellites, and satellite relay of downlink data and survivable readout antennas. The current system requires readout antennas which are too large to allow airborne readout.

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52

-- Improvements in the survivability of communications links, e.g., through deployment of military communications satellites, possibly including silent spares and decoys.

-- Provision of a rapid retargeting capability for Minuteman to improve ad hoc strike planning capability. Minuteman II can now be preprogrammed with up to eight targets and the Minuteman III MIRVs can now be preprogrammed with up to three sets of targets. Currently, however, under current policy about half of these preprogrammed target slots are reserved for implementing new SIOP revision and would not be available for retargeting during a crisis or after an attack. Additional retargeting requires 24-35 hours. New retargeting hardware (Command Data Buffer) could reduce this to about one hour for each missile in a flight of ten, assuming the target data was available at the Launch Control Center. ^{1/} Command Data Buffer does not now contain provisions for retargeting Minuteman from airborne control centers (this would cost about \$100 million). Polaris and Poseidon SLBMs can now be retargeted within 15 minutes after receipt of orders to do so, although there is a question whether the orders can be communicated quickly and reliably in all circumstances to submarines, using current systems. However, Sanguine could order specific pre-planned options already stored on board the SSBNs. Additionally, it could complement a survivable satellite system by selectively calling specific SSBNs to the near surface for brief real time communications via satellite for such options as battle management or ad hoc retargeting. There is a question as to whether we would want direct, 2-way communications with SSBNs and require acknowledgement of instructions in view of the possible increased vulnerability.

Detailed trade-off studies have not been performed which would permit selection of specific command and control improvements to support flexible responses. The considerations set forth here show a range of improvements (and their costs) and are intended only to support decisions on broad planning guidance.

^{1/} The JCS representative notes that new retargeting improvements (Command Data Buffer) could reduce this time to about five minutes for the new improved computer unit and one hour for the D-37 computer unit. Concurrent retargeting allows a full wing (150 missiles) to be retargeted in two hours with the improved computer unit and fifteen hours with the D-37 computer.

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53

Table IV-3 summarizes current estimates of costs and leadtimes of possible command and control improvements for flexible response; this table also shows the current status of these programs. Depending on the extent of the command and control improvements, there could result an increased TOA of as much as \$3-4 billion in FY 73-77 over the current program. Our current command and control program has a TOA of about \$3 billion in FY 73-77, which includes about \$1 billion for some of the improvements in Table IV-3. In addition, the current FYDP provides funds for the 12-site Safeguard program which includes defense of the NCA.

There are three broad approaches we could take with regard to survivability of command and control systems for flexible responses, no improvements, modest improvements, and a concerted survivability program. The basic judgment which must be made is whether we should rely on Soviet and third country restraint from attacking our command and control.

-- No improvements beyond those needed for a well-hedged U/I retaliatory posture. Such a posture might require some of the improvements described in detail above. This issue is also being studied in the NSSM-126 study. This would be the least-cost approach and its effectiveness would depend on Soviet restraint from attacking command and control targets during a crisis. On the other hand, even granting Soviet restraint, our flexible response capability could be reduced or lost through accidental or unauthorized Soviet attacks or through third country attacks.

-- Modest survivability improvements. Critical fixed command posts, surveillance systems, and communications systems could be made sufficiently survivable that several weapons would be needed to destroy each target. These measures would reduce the likelihood of destruction of vital command and control systems by accidental, unauthorized, or provocative attacks. Survivability of these systems against deliberate Soviet and Chinese attacks could not be assured.

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55

-- Concerted survivability program. A vigorous and concerted R&D program to explore all feasible technical approaches to improving command and control survivability could provide assurance of survivability against all Chinese attacks and against a range of Soviet attacks short of general nuclear war. This program would, however, entail substantial and currently ill-defined costs and would have high technical risk of not achieving all of its objectives.

As for post-strike damage assessment, current and programmed surveillance and intelligence systems can provide rough, indirect indicators of success or failure of limited nuclear strikes within minutes of the planned strike times. But direct and more accurate assessment of damage can only be provided within one to two days of the strike and even then some areas of the Soviet Union could not be covered. Programmed systems which are planned to be operational by the mid-1970s could reduce this time to less than a day under favorable conditions. Further reduction in damage assessment time could not be provided until late in the 1970s and would entail a development program costing several hundred million dollars.

Our current and programmed intelligence systems, including data readout and processing facilities, are designed for peacetime operations and are not survivable. Measures to provide high survivability to these systems have not been carefully studied with respect to flexible response requirements, but would probably involve very costly programs with large technical risk. Relatively low cost measures to increase the effort required to neutralize these systems probably could be developed.

-- Some argue that Soviet uncertainty about the function of various systems and their role in U.S. command and control would reduce the likelihood of their being attacked in limited exchanges. They further assert that precise, rapid, and direct assessment of the results of U.S. limited strikes is not essential for the conduct of limited nuclear war and that the large number of diverse U.S. intelligence systems (current and programmed) can provide adequate information to support the President in such a crisis.

-- Others argue that the concept of a series of limited nuclear exchanges punctuated by negotiations and dialogue, requires that the President be fully apprised of the results of previous U.S. strikes and of any information which might indicate Soviet intentions for subsequent

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Table IV-3

Costs, Leadtimes and Status of Possible
C3 Improvements for Flexible Responses

	<u>Cost (\$ Millions)</u>			<u>FY 73-82 Cost</u>	<u>Program Status</u>
	<u>IOC^a/ FOC^a/ FY 73-77</u>	<u>FOC^a/ FY 73-77</u>	<u>FY 73-77</u>		
<u>C3 Survivability Improvements</u>					
Advanced Airborne Command Post (AABNCP)	1975	1976	540	700	AABNCP development - funded in the FY 73 Budget.
Deep Underground Command Center (DUCC)	1975	1975	400	500	No program
ABM Defense of NCA	1979	?	b/2700	3600	Current Safeguard program would need redirection.
Survivability improvements to the early warning satellite system	Mid 1970s		330	600	No program.
FL. COM (Navy Communications Satellite)	1975	1975	300	400	Production decision Pending.
TACAMO IV (AVLF)	1972	1975	96	96	6 additional A/C required but not current approved
Survivable Communications Satellite	1978	1978	200	350	Exploratory development Eng. Dev. decision pending.
Sanguine ELF Com. System	1971	1982	190	470	Add. 10 M required in FY 73.
<u>Minuteman Retargeting</u>					
Command Data Buffer (MMIII)	1973	1975	250	300	In Engineering development Production funds included in FY 73 Budget
<u>Post-Strike Damage Assessment</u>					
Greater Survivability for Existing Systems	Mid 1970s		300	800	No program.
Development of New System with Greater Survivability and Responsiveness	Late 1970s		1200	1800	No program.

^a Assumes FY 73 deployment decision.
L. The inability to relate to an FOC is caused by the fact that the configuration for the NCA is unknown.

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56

actions. Intelligence systems for post-strike damage assessment could be prime targets for Soviet limited strikes, because destruction of these systems would not create the escalatory pressures that attacks on U.S. early warning sensors would cause. At the minimum, R & D programs to improve the survivability of systems for post-strike damage assessments should be pursued.

D. Improved Missile Counterforce Capabilities

U.S. ballistic missiles currently have a limited capability to destroy hardened targets, as is shown in Table IV-4. Existing Poseidon has virtually no counterforce capability MM II and Minuteman III only a limited hard target counterforce capability. However, currently planned improvements for Minuteman III will provide a marginal hard target counterforce capability which could be made a significant capability either by the addition of a new RV or a new guidance system or both. Current improvements planned for Poseidon will not provide it with any credible counterforce capability but a new warhead plus SIG would provide a very credible capability. Note that, by using more than one warhead per target, the U.S. does have some counterforce capability. For example, four Minuteman II warheads have an 80% chance of destroying an SS-9 silo. Phrased another way, 500 Minuteman III missiles (with 3 RVs each) could destroy 250 out of the 288 SS-9 silos with probability 0.8.

Minuteman I or Polaris, not included in the table, have essentially no hard-target counterforce capability.

We can expect some improvement in missile accuracy without new programs, simply through quality improvements in such guidance components as gyroscopes and accelerometers. These are reflected in the table. For example, Minuteman II might improve sufficiently so that only two warheads are needed for an 80% chance of destroying an SS-9 silo.

It should be noted that current Soviet estimates of Minuteman III as reported in the open press are 0.20 MT yield and 400 meter CEP (0.221 nm). A Soviet view of Minuteman III for the late 1970s would probably estimate 0.4 - 0.5 MT yield, three RVs per missile, and a 200 meter CEP (0.11 nm).

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TABLE IV-4 ^{1/}

Number of Inventory U.S. RV's Required for a
Minimum .8 Damage Expectancy ^{2/}

	AVE	Whds	^{3/} CEP	(MT) Yield	^{3/} WSR	TARGET HARDNESS		
						(psi)		
						300	600	900
A. Current U.S. Weapons								
MINUTEMAN II	1.0		.43	1.20	.85	3	5	6
MINUTEMAN III	2.5		.25	.17	.71	5	7	9
POSEIDON	10.0		.28	.04	.80	<u>4/</u>	<u>4/</u>	<u>4/</u>
B. Currently Planned Component Improvement Programs								
MINUTEMAN III	2.5		.13	.17	.71	2	3	3
POSEIDON	10.0		.25	.04	.80	9	<u>4/</u>	<u>4/</u>
4 New Guidance Improvements Not Presently Programmed and New RV's								
MINUTEMAN III								
Only new Guidance	2.5		.10	.17	.71	2	2	3
Only new RV	2.2		.13	.50	.71	2	2	2
New Guidance & RV	2.2		.10	.50	.71	2	2	2
POSEIDON								
Only New Guidance	10		.12	.04	.80	3	4	5
New Guidance & RV	10		.12	.06	.80	3	4	4

^{1/} Second revision to DDR&E data.

^{2/} Computations were produced using the DIA Blast Damage Computer (PBC-8).

Based on SIOP planning factors.

^{4/} Greater than 10 RV's required.

Also shown in the table are the improvements in counterforce capability which would result from the following new development programs, none of which are currently being funded.

-- Improved Minuteman III accuracy through development and deployment of an inertial measurement unit system and other guidance improvements, at a ten-year cost of \$400 million and with an IOC in FY 77.

-- Development and deployment of a new, large-yield warhead for Minuteman III (0.35 - 0.5 MT), at ten-year cost of \$750 million and with an IOC in FY 77.

-- Improved Poseidon accuracy through development and deployment of stellar inertial guidance, at a ten-year cost of \$310 million and with an IOC in FY 76.

-- Development and deployment of a new warhead for Poseidon, i. e., either 10 RVs at 70 to 100 KT or 3 RVs at .5 MT, each with ten year costs of \$600 million and an IOC in FY 77.

There are strategic counterforce roles for other U.S. forces: bombers and ASW forces.

Bombers, provided they penetrate to their targets, have high accuracy and can carry large yield gravity bombs, giving them an excellent capability to destroy hardened targets. There is, however, disagreement about their utility against time-urgent targets such as missile launchers, because of their long time of flight to such targets after penetrating early warning.

-- Some believe the combination of a missile and bomber attack on hard silos would be effective. The missile attack would arrive first to disable the silo for long enough to permit bombers to arrive and destroy the silo.

-- Others believe that a combined missile-bomber attack on silos makes little sense and that bombers have little utility against time-urgent targets. They argue that if missile attack cannot destroy the silo, then it will provide only low confidence of keeping the silo disabled until the bombers arrive. If the missile attack has high probability of destroying the silo, then it would be more efficient to use the bombers on other targets.

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-- Still others believe that bombers could be used in limited strategic attacks on missile silos, arguing that the Soviets probably would not launch their missiles if the attack were small, because of the threat of U.S. retaliation with a large U/I strike.

With current technology, ASW forces have little prospect of limiting damage to U.S. cities from SLBM attacks and attempts to do so would be very costly (perhaps \$1-2 billion per year over the next five years). Some believe, however, that R&D should be funded to seek technological improvements in strategic ASW, rather than assuming the task is impractical.

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There is, however, a counterforce role for current ASW forces in disrupting and degrading the Soviet potential for SLBM attacks on our bomber force. By harassing and attacking Soviet SSBNs near our shores during a crisis (nuclear weapons need not be used in such attacks), ASW forces could provide extra time for escape of alert bombers on warning of an SLBM launch. By knowing the approximate position of enemy SSBN, SAC forces could significantly reduce their vulnerability by increasing alert posture or temporarily dispersing alert aircraft.

1. Issues

The fundamental policy issue to be decided is whether programs should be undertaken to make major improvements in the accuracy or yield of U.S. ballistic missiles.

There are three purposes for which an improved counterforce capability could be sought:

-- To provide disarming strike options against the PRC throughout the 1970s;

-- To provide options for limited missile strikes on hard military targets;

-- To help insure a favorable U.S. advantage in war outcome. Evaluation of the feasibility and utility of a disarming strike option against China in the 1970s depends on many factors, including the possibility of concealment of Chinese missile sites, Chinese development of a launch-on-warning capability, and Chinese deployment of ballistic missile submarines. These factors are discussed in Section V-D which deals with the U.S. strategic posture vis-a-vis the PRC.

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60

2. Improved Missile Counterforce Capabilities for Strategic Flexible Responses

The key judgment regarding improved missile counterforce capability for strategic flexible response options is whether the benefits of such options outweigh the possible adverse effects this capability might have on the long-term stability of the strategic balance.

Arguments supporting missile counterforce improvements for flexible response include the following:

-- Unless we have such options as part of our flexible responses, we may not be able to effectively deal with all of the crisis situations which we could face. Our present and expected hard-target kill capabilities are not adequate for efficient responses in kind to Soviet attacks on U.S. ICBM launchers. Supporters of improved missile counterforce capability argue that an essential leverage in limited war is military leverage; the most significant military leverage in strategic war is counterforce, even limited counterforce.

-- Improved U.S. counterforce would enhance allied confidence in our nuclear shield.

-- As for crisis situations, we could limit the extent of our deployments of counterforce improvements in an effort to allay Soviet concerns about an effective damage-limiting strike. Alternatively, we would have such retaliatory capability that the Soviets would recognize that a first-strike by them would have little benefit.

-- U.S. counterforce improvements within the limits of some SAL agreements would not be destabilizing. A SAL agreement could effectively constrain Soviet arms levels even if they felt a need to react to U.S. counterforce improvements.

-- An ability to respond "in kind" to any attack is an essential element of deterrence and war termination.

Arguments against an improved counterforce capability for flexible response include the following:

-- The analysis for this study has been unable to identify scenarios in which a flexible response capability to strike hardened military targets would have clear utility for deterrence or for early war termination.

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61

-- We already have and, through expected quality improvements, will increase a limited counterforce capability. Thus, there is no need for an additional counterforce improvement program.

-- Heightened Soviet perceptions of a strong U.S. counterforce capability could be destabilizing in a crisis, particularly a crisis in which limited nuclear exchanges had already occurred and could lead to unwanted Soviet escalation. It is unlikely that we could convince the Soviets that our missile improvements were for use only in limited strikes.

-- Our Allies have long known that a counterforce strike would have little damage limiting benefit for them. They are more concerned with establishing the coupling of U.S. strategic forces to their defense. This can be demonstrated with other options.

-- We do not need a capability to respond exactly in kind to deter or counter Soviet attacks on our ICBMs. Appropriate responses, such as attacks on their bomber bases, submarine ports, and/or roll-up of their defenses may offset any Soviet perception of altering the strategic balance by such an attack.

-- Programs to improve U.S. counterforce capabilities could convey to the Soviets the signal that we are seeking a disarming strike capability against them. This, in turn, could work counter to our diplomatic efforts with the Soviets, including SALT. Moreover, it could strengthen the hand of those in the Soviet government advocating increased strategic armaments and could stimulate further Soviet deployment of strategic weapons.

3. Improved Counterforce Capabilities for Relative Advantage in War Outcome

Some maintain that improved counterforce capability is an essential element of the U.S. deterrent and warfighting posture. They argue as follows:

-- The relative post-war military position is a critical factor which affects the decisions of a government contemplating aggression or the threat of aggression. This implies that our deterrent must include a sufficient counterforce capability to secure relative advantage in surviving military forces after a nuclear war, or, at the minimum, to deny the Soviets the certainty of a favorable balance.

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-- Our current posture, even though it now provides extensive targeting of soft military installations, may not do so in the future as the Soviet and Chinese threats to our forces grow. Moreover, it will not necessarily provide forces optimized for efficient use against soft military targets, particularly the command and control needed for such attacks.

-- The current emphasis on a well-hedged U/I capability has precluded imaginative R&D programs on counterforce options such as strategic ASW, order-of-magnitude accuracy improvements, and battle management systems which could render Soviet countermeasures ineffective. Without accomplishing such programs, we cannot conclude that efforts to improve our counterforce capability will be fruitless.

-- The threat of a U.S. damage-limiting strike on Soviet forces should have little destabilizing effect during a crisis since the Soviets would recognize that a preemptive nuclear attack on the U.S. would still leave them in an unfavorable military position.

-- In the long run this posture will achieve the most stable strategic balance. The Soviets cannot hope to match the U.S. because of U.S. economic and technological superiority. The U.S. can therefore maintain a strategic force which will guarantee relative favorable outcomes if it announces such a policy and consistently takes action to maintain it.

Others assert that increased counterforce capability will add little to the U.S. deterrent or to an effective nuclear warfighting capability, but will have an adverse effect on the stability of the long-term strategic balance. They make the following arguments:

-- At the level of destruction which would result from general nuclear war, achieving a favorable relative advantage in surviving military capability is a meaningless goal. Such consideration of advantage are unlikely to affect a political decision to start a war, once levels of destruction are incommensurate with any possible objectives.

-- A well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability provides (and will almost certainly continue to provide) an extensive capability to destroy soft military targets, some capability to destroy time-urgent hardened targets, and extensive capability, with bombers, to destroy hardened non-time-urgent targets. This will support our allies by providing for effective attacks on all Soviet installations except hardened missile launchers.

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-- Efforts to achieve an increased counterforce capability against hardened Soviet missile launchers will not be effective if the Soviets take offsetting measures which are readily available to them. These include further hardening, proliferation of SLBMs, deployment of land-mobile ICBMs, dispersal and increased alert for bombers, and possibly, launch-on-warning of attack.

-- Increased U.S. counterforce capability would create uncertainty in the minds of the Soviet leaders about the ability of their forces to ride out a U.S. attack and would increase their incentive to adopt less stable launch-on-warning tactics or to strike first in a crisis.

-- This would very likely stimulate offsetting Soviet force deployments, leading to needless increases in weaponry on both sides and possibly to heightened U.S.-Soviet tensions.

4. Command and Control

A comprehensive analysis has not been made of the command and control necessary to support improved counterforce capabilities in an effort to insure a favorable balance after a nuclear war with the Soviet Union. A preliminary examination suggests that adequate command and control for such a posture could cost \$3-4 billion more in FY 73-77 than the current program. Our current command and control program will cost about \$3 billion in FY 73-77. Command and control improvements which could be associated with improved counterforce capabilities include the following:

-- A survivable and near real-time satellite system to determine which Soviet missile launchers have been fired, in order to allow surviving U.S. missiles to be concentrated on Soviet launchers which still contain missiles.

-- An advanced Airborne Command Post (AABNCPs) for U.S. commanders to manage strategic forces during a large nuclear war.

-- Survivable missile retargeting capabilities.

-- Survivable and reliable communications for force management during a large nuclear war: to include:

. Airborne VLF TACAMO force sufficient to provide VLF communications worldwide.

. ELF Sanguine to provide survivable communications to SSBNs on station at significant operating depths throughout the world.

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99

C. China

Regarding U.S. strategic objectives and force posture vis-a-vis the People's Republic of China (PRC) this section discusses the question of whether we should take measures to provide for a disarming counterforce strike capability against the PRC nuclear capability throughout the 1970s.

A complete analysis of possible requirements for a disarming strike capability against the PRC nuclear threat must also consider issues involving U.S. conventional and tactical nuclear force posture in Asia. These are discussed in considerable detail in the NSSM 69 study (U.S. Strategy and Forces for Asia). Decisions on our strategic posture vis-a-vis the PRC should be made in the context of both the NSSM 69 study and overall U.S. strategic objectives.

The Chinese Nuclear Threat

Our knowledge of Chinese nuclear delivery systems is limited because of serious deficiencies in the quantity, quality, and nature of the evidence. Consequently, intelligence projections and judgments are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty.^{1/}

Two broad alternatives are available to the Chinese under this estimate: (1) emphasis on peripheral delivery systems and (2) emphasis on inter-continental delivery systems. Available evidence indicates that the Chinese have opted for the former course of action. They are currently emphasizing the continued development, production, and deployment of a regional force of jet medium bombers and peripheral strategic missiles. This may, however reflect short-term capabilities rather than long-term intent.

Annex D contains a more detailed description of the PRC nuclear threat and shows postulated force projections for each of the above alternatives.

Chinese Nuclear Doctrine

PRC nuclear doctrine in the 1970s is expected to emphasize defense of the homeland and nuclear deterrence. The possibility of the Chinese resorting to "nuclear blackmail" in the absence of direct threats to their national interests is believed remote because:

^{1/} The views of the intelligence community on current and future Chinese strategic nuclear capabilities are contained in NIE 13-8-71 (Communist China's Strategic Weapons Program).

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100

-- With larger conventional forces than any neighboring Asian country, direct use of nuclear weapons would seem an unnecessary and risky course of action.

-- The Chinese appreciate their substantial nuclear firepower disadvantages vis-a-vis the United States or the Soviet Union and they would undoubtedly be reluctant to become involved in a nuclear encounter. The Chinese are surely aware that to become involved with one of the two superpowers would leave it exposed to threats by the other.

While direct nuclear blackmail is considered remote, the Chinese may attempt to intimidate their neighbors in Asia through indirect means short of overt blackmail. That is, the Chinese might exert more subtle means of pressure which could possibly be effective. They can be expected to exploit politically whatever leverage their nuclear capability gives them, consistent with not jeopardizing their national security.

Prestige will also be a principal objective of Chinese nuclear policies. The possession of nuclear weapons -- and the implications of these weapons regarding scientific, technological, and military capabilities -- will give China an elevated status not only among Asian nations, but throughout the world.

For these reasons, the possession of nuclear weapons can be expected to work to the advantage of the PRC, although it might be offset by the presence of U.S. nuclear forces in Asia or by a U.S. disarming strike capability against China.

Elements of a U.S. Strategic Policy Toward China

With even a limited nuclear capability, the Chinese are in a position to threaten the security interests of the United States and its Asian allies; this capability will increase during the 1970s. Yet, China poses some issues different than those of the Soviet Union, because:

-- The nuclear capabilities of the PRC will be for the foreseeable future far less than those of the United States or the Soviet Union.

-- Our operational capabilities against China are different than those against the Soviet Union. In particular, destroying large percentages of the population is much more difficult, destroying industry is much easier, and limiting damage is substantially casier than is the case against the Soviet.

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-- Tactical delivery systems can cover a higher percentage of strategic targets than in the case of the Soviet Union.

Beyond these general observations, the study group delineated the agreements and disagreements regarding key elements of U.S. strategic policy vis-a-vis China.

-- There is general agreement that the Chinese policy makers are no less rational than those in the U.S. and USSR and should be treated accordingly.

-- An essential element of U.S. deterrence policy is a capability to destroy PRC cities. But there is disagreement about the circumstances under which this threat will deter Chinese nuclear or conventional attacks on our allies or, in the late 1970s, nuclear attacks on the United States. Although Chinese population is dispersed (see Table V-3), PRC leaders realize that Chinese cities, including most PRC industry, could easily be destroyed in a nuclear attack. The top 1,000 cities contain only 11% of China's total population (but 80% of her industry), making it impractical to strive for the same capability -- on a percentage basis -- to inflict deaths that we have against the Soviet Union. The table below illustrates the relative vulnerability of China's industry and the effects of her dispersed population.

Table V-3
Damage from 100 Arriving Warheads (1 MT)

	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>USSR</u>	<u>China</u>
% Population	21	17	6
% Industry	19	32	42
Population (millions)	49	43	51
% Urban population	35	34	70

-- There should continue to be strategic strike options against China which do not involve overflight of the Soviet Union. But the Chinese cannot ignore the total U.S. spectrum of nuclear weapons and all U.S. strategic weapons (including Minuteman) should be considered as contributing to deterrence of Chinese nuclear attack on the United States.

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102

-- There is no agreement concerning the degree to which a disarming strike capability is feasible, desirable, or necessary in order to enhance deterrence, to prevent coercion of allies, or to support our alliances. The desirability of a disarming strike capability is related to our conventional and tactical nuclear force posture in Asia. If we reduce conventional forces in Asia and depend primarily on tactical nuclear weapons for defense of our allies from attacks by PRC conventional forces, a disarming strike capability might be desired if we wanted to be able to prevent China from escalating the conflict by making nuclear attacks on U.S. bases, on our allies, or even on CONUS. The feasibility of a disarming strike is analyzed below.

Strategic Alternatives

In the overall context of the General Strategic Alternatives, we developed two options vis-a-vis China which differ basically in regard to a disarming strike capability.

Option A. U/I Retaliatory Capability Plus Limited Counterforce Capability

1. Purpose and Capability. This option would provide those capabilities against China which result from a posture designed primarily for a well-hedged U/I retaliatory capability against the USSR. There would be no improvements in missile counterforce or ASW capabilities for the purposes of limiting or denying damage from PRC attacks.

Forces procured on this basis would maintain the following capabilities against China:

-- The capability to destroy about 70% of Chinese industry and 70% of the urban population (about 60 million people or 7% of the total population).

-- The capability to destroy most soft military targets (conventional and nuclear) and hardened, non-time-urgent targets.

-- A limited capability to destroy some time-urgent targets of some degree of hardness (e.g., missile silos), although this would require overflight of the USSR with Minuteman or deployment of Poseidon in the Pacific (not currently planned).

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We currently have the first two capabilities against China, using about 600 warheads targeted in the SIOP (no overflight of the Soviet Union would occur); the third capability is not currently at issue because China has no hardened missile launchers.

Moreover, we currently have a disarming strike capability against known Chinese nuclear threats. But China may already have deployed some MRBMs which have not been detected (see Annex D). Under Option A, our disarming strike capability will be seriously eroded if the Chinese increase the number and survivability of their nuclear warheads or if they develop a launch-on-warning capability. ^{2/}

2. Forces and Costs. This option would not require additional forces or costs over those appropriate to any of the General Strategy Alternatives. Nor would it require an area ABM defense.

3. Key Issues. The key issue under this option, is whether the threatened destruction of PRC cities and soft military targets, in conjunction with U.S. tactical nuclear forces and U.S. and allied conventional forces, would be sufficient to deter PRC attacks on the United States, its bases overseas, and its allies. (Evaluation of this issue depends in part on tactical and conventional force posture in Asia discussed in NSSM-69.) While this option would provide some damage-limiting capability, we could not deny damage from Chinese nuclear attacks throughout the 1970s. This implies the following:

- 1/ Under the most likely assumptions, the Chinese could deploy MRBMs in silos of unknown hardness by 1974/75 and their first nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine as early as 1976. The initial deployment of ICBMs will probably be in silos of unknown hardness and could occur as early as 1974, but more likely in 1975. There is no evidence of construction of deployed silos, and it has not been possible to estimate what the hardness of deployed silos would be from analysis of the ones involved in R&D.
- 2/ A crude warning system, sufficient for launch-on-warning against missile attacks, could be deployed late in the 1970s. The Chinese probably now have the capability to respond to a bomber attack by launching their bombers on receipt of warning. As they deploy land-based missiles, they will probably be able to launch them on warning of a bomber attack.

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-- For deterrence of PRC conventional attacks on our allies, we would depend primarily on either (a) a combination of U.S. and allied conventional forces or (b) battlefield use of tactical nuclear weapons, with the risk that the Chinese would respond with nuclear attacks.

-- For deterrence of PRC nuclear attacks on our allies, we would depend on U.S. theater nuclear weapons in conjunction with the threat of strategic nuclear weapons.

4. Relation to General Strategic Alternatives. China Option A is most consistent with Alternatives 1, 2, and 3A, which do not provide improved counterforce capabilities. It could be consistent with Alternatives 3B and 3C if counterforce improvements in these alternatives were directed primarily toward the USSR (i. e., improvements in Minuteman or improvements in Poseidon, but without deploying Poseidon in the Pacific) would be more consistent with the damage denial objective of China Option B.

Option B. U/I Retaliatory Capability Plus Enhanced Counterforce Capability Designed for Damage Denial

1. Purpose and Capability. This option would add to Option A an improved missile counterforce capability against hardened time-urgent targets and a strategic ASW capability against Chinese submarines in order to extend the time during which we could threaten China with a disarming strike.

There are two possible uses for a U.S. disarming strike capability:

-- First, to contribute (in concert with tactical nuclear weapons) to deterrence of Chinese conventional attack on our allies and to reduce the credibility of Chinese nuclear threats to our allies.

-- Second, a disarming strike could be executed in an attempt to prevent Chinese nuclear responses if the United States is required to make battlefield use of tactical nuclear weapons to support allied or U.S. troops engaged in battle against PRC forces.

2. Forces and Costs. In order to have high confidence of destroying Chinese missiles in silos ^{1/} without overflying the USSR, the counterf

^{1/} A few IRBMs could be deployed in silos by 1974/75; ICBMs will not be initially deployed in silos. Until more evidence is available and deployed silos are constructed and analyzed, there is no way of estimating what their hardness may be.

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capability of U.S. SLBMs would have to be improved. If we relied on bombers for such attacks, success would be critically dependent upon the Chinese not launching their missiles on warning of the attack.

We could develop and deploy a Polaris missile with improved counterforce capability (no current program) or deploy Poseidon in the Pacific (not currently planned, but under study by the JCS) and improve the Poseidon accuracy (means for improving accuracy are under development, but a higher yield warhead is not; however, it would take about 4 years to IOC for an improved Poseidon guidance package, i. e., early 1976). If Poseidon is deployed in the Pacific, we would face a choice of covering Chinese hard targets at the expense of uncovering some Soviet targets or of buying additional SSBNs.

Bombers and tactical nuclear delivery systems could be used for many targets, such as urban/industrial and soft military targets.

To support a disarming strike capability, once the Chinese deploy their first nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (perhaps as early as 1976), dedicated strategic ASW forces would be necessary. Moreover, an area ABM defense (Defense Level B or C), would be necessary if we were to limit or deny damage to the United States from PRC missiles surviving a U.S. attack, forces not located for targeting; or missiles launched on warning of the U.S. strike. Alternatively, we could threaten the destruction of PRC cities in order to deter PRC attack on the United States with their surviving weapons.

3. Key Issues. Differing assessment of risks under this option produce the following issues:

(a) Would missile counterforce improvements significantly affect the U.S.-Soviet relationship?

The Soviet Union could interpret improvements in U.S. missile counterforce capabilities as a step toward a first-strike capability against the USSR.

-- Some believe this would lead to further proliferation of Soviet strategic offensive and defensive forces and to complications in SALT or other U.S.-Soviet diplomatic efforts.

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106

-- Others believe deployment of an improved Poseidon in the Pacific would not be interpreted as a threat by the Soviets.

(b) Is a U.S. disarming strike feasible?

Even before a Chinese SSBN becomes operational (1976 at the earliest) or 6000 n.m. ICBMs in silos could be deployed in significant numbers (1978/79), executing a disarming strike would, for the following reasons, involve significant risk of damage to U.S. allies and overseas bases from attack by surviving PRC nuclear forces.

-- Possible failure to locate with accuracy all deployed Chinese missile launchers. For example, since 1969 we have observed Chinese troop training with MRBMs and they may have deployed a few. We have yet to locate a deployed missile site, however, which may mean MRBMs are deployed in a concealed mode. New intelligence collection capabilities will improve this situation, but there is still considerable uncertainty associated with locating all Chinese missiles.

-- If the Chinese develop and deploy the necessary warning systems, they could adopt a launch-on-warning doctrine which could seriously detract from the effectiveness of a U.S. disarming strike. A crude warning system, sufficient for launch-on-warning of missile attacks, could be deployed late in the 1970s. They probably now have a capability to respond to a bomber attack by launching their own bombers on receipt of warning. While we might jam Chinese radars to deny them precise information about an incoming attack, the jamming itself during a crisis might cause them to launch their bombers and possibly even their missiles.

-- When the Chinese perceive that the United States is developing a disarming strike capability, they might be induced to accelerate the development and deployment of missiles in a survivable mode (concealed missiles, SLBMs, or land-mobile missiles). On the other hand, perception of an improved U.S. disarming capability might cause them to slow down their deployment of nuclear weapons.

-- Only a few residual weapons launched by the PRC could inflict massive casualties and damage on allied population centers and U.S. overseas bases should the Chinese choose to target them.

Faced with the above risks our allies may not place much confidence in a U.S. posture which depends upon the effectiveness of a disarming strike to deter attacks on them.

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107

After the Chinese deploy SSBNs or 6000 nm ICBMs in silos, the risks of damage to the United States from residual PRC weapons would increase, particularly if we could not deploy an area ABM defense because of a SAL agreement with the USSR or because Congress continued to refuse funding for such a defense. For example, without an ABM system which protected major populated areas, three surviving Chinese ICBMs or SLBMs with thermonuclear warheads could kill 5-8 million U.S. people, if targeted to maximize fatalities. Twenty surviving missiles could kill 16-20 million U.S. people. We could, however, threaten destruction of PRC cities in an attempt to deter retaliatory strikes on the United States or its allies. (Collateral fatalities and damage connected with a disarming strike would be only _____, thus, this threat would have strong deterrent value.)

U.S. ASW forces would probably be effective against the small number of relatively noisy and unsophisticated SSBNs the Chinese could be expected to deploy in the last half of the 1970s. Nonetheless, the outcomes of ASW engagements are strongly dependent on tactics and environmental factors and we could not predict with certainty the destruction of Chinese SSBNs before they launched their missiles.

Faced with these risks, the United States might be willing to execute a disarming strike against China in defense of an Asian ally. A crisis which would confront us with such a decision is most likely to arise because of a Chinese conventional attack on one of our Asian allies. It is likely that the Chinese would take military and diplomatic actions designed to encourage opposition by the U.S. public to U.S. first use of nuclear weapons (on the battlefield or for a disarming strike) in such a crisis. If the Chinese believed that this opposition would inhibit us from using nuclear weapons in defense of an Asian ally, then the effect of a disarming strike posture in helping deter conventional attacks would be significantly eroded.

In spite of these limitations, some argue that a disarming strike capability can be politically useful, especially as Chinese planners would conservatively make more pessimistic assessments than we, and our allies might lack the sophistication to tell the difference. Others point out that survival of a few residual weapons are easy for all to imagine that this would be enough to erode the political leverage we might gain from an imperfect disarming strike capability.

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108

4. Relationship to General Strategic Alternatives. China Option B is most consistent with Alternative 4, which would provide major counterforce improvements, and with Defense levels B. Defense levels D or E would not be inconsistent inasmuch as they also involve at least a light area defense. As noted above, it could also be consistent with Alternatives 3B and 3C.

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