

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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TOP SECRET ATTACHMENTS~~

March 22, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

FROM: WILLIAM E. ODOM WO

SUBJECT: Draft PD on Nuclear Targeting (e)

I have made revisions in my original draft and now submit it for your review and further discussion with Welch (Tab 1). As background for that discussion, I would like for you to understand precisely why I drafted the PD the way I have. In the short time available for discussions, it is easier for nay-sayers to introduce false issues and category mistakes than it is for me to clarify them. Therefore, I want to explain my position beforehand, at least in its fundamentals. (S)

The Problem

Nuclear weapons and long-range delivery systems (bombers and ICBMs) created a major requirement for operational change which has been swept under the rug in most U.S. debate on the significance of nuclear weapons. In World War II, our homeland and our military command structure were not subject to serious attack. At the same time, theater commanders could be given missions, general in nature, and allowed to conduct campaigns. General Marshall, however, still faced extraordinary cross-pressures from the European Theater and the Pacific Theater. Within theaters there were struggles over allocations and operations. But in no case was there a requirement for the "artillery" and the "air support" for an operation to be coordinated down to the hour and minute at the Washington level. The advent of ICBMs and nuclear weapons have forced that operational requirement on the National Command Authority and the Secretary of Defense. (S)

Under McNamara, one major step was made to solve the problem. The Navy and the Air Force were forced to coordinate their targeting through a JCS element, the Joint Strategic Targeting Planning Staff. It created the SIOP. Being located at SAC, it has become more responsive to SAC than to the JCS. The SIOP was a fairly large step forward, but technological advances since then have caused it to become an obstacle to further progress. In the 1960s, satellite reconnaissance capabilities were primitive. The capability to identify rapidly new targets and to coordinate nuclear strikes on them within a few minutes or hours was not practical. Today it is. Because it is, it means that nuclear weapons can support general purpose force operations just as bombers could support the Normandy invasion in World War II. (S)

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Review on March 21, 2000  
Extended by Z. Brzezinski  
Reason for Extension: NSC 1.13(e)

DECLASSIFIED

per 6/15/09 NSC 14r.  
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BY BAR NARA, DATE 8/24/11

The SIOP era has been a happy one for SAC. The era depends on the assumption that all targets must be located before the war, and it has fostered the belief that a war can be fought, controlled, and won or lost with strategic forces alone. What the Air Corps tried to prove with the bombing survey after World War II, the autonomy of air power for conduct of general war, SAC effectively achieved in our force structure under the rhetoric of deterrence theory. The SIOP is an autonomous war plan which thrusts aside all other unified commands and forces or makes those commands serve the SIOP. (S)

Once we begin to discuss "flexibility" and a "look-shoot-look" C<sup>3</sup>I capability for destroying moving military targets, we bring all military forces back into the planning. SIOP autonomy is reduced to one contingency: a retaliation if we believe we are losing control and want to strike a last resort punishing blow. (S)

#### NSDM-242 (Tab 2)

The big effort in NSDM-242 to move toward flexibility achieved a number of things, but it did not deprive the SIOP of its autonomy. It yielded the appearances of flexibility without the substance. "LNOs" and "escalation control" were terms that suggested flexibility but left out the key elements of genuine flexibility: strategic defense (if you shoot an LNO, are you going to sit calmly with no civil defense and take the Soviet LNO response? Does anybody really believe such an LNO is credible? It is less credible than the SIOP!), C<sup>3</sup>I to include more than communications (meaning an enduring staffing capability at the national level and intelligence acquisition for shifting targets), and integration with general purpose force operations (meaning that strategic forces would be put in a "supporting role" and not allowed to fight the war alone or as the primary force). (S)

The confused logic of LNOs and of the claim of new flexibility surfaced with the effort to get "political guidance" for pre-planned LNOs. How can one give political guidance for an unknown contingency far in the future? When one knows the situation, then the LNO can be designed. That means, of course, that LNOs must come after the political events, not before. But to introduce the rational sequence is to return to traditional views of the relationship between politics and war, a return that would eventually destroy the SIOP autonomy and reduce it to a supportive part of the larger political and military whole. (S)

#### The Inadequacy of the JCS

Eventually a national military operational staff has to perform the traditional integrative role if we move toward genuine flexibility. At present, the JCS is not up to the task. The only practical way to change this situation is to begin generating exercises which involve the NCA and require genuine flexibility. Harold Brown

recently played in Petite GAUNTLET 80, an exercise requiring him to go to general war. Slocombe was so excited by Brown's behavior that he cornered me and said "something truly significant happened on targeting at the Pentagon today." Harold began chasing general purpose forces in East Europe and Korea with strategic weapons! And this caused him to think of the need for coordination with U.S. general purpose forces in those theaters. The J-3 had to fake the staff support. (S)

My Draft PD (Tab A)

I have stripped out a minimum number of critical points for a directive which will, if followed, move us toward genuine flexibility, or at least an awareness of what it requires. Many of the buzz words from previous directives are omitted intentionally because they are the shield for defending SIOP autonomy (e.g. escalation control, LNO, HTK, "crisis management," etc.). Let me explain the rationale of each section. Then you can compare the PD-18 follow-on study, NSDM-242, and my draft on the sheet at Tab 4. (S)

-- The preamble is a general statement of your three questions about what it requires to deter in the 1980s and 1990s. The word "countervail" is there because that is what Brown calls his new strategy. (S)

-- Pre-planned options are mentioned, although there is no imperative for this other than fear of shocking the SIOP people and SAC with the hint of their growing inadequacy to deterrence requirements. The last half of the section is verbatim language from Brown's posture statement. (S)

-- Flexibility is treated to force the staffing requirements, the supporting role of nuclear forces for general purpose forces, and the intelligence requirements for the fast cycling of "look-shoot-look" operations. I have omitted the 30 percent figure from the part on the reserve force. You requested that, and I shall comply, but it may be a mistake. The size of reserves is traditionally decided by the highest level of command. That is the field marshal's major decision tool to influence a campaign. How, where, and when he allocates the reserves is his major contribution to strategic operations. Therefore, it is not a trivial detail. The SIOP people have kept reserves to virtually nothing. The Navy has used the "secure reserve force" concept to justify more SSBNs. Thus reserves have become to focus as an inter-service rivalry. The President would be well advised to review the size and make up of the reserve force at least annually. It is a key matter for influencing almost all else in planning. Thirty percent is a fair figure for a start; 20 percent would be all right. But the President must finally be specific if he wants to exert control. (S)

-- Targeting priorities, boldly stated, struck you as too much for Brown to accept. If you will read his posture statement on this matter (Tab 3), you will see that he has already addressed the

priority issue with candor. My draft merely codifies what he has begun in the posture statement and what has been the case in actual JCS planning from the beginning. "Countervalue" and counter-city priorities have never been taken with great seriousness by the planners. (S)

You will also find in this section some language about a "counter-vailing strategy" which comes from Harold's own pen. Following it, however, I have introduced a simple but crucial statement of the First Principle of War (first of nine). That is, destroy the enemy's army or its ability to fight. Capturing terrain, firing demonstration shots to show resolve, and all other such objectives have contributed to defeat when they fail to destroy the army. Also, I have stated that nuclear forces are to be used with general purpose forces to achieve this "objective," another "traditional" statement that some will call "radical." (S)

-- On C<sup>3</sup>I, the draft cites PD-53 (all that needs to be said for "direction") and emphasizes the growing importance of C<sup>3</sup>I as an element of deterrence. Hidden behind this section is a different view of how war is likely to unfold. Once nuclear weapons are used, I doubt seriously that rapid escalation will occur. Suddenly we shall realize how vulnerable we are and scarce our nuclear weapons are. We will worry about wasting them on non-military targets. Days and weeks will pass as we try to locate worthy targets. Then there will be nuclear strikes, confusion, and panic. Another period of weeks or months will pass while both sides locate their own forces and race to discover the location and condition of the opponent's forces. C<sup>3</sup>I is the critical variable for the race during each interval to get ready for the next exchange. I worry that theater nuclear war in Europe would lead not to escalation but to drawn out attrition warfare because the TNF firepower exceeds both sides' C<sup>3</sup>I capabilities to use it for a decisive and early result. The machine gun and artillery did this for World War I. The tank, the airplane, and the radio broke that stalemate in World War II. (S)

-- Acquisition policy and employment policy must be linked to prevent what happened in the case of NSDM-242. Acquisition was kept distinct from employment policy in that case. Thus, DR&E and the program people did not buy systems for the new doctrine of flexibility. In my draft, I have tied the two but not inflexibly. The Secretary of Defense can use the language to force new programs to support the doctrine, or he can let the connection remain loose. I prefer to let Brown have some say in this because we cannot force him to accept it. (S)

-- Implementation is key. Exercises, review of the reserve forces, and C<sup>3</sup>I matters are the motors for driving our capability in the direction you desire. They can, if so used, bring the "unity of theory and practice" essential to sound force posture development. (S)

You can proceed in any of three ways:

1. Hold another meeting with Welch, et. al., to discuss and debate the draft PD and the covering memo.
2. Sign the memo to Brown, send it, and call him about it.
3. Invite Brown to discuss the draft PD in your office.  
Work out a final version for submission to the President. (S)

The first approach may lead to signing out a memo. Welch, Utgoff, and Ermarth have come quite far in adopting my version. The danger is that they may render the language sufficiently general to blur the issue of SIOP autonomy and integration with general purpose forces. The blurring targeting priorities, staff roles, and reserve force sizes can bring that result. (S)

The second approach is a wild card and you probably won't want to play it. (U)

The third approach keeps the Pentagon drafters from presenting you with something that blocks your efforts or salvages the present strategic doctrine. (S)

Late today, Welch et al. produced a draft very close to mine at TABA.

Thus, we may be very near a staff consensus. Nonetheless, all the arguments in this memo still hold, and I believe they will help you see what is key and what is peripheral and negotiable.

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